

VETERANS AND NEW FACES IN OLMERT'S CABINET

By Dan Baron, JTA

Meet the major players in Israel's new government:

*** Prime Minister Ehud Olmert:** A charismatic ex-mayor of Jerusalem who filled Ariel Sharon's post when the former prime minister was crippled by a stroke in January, Olmert lacks Sharon's military pedigree but is considered a shrewd statesman. A scion of the long-dominant Likud Party, Olmert was quick to follow Sharon when the former premier left the Likud to form the more centrist Kadima Party last year. Olmert is considered a pragmatist keen to follow up last year's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and northern West Bank with more far-reaching moves in the West Bank, and to set Israel's border unilaterally in the absence of peace talks with the Palestinians.

*** Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni:** As the second woman, after the iconic Gold Meir, to hold the Foreign Affairs portfolio, some expect Livni to similarly rise to top office one day. A one-time Mossad operative, Livni cut her political teeth as immigration and justice minister in previous Likud-led governments. Well before Hamas won Palestinian Authority elections in

January, Livni invested months in convincing Western nations to isolate the Islamic terrorist group.

*** Defense Minister Amir Peretz:** Chairman of the Labor Party, senior partner to Olmert's Kadima in the coalition government, Peretz secured the key Defense Ministry — raising eyebrows given his lack of military experience. A veteran trade unionist, Peretz is considered a Labor firebrand, but since toppling Shimon Peres as party head last year he has alienated colleagues who accuse him of lacking diplomatic vision.

*** Finance Minister Avraham Hirschson:** An Olmert confidant, Hirschson is expected to press ahead with free-market reforms championed by former Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. As tourism minister in the previous government, Hirschson helped introduce more competition in Israeli commercial aviation and pursued joint projects with his Palestinian Authority counterpart.

*** Minister of Regional Development Shimon Peres:** As Israel's elder statesman, Peres was guaranteed a senior role in the new government. He is expected to focus his efforts on developing the Galilee and Negev, areas

that have received new attention since the Gaza Strip withdrawal prompted a quest to rehouse former settlers. Winner of the Nobel peace prize for his role as architect of the Oslo peace accords, Peres could also lend diplomatic polish to Olmert's plan to annex West Bank settlement blocs.

*** Internal Security Minister Avi Dichter:** A former head of the Shin Bet domestic security service who backed the assassination of top Palestinian terrorists, Dichter has made the most dramatic leap from Israel's security ranks to politics. He is expected to apply his experience to fighting a crime wave sweeping the Jewish state.

The other members of the Cabinet, with their parties and positions, are:

* Ariel Atias, Shas, Minister of Communications;
 * Ronnie Bar-On, Kadima, Minister of the Interior;
 * Yacov Ben Yizri, Gil, Minister of Health;
 * Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, Labor, Minister of National Infrastructure;
 * Ze'ev Boim, Kadima, Minister of Immigrant Absorption;
 * Eitan Cabel, Labor, Minister without port-

folio (responsible for the Israel Broadcasting Authority);

* Yitzhak Cohen, Shas, Minister without portfolio (responsible for the religious councils);

* Ya'acov Edri, Kadima, Minister without portfolio (responsible for liaison with the Knesset);

* Rafi Eitan, Gil, Minister without portfolio (responsible for pensioners);

* Gideon Ezra, Kadima, Minister of the Environment;

* Isaac Herzog, Labor, Minister of Tourism;
 * Shaul Mofaz, Kadima, Minister of Transportation;

* Meshulam Nahari, Shas, Minister without portfolio;

* Ophir Pines-Paz, Labor, Minister of Culture and Sport;

* Haim Ramon, Kadima, Minister of Justice;
 * Meir Sheetrit, Kadima, Minister of Housing and Construction;

* Shalom Simhon, Labor, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development;

* Yuli Tamir, Labor, Minister of Education;
 * Eli Yishai, Shas, Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor.



Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, seated left, and Israeli President Moshe Katsav, seated right, pose for a group photo with Olmert's new 25-member Cabinet, May 4, 2006, at the presidential residence in Jerusalem.

First row left to right: Health: Yacov Ben Yizri (Pensioners), Pensioner affairs: Rafi Eitan (Pensioners), Without portfolio: Yitzhak Cohen, (Shas), Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Israeli President Moshe Katsav, Regional development: Shimon Peres (Kadima: also deputy prime minister), Defense: Amir Peretz (Labor: also deputy prime minister), Education: Yuli Tamir (Labor), Immigrant Absorption: Ze'ev Boim (Kadima).

Second row left to right: Without portfolio: Eitan Cabel (Labor), Transportation: Shaul Mofaz (Kadima: also deputy prime minister), Culture and Sport: Ophir Pines-Paz (Labor), Industry, Trade and Labor: Eli Yishai (Shas: also deputy prime minister), Housing and Construction: Meir Sheetrit (Kadima), Interior: Ronnie Bar-On (Kadima), Without portfolio/Cabinet Liaison: Ya'acov Edri (Kadima), Foreign Affairs: Tzipi Livni (Kadima: deputy prime minister), Justice: Haim Ramon (Kadima), Tourism: Isaac Herzog (Labor), Agriculture: Shalom Simhon (Labor).

Back row left to right: Environment: Gideon Ezra (Kadima), Without portfolio: Meshulam Nahari (Shas), Internal Security: Avi Dichter (Kadima), National Infrastructure: Benjamin Ben-Eliezer (Labor), Finance: Avraham Hirschson (Kadima), Communications: Ariel Atias (Shas), Cabinet Secretary: Israel Maimon.

Photo by Brian Hendler/JTA

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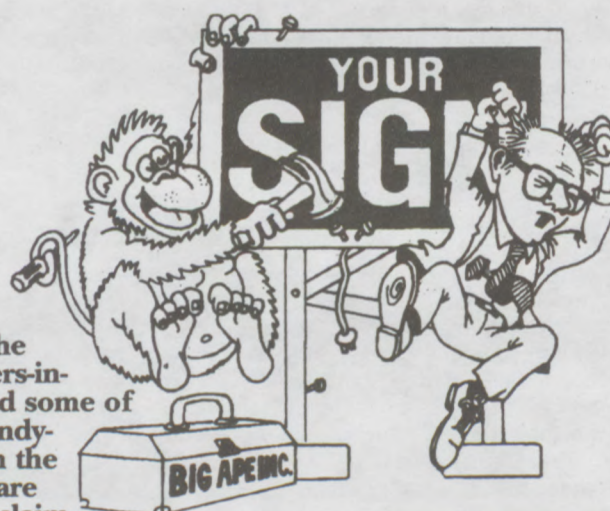


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FEDERATION Focus

On graduations and education



Ruth Rosenberg
Campaign Director

This is a wonderful time of year. The sun is finally shining, flowers are in bloom and fashion has turned to cap and gown. Graduations abound this season from the smallest children moving on to "big kid" school to young adults ready (or not) to take on the real world. They celebrate in schools that are public, private, religious or secular. They celebrate for all that's been learned and look to the future full of hope and aspiration. It is education and accomplishment that are formally celebrated by these milestone ceremonies.

There's a popular song on the radio by Semisonic whose lyrics

evoke the clash of jubilation and sadness often felt at graduations: "Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end." As we mourn the passing of one phase in life we look forward to the next. Carpool schedules change, nests empty and life goes on. Ah, the bittersweet moments in life. Striving to remain the optimist, I raise my glass ("half full" of course), to all the graduates and their families who have reached this moment. Look in this edition of the Voice to learn more about the admirable achievements of fourteen young people graduating from Gratz this year. As a community we can share the pride of their families in having

provided an environment rich in opportunity.

Jews have always had a passion, even an obligation, to study and learn. Talmud, Torah, history; learning and growth are essential parts of who we are. We are blessed with many opportunities for structured learning in our community. Think about it - we have at our fingertips education for every age group: early childhood education at the Bernard & Ruth Siegel Jewish Community Center, day school at Albert Einstein Academy, Delaware Gratz Hebrew High School for teens, Jewish studies classes and social/educational programs at the Kristol Center for Jewish Life

(Hillel) at the University of Delaware and the Florence Melton School for adults. What an impressive array! And of course the Annual Campaign supports programs and schools around the world. Did you know that UJC is a supporter of ORT, the largest system of non-governmental schools in the world including schools that educate one in five Israelis?

Please join me in celebrating this beautiful season of celebrations of accomplishment. Consider making a gift in honor of a graduate or celebrating the success of one of our wonderful schools.

Live Generously...It does a world of good.

Time



Lauren Schultz
Director, Women's Philanthropy

In the spirit of camaraderie, women of Delaware recently came together for the spring 2006 Women's Philanthropy event. Our guest speaker Kate Wenner, award-winning producer for ABC's 20/20 and novelist, offered thought provoking insight about opening dialogue across generations through her own experiences with her father. Kate shared her story and documentary, "Time With My Father," which grew out of videotaped interviews she did with her father while she cared for him during the eight months that he battled stomach cancer. "Before his illness, he always kept us all at arm's length. He was quick to anger if we

challenged him, intolerant of scrutiny of any kind. And then, only weeks before I lost him forever, I learned why."

Their conversations revealed untold family stories and then, in his final days, her father felt comfortable enough and ready to share a shameful secret he had kept buried since his childhood. When he was only 14 years old, his mother deliberately set fire to her shop to collect insurance money. Her father had been an unwitting party to the crime. While her father lowered the store awning at his mother's request, the couple that lived in the apartment above the store came screaming from the

building with a baby in their arms. They easily could have been killed that night. He carried the burden of guilt his entire life. He realized that he and his family might have committed murder that night. He grew to be an angry and bitter man. He was distant to everyone in his life, including his own children. In finally revealing the lifelong secret, her father opened a path for emotional and spiritual renewal for their whole family.

Those of us who heard Kate speak came away with a strong desire to connect with our loved ones. It was a reminder to not waste time. Make the most of the time we have with family and friends because

they will not be here forever. Kate only started to spend time with her father after he had been diagnosed with a terminal illness. If there is one valuable lesson we can learn from Kate, it is to make the time and space in our lives now. It is not always about secrets; it is about allowing your true feelings to emerge with the people you care most about.

Kate's life was transformed during this time with her father. By engaging in these conversations, your life can change for the better too. If you would like to get involved with Women's Philanthropy please call me (302) 427-2100 or email lauren@shalomdel.org.

Myths and Facts

MYTH #218:

"Israel's demands for defensible borders are unrealistic in an era of ballistic missiles and long-range bombers capable of crossing vast amounts of territory in minutes."

FACT:

History shows that aerial attacks have never defeated a nation. Countries are only conquered by troops occupying land. One example of this was Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, in which the latter nation was overrun and occupied in a matter of hours. Though the multinational force bombed Iraq for close to six weeks, Kuwait was not liberated until the Allied troops marched into that country in the war's final days. Defensible borders are those that would prevent or impede such a ground assault.

Israel's return to its pre-1967 borders, which the Arab states want to reimpose, would sorely tempt potential aggressors to launch attacks on the Jewish State - as they did routinely before 1967. Israel would lose the extensive system of early-warning radars it has set up in the hills of Judea and Samaria. Were a hostile neighbor then to seize control of these mountains, its army could split Israel in two: From there, it is only about 15 miles - without any major geographic obstacles - to the Mediterranean. At their narrowest point, these 1967 lines are within 9 miles of the Israeli coast, 11 miles from Tel Aviv, 10 from Beersheba, 21 from Haifa and one foot from Jerusalem.

To defend Jerusalem, the U.S. Joint Chiefs concluded in a 1967 report to the Secretary of Defense, Israel would need to have its border "positioned to the east of the city" (Memorandum for the Secretary

of Defense, June 29, 1967).

Control over the Jordan River Valley is also critical to Israeli security because it "forms a natural security barrier between Israel and Jordan, and effectively acts as an anti-tank ditch," military analyst Anthony Cordesman noted. "This defensive line sharply increases the amount of time Israel has to mobilize and its ability to ensure control over the West Bank in the event of a war." He added that sacrificing control over the routes up to the heights above the West Bank makes it more difficult for the IDF to deploy and increases the risk of Jordanian, Syrian, or Palestinian forces deploying on the heights (Anthony Cordesman, "Escalating to Nowhere: The Israeli-Palestinian War - Fighting and Failed Peace Efforts," DC: CSIS, August 22, 2003).

Even in the era of ballistic missiles, strategic depth matters. The Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, an Israeli think tank considered dovish, concluded: "Early-warning stations and the deployment of surface-to-air missile batteries can provide the time needed to sound an air-raid alert, and warn the population to take shelter from a missile attack. They might even allow enemy missiles to be intercepted in mid-flight.... As long as such missiles are armed with conventional warheads, they may cause painful losses and damage, but they cannot decide the outcome of a war" (Israel's Options for Peace, Tel Aviv: The Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, 1989, pp. 171-72).

This article can be found at <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/myths2/Boundaries.html#i9>

Source: REVISED Myths & Facts Online - A Guide to the Arab-Israeli Conflict by Mitchell G. Bard

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EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

A Jewish twist on Mother's Day

Many of us look upon Mother's Day with great cynicism. In the mall I hear grumbles and groans from those racing through the card shops, candy stores and jewelers (typically at the very last minute) that this holiday is little more than a marketing ploy to boost retail sales. Indeed, we have gone far astray from the original intent of the holiday's foremothers Anna Jarvis and Julia Ward Howe. Jarvis, organized a "Mother's Work Day" to raise community awareness of the deplorable health resources in her native Appalachia. Howe, who wrote the Battle Hymn of the Republic, envisioned the day as an opportunity for women to rally for peace. Howe rationalized that mothers, as creators of human lives, were profoundly affected by the casualties of war.

Jarvis' daughter vowed to continue her mother's quest to create a national holiday for American mothers. On the third anniversary of her mother's death, her namesake gave out white carnations to all in attendance at a church service to honor her memory. This simple gesture launched a national campaign, which culminated in the designation of the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day. Although initially exhilarated by this realization of her mother's dream, she soon grew disenchanted with Americans' obsession with commercializing a day designed to recognize those who were committed to social action.

You, dear readers, know that I try very hard to put a Jewish spin on the pieces that I create and/or edit. Therefore, I was delighted to discover that we have marked, for many years, the 11th day of the Hebrew month of Cheshvan as a type of Jewish Mother's Day. This date is the yahrzeit of our matriarch Rachel, the wife of Jacob and mother of Joseph. Rachel is revered throughout our Jewish texts as a woman of boundless compassion and uncompromising faith in G-d's power to effect miracles. As a reward for her selfless devotion to her husband, her child and to all the children of Israel, G-d ended our ancestors' exile and allowed their return to the Holyland.

This Mother's Day will be particularly poignant for me. My family will gather for both a holiday celebration and a send-off party for our eldest son, Scott, who will spend his 20th birthday training to be a United States Marine. Like Rachel, I too will weep and ask G-d to keep my son and all the selfless sons and daughters who are serving our country safe from harm.

Happy Mother's Day!

B'Shalom,

Lynn B. Edelman

Lynn B. Edelman

Editor and proud mother of Scott and Lee

TASTE OF TORAH

Lag B'omer-A Day for Scholars

Dr. Jack L. Sparks
Head of School
Albert Einstein Academy



This Tuesday, May 16th is a significant day in Jewish history called: "Lag B'omer". It corresponds to the 32 day of the counting of the omer. It's known as a scholars day, for on this day we remember students of Torah throughout the ages. One student, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, a disciple of Rabbi Akiba's stands out on this day. Rabbi Shimon lived during the Roman conquest of Jerusalem, 2000 years ago. During this tragic period in history some 24,000 Torah scholars died of a terrible plague that swept through the community between Pesach and Shavuot. We remember them on this day.

Rabbi Shimon was on the Roman government's "most wanted list" because of some of his disparaging remarks made about the Roman Empire. (Talmud: Mesechta Shabbat: 33) The three great sages Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Yossi and Rabbi Shimon were once engrossed in a heated debate. While Rabbi Yehudah credited the Romans for their great achievements in building roads, bridges and bath-houses, Rabbi Shimon countered that this was done only for their own self interests and certainly was not done with the people in mind. The bath houses were built for their own enjoyment and the bridges were built to col-

lect taxes so they could fill their own coffers. Rabbi Yossi sat silently, listening to the debate but not offering any comment of his own.

A man by the name of Yehuda ben Geirim who sat nearby and heard the entire discussion, repeated these comments and the word soon spread until it reached the ears of the Roman authorities who weren't great believers in "freedom of speech." Rabbi Shimon's remarks were considered outright incitement and treason, and he was immediately condemned to death. Rabbi Yossi was condemned to be exiled to Zippori for his silence and lack of defense for the Roman Empire. Rabbi Yehudah was rewarded by being made the speaker of the house for his favorable remarks.

Luckily, Rabbi Shimon was forewarned that the soldiers were on their way to arrest him, so he quickly hid in the shul's attic. He stayed hidden there with his son while the police continued their search in vain. Each day his wife would come and bring them food. As the search for him intensified, he was afraid that they would torture his wife in order to discover his secret hiding place. He left in the middle of the night and hid in a cave in the wilderness.

Rabbi Shimon and his son remained in that cave for 12 years, involved in nothing but the study of Torah. The text tells us that G-d provided a carob tree and a spring of water as sustenance. One day Elijah the prophet came to the cave and announced that the Ruler had

See TORAH, page 5

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"A" is for Apathy

We've all heard of the "Scarlet Letter." Sadly I believe that individually and communally we all could wear the letter "A" for "Apathy." Be it the synagogues or Federation, the Jewish Community Center or other agencies, our commitment to "community," our focus on tomorrow, leaves something to be desired.

Having returned from a huge program at the JCC in Cherry Hill, New Jersey on Sunday, I was looking forward to the Yom Ha'atzmaut bash at our JCC. To say the least, the numbers were "underwhelming." Yes, I know that the Jewish community in Cherry Hill is larger than ours, but relatively speaking attendance in Wilmington was embarrassing. Sam Asher, the JFD executive, gave greetings from the board of the Federation, but were the board members there?

We have an annual JFD Shabbat. Agency heads and Federation Board members don't show up and yet there's an expectation that the synagogue members will support the good work of the Federation. That's not to say that the syn-

agogue regulars will "travel" to the other congregations be they in Wilmington or Newark, and that is something I have been trying to change for years.

Even synagogue-affiliated members religiously stay away from programs and celebrations let alone Shabbat and festival worship in their own congregations. We wring our hands over the future of our People, and yet when there is something we might be able to do about it, we don't.

A recent article states that Jews contribute far more to non-Jewish causes than their own, except for organizations that fight anti-Semitism. The "enemy within" should be far more of a concern to us than those who would do us harm for indeed our apathy is squeezing the life out of us.

Peter H. Grumbacher

Rabbi

Beth Emeth Congregation, Wilmington



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EDITORIALS AND OPINIONS

Darfur Rally – Not just another mall trip

By Edward L. Tucker
Special to the Jewish Voice

When two JFD/JCRC busloads of Delaware folks, including many college students and younger children, left Wilmington and Newark on Sunday morning, April 30, it was not just another mall trip. They were headed with about 90 passengers to the Mall in Washington DC to take part in the Save Darfur- Stop Genocide rally along with another ten plus thousands of people. The date itself was also not just another date but one that stood at the end of the week containing Yom Hashoah, the Day of Remembrance.

These bus riders took seriously the phrases Never Again and Stop Genocide Now by going on record that they know about the genocide taking place in Darfur and were taking action based on their convictions. They went to learn about the Sudanese strife and what has to be done to bring reality to the phrases. They were not disappointed.

The lead off was the remarkable Elie Wiesel who urged "For the sake of our humanity, save Darfur." He was followed by other well-known personalities including clergy of all faiths, entertainers, public officials and victims and heroes of the genocides of the 20th century and Darfur, the first genocide of the

21st century.

This rainbow of speakers made a stirring case for not being silent. Perpetrators, they said, thrive on silence, but the victims suffer. Others added that elected government officials actually follow rather than lead. The people are in a position to take leadership on the Darfur issue just like they have recently taken the lead in a number of issues that dominate the American scene.

Not everyone could go to Washington on April 30, but everyone can do something now that the news is out loud and clear "Genocide is happening in Darfur." This is the time to write to the

President via www.savedarfur.org, or write your Congress person for action now rather than too late and contribute to a host of organizations, such as the American Jewish World Service www.ajws.org, providing humanitarian relief to the people of Darfur, about 2 million of whom have been displaced and about 200,000 have already been killed.

Among the steps that can be taken immediately are:

- Establish a no-fly zone over the affected area to protect the displaced

- Create a US Special Envoy to focus diplomatic attention on the area.

• Engage the United Nations to effectively bring relief to the hungry and security to the vulnerable.

John Bolton, the US Ambassador to the United Nations, at a presentation at the University of Delaware, recently listed Darfur as one of the top three issues confronting the United Nations. But we don't really see the action. We only hear the rhetoric. Let our officials know that Saving Darfur is indeed high on our priority list and we need action now. There are things that we can do and that we must do. But first we have to speak up and speak out, NOW. Save Darfur- Stop Genocide.

Edward L. Tucker is a member of Temple Beth El, Newark.

Kosher pizza for everyone

By Nechemia Meyers

I was absolutely floored when Rotem, my eleven-year-old granddaughter, insisted that the pizza served at her recent birthday party be kosher. Her home is neither kosher nor observant. But the Yachad School she attends in Modi'in, a fast-growing town midway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, brings together youngsters from both religious and secular homes, and they learn to respect one another's beliefs.

This is an enormous achievement in a country where children, from kindergarten onwards, go to educational institutions that are either firmly secular or devotedly religious. This means that classmates are all either one or the other, and, as a result, boys and girls from different sectors of Israel's religious spectrum don't get acquainted on a personal basis until the army, if

then.

This cultural and religious isolationism bothered a small group of parents in Modi'in, who came together just over six years ago. Those who were religious wanted their kids to have a broader range of friends than is provided by religious schools, while the secularists were anxious that their offspring become better acquainted with traditional Jewish texts and even be able to knowledgeably participate in synagogue services.

Doubters on both sides warned of the possible dangers of "contamination," but the parents moved ahead. It wasn't easy. Obtaining permission to create a new and innovative school demanded the OK of the municipality and the Education Ministry, among others. Also, parents had to put up money at the organizational stage and now that the institution is operating are required to pay some \$55 a month

per child (though reductions are available for less affluent parents anxious to give their children a Yachad-style education)

According to Yad Baitner, who chairs the school's management committee, news of the new venture spread by word of mouth and by the beginning of the first school year there were enough pupils for first and second grade classes as well as for a kindergarten and a pre-kindergarten. Now, six years later, there are five kindergartens, three classes each of first, second, third and fourth graders, as well as one class each for children in the next three grades. There is also a long waiting list, as more and more parents are attracted by the school's reputation no less than its ideology.

Baitner notes that a large percentage of the participating parents are from English-speaking countries, perhaps, he speculates, because they are used to cooperating with

other Jews who may have a rather different attitude to religious observance. Their children may even have attended similar Jewish schools overseas.

Not only the pupils, but also the parents, develop close ties with one another. This was noticeable at an arts and crafts fair sponsored recently by the school. Religious women with traditional head coverings and long dresses were having animated conversations with slack-clad women without any head covering. And if two boys were playing together, more often than not one had a kipa and one didn't.

This openness is evident in the school itself where religious studies are concerned. When asked whether she and other secular kids enjoyed learning about the Mishneh or the Portion of the Week, Rotem answered without hesitation: "These things interest us just as much as they interest kids from religious

homes. And, yes, we also enjoy participating in the brief daily prayer service."

Truth be told, prayers are apt to be more of a problem in the higher grades (when they are much longer.) Now being considered at Yachad is the possibility that secular youngsters will be exempted from the longer prayer sessions.

Friendships that develop in the classroom continue into the afternoon and evening hours. Girlfriends visit Rotem for gossip and kosher snacks and they help one another with homework. But on Saturday my granddaughter won't call an observant classmate about a problem she is having in math or history until after the Sabbath is over.

While still rare, the Yachad model is catching on. In the last few years a number of new mixed religious-secular schools have opened up in various parts of Israel and more are on the way.

Torah

Continued from page 4

died, and the decree against Rabbi Shimon was lifted. Rabbi Shimon and his son emerged from the cave for the first time and were appalled that Jews were not continuously occupied in the study of Torah exclusively. Rabbi Shimon came upon some farmers who were working their fields, they were vaporized immediately due to the power of Rabbi Shimon's spiritual stature and his disappointment in them. Rabbi Shimon was believed they should not be working their fields, a mundane task, but rather engaged in Torah study. A voice from heaven proclaimed: "My world is not to be destroyed. Return to your cave!"

Father and son did as instructed and during that period back in the cave, Rabbi Shimon learned how to control his spiritual powers and 1 year later emerged again with permission. Other historical references indicated that Rabbi Shimon learned how to control his spiritual powers after that experience.

Rabbi Shimon's student, Rabbi Abba, was given the honor of transcribing Rabbi Shimon's words. Abba said: "I couldn't even lift my head due to the intense light emanating from Rabbi Shimon as he spoke. One particular day the house was filled with fire and nobody could get close to Rabbi Shimon as he spoke, because of the wall of fire and light. At

the end of the day, when the fire subsided, Rabbi Shimon was found dead wrapped in his talit. This was the day of Lag B'omer.

To celebrate Lag B'omer, Jews around the world light bonfires to commemorate the great fire that surrounded Rabbi Shimon's wisdom, learning and spiritual vision. In Israel children scavenge wood for weeks prior to Lag B'omer, and assemble huge piles of sticks, often 30 feet high for great bonfires on Lag B'omer. In Rabbi Shimon's town, Meiron, in the Galilee, 250,000 Jews visit, dance, pray and celebrate the wisdom and spirituality of Rabbi Shimon. The entire town is filled with torches and bonfires. Barely a place is absent of bonfires in Meiron; parks, streets, rooftops. Satellite maps of Israel taken on that day highlight an odd glow; symbolically they illuminate the path of those who seek to understand the deeper truth of Torah, as revealed by Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai.

At Albert Einstein, our children gather on this day, study about the life of Rabbi Shimon, enjoy a field-day program (to symbolize what Israeli school children are doing) and symbolically light a fire to remember the light, which emanates from Torah scholars, and those 24,000 who perished leaving untold generations of unborn Torah scholars and Jews.

May we continue to study and find paths to enlighten ourselves and those around us, on this day of remembrance of Rabbi Shimon, his students and all scholars of Torah.

This Week in Jewish History



Celebrate 350
Jewish Life in America
1654 - 2004

This Week in Jewish History" is an introduction to 350 years of American Jewish life, brought to you by the Jewish Women's Archive. More information about each of the events described below can be found on JWA's website at http://www.jwa.org/this_week/week31.html

More information about each of the events described below can be found on the website of the Jewish Women's Archive at http://www.jwa.org/this_week/week19.html

Esther Ruskay spoke on "The Revival of Judaism" at the founding meeting of the New

York section of the National Council of Jewish Women on May 9, 1894.

Anne Bernays received the Edward Lewis Wallant Book Award for her novel, "Growing Up Rich", on May 9, 1976.

Amy Eilberg became the first woman ordained as a Conservative Rabbi at the Jewish Theological Seminary's commencement exercises in New York City on May 12, 1985.

Gladys Heldman, tennis player, promoter, and women's advocate, released the first issue of World Tennis Magazine on May 13, 1953.

Mayyim Hayyim, a progressive community mikveh and education center in Newton, Massachusetts, opened its doors on May 14, 2004.

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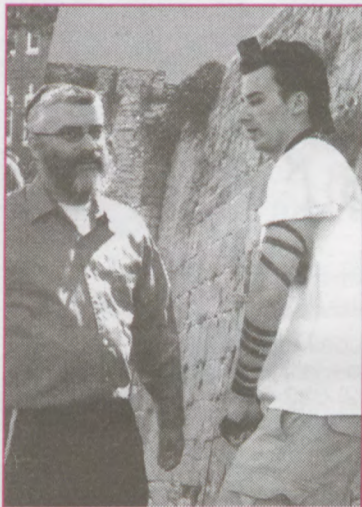
INSIDE DELAWARE

Israel at 58 –

Local celebrations include Prayer, Parties, Food and Fun

Text and photos by Joel Glazier

May 5 marked the date for Yom Ha'Atzmaut, (Hebrew date, 5 Iyar), the celebration of Israel's creation. Here in Delaware, America's First State, we have almost 219 years of statehood to commemorate. Therefore, it is no surprise that Delaware's Jewish community seized upon Israel's 58th birthday as a time for festive celebrations in several sites.



Israel Fest organized on the campus of the University of Delaware featured a large photograph of The Western Wall. Rabbi Eliezer Sneiderman of Chabad Newark (l) accompanies Justin Schanzer in front of "The Wall" as he prays on Yom Ha'Atzmaut.



Several Jewish groups on campus worked together to organize a successful Israel Fest at the University of Delaware. The seven hour event on May 5th featured live music, food, Israeli and local gifts and a Hookah-Thon. The sponsoring groups included Hillel Student Life; AEPI Fraternity; Blue Hens for Israel; Jewish Heritage Program, Chabad, Koach and Keshet. Pictured in front of the Western Wall photo are (back row l. to r.): Ziv Abramowicz, Rebecca Chabrow, Justin Schanzer, Dahlia Galler, Jodi Roth, (front row): Marissa Shneider, Meredith Brabek and Deanna Goldner. Said Blue Hens for Israel President Dahlia Galler, "We all came together for this celebration. There's no better reason than for Israel and we hoped to teach the students about positive aspects and that Israel is fun." Kristol Hillel Director Susan Detweiler, happily commented "After the success of this day, it has been suggested to expand it for next year and some students want to bring camels onto the campus!"



The Harokdim and A Kids Dance Groups performed in celebration of Yom Ha'atmaut at Border's Book Store on Concord Pike. Traditional and modern Israeli folk dances were performed.



Michael and Amy Batogower, members of Temple Beth El in Newark, work on a jigsaw puzzle after studying the large interactive map of Israel at the JCC Yom Ha'Atzmaut Celebration.



All of Wilmington's morning "minyans" included The "Hallel" Prayers in their Shachris Service on May 5. Temple Beth Emeth's minyan (pictured), was led by Alfred Green. Adas Kodesch's minyan heard IDF Veteran Ahron Augenbraun chant the Festival prayers. Beth Shalom's minyan, held at Einstein Academy that day, also included The Hallel as part of the morning service.



Samantha Burman, Orly Wallach and Iris Tocker prepare Israeli food for the dinner buffet at the Yom Ha'Atzmaut Celebration at the Siegel JCC.



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By Arleen Kessler
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It's a Simchah!, is a celebration for the eyes and ears. Café Tamar once again will provide outstanding performances centered on a Jewish wedding theme. The entertainers will take the stage on Monday, May 29, 2006 at 6:30 PM at Adas Kodesch Shel Emeth synagogue in Wilmington.

The AKSE mixed chorus, Men's Choir, and Shir Chadash, the children's choir will be singing under the direction of Cantor Joel Kessler. Benjamin Russell will perform with Shir Chadash. Irene Plotzker will delight us with a solo. All will be treated to the duets of Sharon Berry and Jennifer Gruber, Cindy Goldstein and Scott Slomowitz, Hailey and Larry Weiner, and Sam Romirowsky and

Cantor Joel.

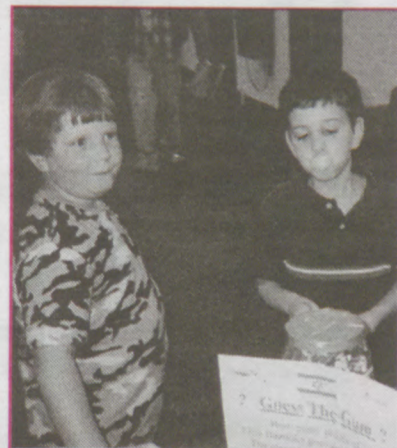
New to the program will be the AKSE Klezmer Band under the direction of Steve Howard. A favorite every year, David Gesterak, will be accompanying the vocalists on the keyboard.

Harokdim, AKSE's teenage dance troupe, having recently performed at the New York Israeli Dance Festival, will present new and lively dances. A-Kids, the children's troupe, and Lanetzach Tz'irim, the adult troupe, will be entertaining us with exciting, new Israeli dances performed in costume.

Tickets are on sale at the synagogue office and from the performers – Adults \$10.00, Children (under 13) \$5.00. Refreshments are included in the price of admission. Don't miss this outstanding event in the Jewish community - It's a Simchah!



JCC Associate Executive Director Ivy Harlev believed that the day was made "extra special" by the participation of the Center's namesakes, Bernard (Bernie) and Ruth Siegel in the festivities.



Jordan Cohen, Max Sugarman (with bubble) try to guess how many pieces of Israeli Bazooka Bubble gum are in the bottle.

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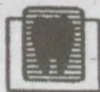
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GLOBAL JEWISH NEWS

On Iran, groups play down Jewish angle

By Chanan Tigay, JTA

With concern mounting over Iran's atomic ambitions, the American Jewish community is lobbying intensively to ensure that the threat is taken seriously by the United States, the media and the world.

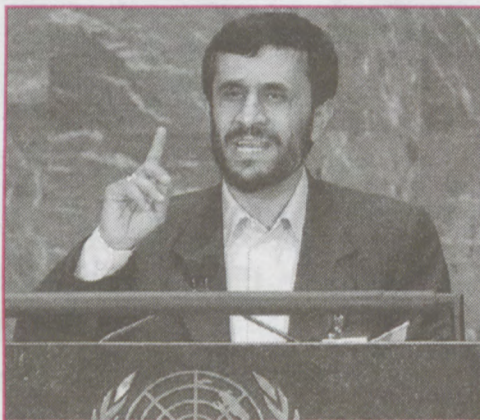
Careful to avoid giving the impression that it's primarily an issue of Jewish or Israeli concern, however, U.S. Jewish groups are taking pains to highlight the greater regional and global threats posed by a nuclear Iran and its Holocaust-denying president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"We have to mobilize public opinion in this country and around the world to understand the serious threat that this represents," Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, told JTA. Iran is "the fulcrum of the international terrorist movement, not only through Hezbollah and Hamas and Islamic Jihad, which they aid, but terrorist groups around the world — including in the United States and Europe."

The American Jewish Committee bought ads last month in The New York Times, Financial Times, International Herald Tribune and New York Sun, asking, "Suppose Iran one day gives nuclear devices to terrorists. Could anyone anywhere feel safe?"

The idea, said David Harris, the AJCommittee's executive director, was "to make sure that the global threat was understood, as opposed only to the Israel dimension."

On Tuesday, the head of Israel's military intelligence unit, Amos Yadlin, said that,



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad addresses the U.N. General Assembly on Sept. 15, 2005. Credit: Paulo Filgueiras/UN

absent sanctions, Iran would attain nuclear weapons by 2010.

According to reports, Iran already has procured North Korean missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads as far as Israel and parts of Europe. The Bush administration has said it will not tolerate a nuclear Iran, a sentiment recently echoed by German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

When Ahmadinejad "says that he wants to destroy Israel, the world needs to take it seriously," Bush said in an interview with German weekly Bild am Sonntag. "This is a serious threat, aimed at an ally of the United States and Germany. What Ahmadinejad also means is that if he is ready to destroy one country, then he would also be ready to destroy others. This is a threat that needs to

be dealt with."

The foreign ministers of several key Security Council members met Monday to discuss a proposed U.N. resolution to brake Iran's nuclear program, but did not reach consensus. Russia and China still oppose including any mention of sanctions or possible military intervention in the resolution, which is being sponsored by Britain and France and backed by the United States.

Hoenlein said the Presidents Conference is deliberately taking a quiet approach to its lobbying on Iran.

"This is an area where, I think, we do not want this to be seen as a Jewish issue; it's not," he said. "This is a danger for America, for the world. Therefore, I think the low-visibility but intensive approach is appropriate."

"We're not against protests or American Jews expressing themselves on this," Hoenlein added, "but it shouldn't be exclusively Jews."

Jewish groups have publicly backed the Iran Freedom Support Act, a piece of legislation that has passed the U.S. House of Representatives and is now going through the Senate. The act would impose sanctions on companies doing business with Iran and would promote democratic organizations there. The House bill also includes language that urges American investors to divest from Iran.

Jewish groups have vigorously lobbied American and international leaders, and have held meetings to educate members of the media.

During its Washington policy conference in March, members of the American Israel

Public Affairs Committee held more than 450 meetings with members of Congress in which Iran was among the major topics of discussion, AIPAC spokeswoman Jennifer Cannata said.

Leaders of the American Jewish Congress have held high-level talks on the topic with the Jordanian mission to the United Nations, and will be traveling to Jordan later this month to meet with King Abdullah II.

AJCommittee officials raised the topic of Iran when they met Tuesday with French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy. Last week, the AJCommittee spoke with Merkel and U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, among others. The group also has met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

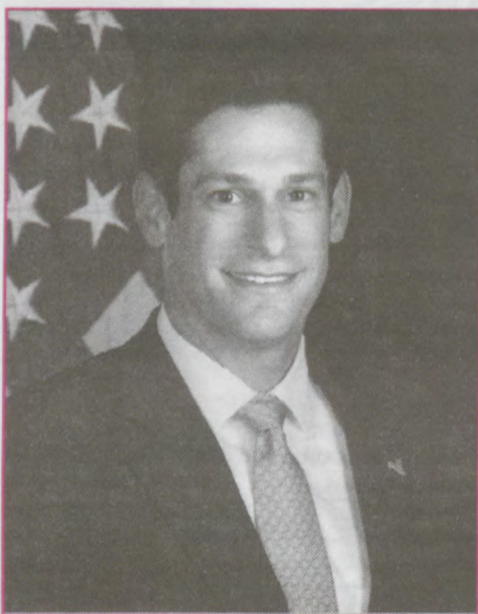
Despite differences in approach among world leaders, Harris said, "There is a virtual unanimity of view on the threat assessment. No one we have met takes the issue lightly or minimizes the danger."

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said Iran is either No. 1 or No. 2 on the group's agenda in all meetings with American and foreign officials. Sometimes the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority tops the list of talking points.

"The threat of a nuclear Iran is an irrational state which has declared war not only on Israel and the Jewish people, but on our values and our institutions and on everything the free world cherishes," Foxman said.

Referring to Ahmadinejad's threats to annihilate Israel, Foxman added that history has taught that "you pay attention to what lunatics say, especially when they have the means to effectuate their words."

Bush aide mixes levity, gravitas



Joel Kaplan

By Ron Kampeas, JTA

Joel Kaplan, President Bush's new policy czar, brings to his job a disciplined adherence to the White House message.

Bush last month named Kaplan, 36, as deputy chief of staff in charge of day-to-day policy after deciding that his closest adviser, Karl Rove, needed to focus more on upcoming congressional elections. With Bush's public support plummeting in opinion polls, Republicans face the real prospect of losing one or both houses of Congress in November.

Kaplan's reputation after three years as deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget was of someone able to simultaneously handle the big picture and master details — qualities that made him a good fit for one of the most grueling jobs in the administration.

"I tell everyone that you really have to have your stuff together before you go and meet with" Kaplan, said Tevi Troy, a senior adviser

to Bush who was the White House liaison to the Jewish community until 2003. "He has a reputation for brilliance and really getting to the heart of the matter."

Kaplan seemed both a natural choice for the policy job and something of a mystery. It seemed natural enough for Joshua Bolten, Bush's new chief of staff, to bring over his most trusted aide from the Office of Management and Budget, where Bolten had been director. Bolten, who also is Jewish, recited the Sheva Brachot, traditional Jewish blessings, at Kaplan's wedding earlier this year at the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

On the other hand, Kaplan was an unknown quantity — unlike Bolten, who was known for his friendly relations with Congress and his onetime dalliance with Hollywood star Bo Derek.

Kaplan has made his presence felt in the new post with an easygoing manner.

"He has a lot of energy, a good sense of humor," said Jay Zeidman, the White House Jewish liaison.

That sense of humor sometimes gets a little goofy.

In a January 2004 online session of "Ask the White House" on the topic of the budget, Kaplan showed an apt hand with statistics and projections, answering a question in heavy policy-wonk jargon.

Yet when someone asked Kaplan about his resemblance to Peter Frampton, he immediately posted a photo of the 1970s rock icon and said he had just bought a shirt like the silk number Frampton is wearing in the picture.

"As for my favorite Frampton song — I would go with 'Show me the Way' or 'Day in the Sun,'" he added.

Friends say the humor leavens a deeply serious side. A Boston native, Kaplan interrupted his academic trajectory between a 1991 Harvard undergraduate degree and a 1998 Harvard Law School degree to serve three years as a lieutenant in the U.S. Marines.

"The key tenets of honor and courage and

commitment were attractive to him," said Nigel Jones, who has known Kaplan since ninth grade and served in the Marines with him.

Jones said Kaplan wanted to break away for a while from his middle-class upbringing in suburban Boston, where he attended Sunday school at Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley, Mass.

"We were graduates of liberal arts schools from the Northeast, a Jewish guy and a black guy," said Jones, who now is a partner in a venture capital firm in the Washington area. "It was not your typical demographic, which is why we both did it — to get out of our comfort zone."

Old friends say Kaplan's seriousness stems in part from his Jewish commitment. Kaplan maintained his connection to his faith even while leading patrols on the U.S.-Mexico border or fighting wildfires in Washington state.

"We spoke about religion on a number of occasions," said Brian O'Leary, who trained in artillery with Kaplan in Oklahoma and now is a money manager in New Jersey. "He's very astute with respect to his own faith."

Kaplan participates avidly in White House Jewish events, seeking out the rabbi in attendance on Sukkot to fulfill the mitzvah of the lulav and etrog. Most recently, he spoke at the executive office's private Holocaust remembrance ceremony.

"He spoke eloquently and thoughtfully," Zeidman said. "He carried the message of the importance of never forgetting."

Jones said Kaplan's Judaism is an essen-

tial part of his worldview.

"His core values are very much rooted in, as he terms it, the Judeo-Christian ethos, respect for the individual, respect for truth, honesty and loyalty," he said.

Such high-mindedness doesn't mean Kaplan lacks a fiercely competitive streak.

"He's a Red Sox fan, and I'm a Yankees fan. That's good fodder for arguments and debates," O'Leary said.

Kaplan won a fitness award in the Marines that O'Leary had hoped to nab.

"It pains me to remember this, but I lost a beer in a bet over that one," he said.

Jones said Kaplan worked hard even when he didn't have to.

"Joel would come into the homeroom on the day of a history exam and ask me a few questions about the exam," as if he hadn't prepared, Jones recalled. "Then a few weeks later the teacher would hold up his exam as an example of how it should be done."

Kaplan was reported to be among a large group of Bush supporters who helped bring about a stop to the Florida recount in 2000 when they stormed a room in a local government building. In his Senate confirmation hearings in 2003, Kaplan said he was there but, as far as he recalled, was not a participant in the incident.

Whatever his role, he maintained his famous wit: It's Kaplan who is believed to have labelled the incident the "Brooks Brothers Uprising," referring to the business attire of many of the protesters.

JTA Washington intern David J. Silverman contributed to this report.

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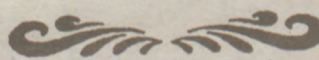
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ISSUE**

May 26th
Confirmations &
Other Simchas
Deadline: May 18th



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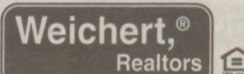
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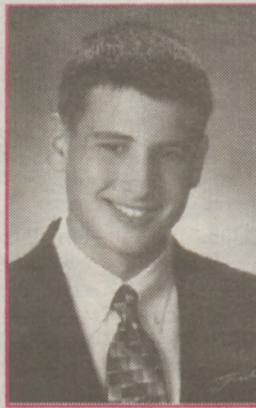
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Delaware Gratz Hebrew High School 5766 Graduating Class 2006



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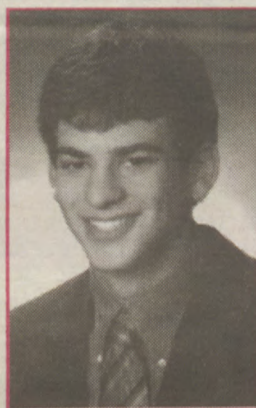
Sara Leviton



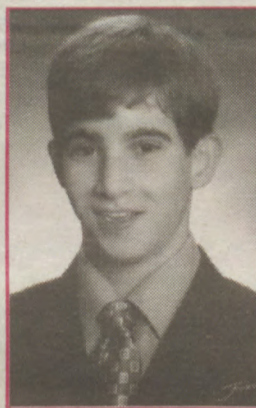
Rachel Masel



Jennifer Rosenberg



Russell Rosenberg



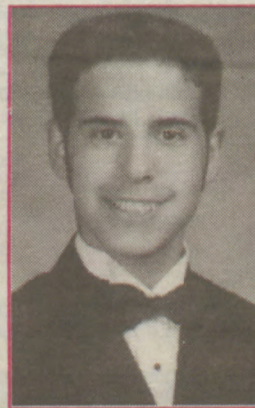
Ross Rudnitsky



Rachel Sawicki



Rina Wagman



Scott Weinberg



David Zussman

AVIVA ELZUFON

Aviva Elzufon is a senior in the IB Programme at Mount Pleasant High School. She volunteered at the AKSE Community Hebrew School and the Mary Campbell Center. Aviva was the Delaware delegate at HOBY's World Leadership Congress. She co-chaired the Youth Philanthropy Board of the Delaware Community Foundation, chaired the Mount Pleasant High School 2005 Relay for Life, and was student delegate to Girls State and the Biden Youth Seminar. Aviva has participated in musicals in high school. She is a member of the National and Spanish Honor Societies, and was awarded the Mount Pleasant IB Ambassador Award and IB Academic Award. She has also received the Governor's and President's Youth Volunteer Awards and the William V. Roth, Jr. Citizenship Award. Aviva plans to major in Spanish in college. She is the daughter of John and Lena Elzufon.

JARED GOLDSTEIN

Jared Philip Goldstein is a senior at Brandywine High School. Jared is a member of the varsity basketball team, and leads Junior Congregation at AKSE. Jared volunteered for two summers at A.I. DuPont Hospital, and had a featured article, "Jared's Journal", on their website. Besides taking some pretty interesting classes and working with the cool residents of the Mary Campbell Center, staying connected to old friends kept him coming back to Gratz each session. Jared will attend the University of Delaware's College of Business and Economics with an interest in Pre-Law. Jared is the son of Lee and Cindy Goldstein.

NAOMI HAMERMESH

Naomi Hamermesh is a senior at Wilmington Friends School. Naomi is very proud of her role as founder and clerk of her school's Songwriter's Club. She is in three choirs, including Chamber Singers and the Wilmington Music School Select Choral Ensemble, and highly enjoys herself while singing in any setting. Naomi's

favorite foods are chocolate, cheese and Buffalo wings. Naomi will attend Bryn Mawr College, with a possible Math major and Theater minor, and is thinking of becoming a teacher. Naomi is the daughter of Larry and Marion Hamermesh.

KAYLA LAHIJANI

Kayla is a senior at Brandywine High School. She has a very dedicated association with B'nai Brith Youth Organization (BBYO) for four years as well as NCSY. She has received the Governor's Award and Presidential Award for Volunteer Services to the Delaware Food Bank, the Brandywine Hundred Library and the Kutz Home. She has been nominated to attend a National Youth Leadership Conference in Washington D.C. Kayla will have the opportunity next year to go on a birthright trip to Israel. For the past year Kayla has been a teacher's aide at Adas Kodesch Synagogue and has been working as a secretary as well for the Hebrew School. Kayla plans to attend the University of Delaware next year majoring in English with a Pre-Law Track and hopes to become a lawyer. She is the daughter of Jake and Farah Lahijani.

SARA LEVITON

Sara Danielle Leviton is a senior at Wilmington Friends School, and is an IB Diploma candidate. Sara has been on the varsity volleyball team, chamber singers, blood drive committee and the nominating committee. She has been active in club volleyball for three years, and volunteered at the Delaware Humane Association. Sara has worked as a counselor at the New Jersey "Y" Camp Program. Her intended major is Biology, with a minor in History. Sara will have the opportunity to travel abroad this summer with the People To People Ambassador Program. Sara is the daughter of Amy and Michael Leviton.

HEATHER LOWE

Photo not available

Heather is a senior at Pennsville School. She is the daughter of Harold and Beth Lowe.

RACHEL MASEL

Rachel Jenna Masel is a senior at

the Tatnall School. She is an enthusiastic student, athlete and volunteer. She is an avid tennis player, and is captain of her team. Rachel is Chairperson of the Environmental Club, Yearbook Editor, Peer Counselor and Peer Math Tutor. She is a cadet aide at Congregation Beth Emeth. Among the awards Rachel has won is 1st place in the ISEF INTEL Science Fair, and American Legion Girls State Representative. Rachel has been accepted into the Legacy Heritage Internship for Young Scientists this summer, and will spend six weeks in Israel. Rachel will attend Muhlenberg College, majoring in Neuroscience/ Psychology, and plans to become a Physician. Rachel is the daughter of Allen and Terry Masel.

JENNIFER ROSENBERG

Jennifer Leigh Rosenberg is a senior at Wilmington Friends School. Jennifer brings a Jewish perspective to the Quaker tradition of WFS as co-clerk of the Worship Committee. She is co-captain of the varsity tennis team, and enjoys singing in the Chamber Singers. She is passionate about science, is a member of the Future Medical Doctors Club, and has received the Robert P. Hukill Award, as well as the AAUW Award for excellence in science and mathematics. She has attended the National Youth Leadership Conference on Medicine. She loves being a teacher's aide at Beth Emeth Religious School, and has treasured her time at Gratz. Jennifer thinks she will major in pre-med, as she wants to become a doctor. Jennifer is the daughter of Matt and Ruth Rosenberg.

RUSSELL ROSENBERG

Russell David Rosenberg is a senior at Brandywine High School. Russell is a captain of both the Varsity Winter and Spring Track Teams as well as a member of Spanish and National Honor Societies. He spends his summers as a lifeguard at the JCC. Russell is a recipient of the Brandywine High School Scholastic Merit Award and Silverman Scholarship. He was awarded the President's and Governor's Volunteer Service

Awards and Volunteer Service Credit for his work at the Mary Campbell Center. Russell has served as a board member for Wilmington BBYO and as president of AKSE Minyonaires. Russell plans on attending the University of Maryland Honors Program, majoring in Kinesiology, and hopes to become an orthopedist. Russell is the son of Max and Judith Rosenberg.

ROSS RUDNITSKY

Ross M Rudnitsky is a senior at Brandywine High School. Ross feels that the six years that he attended Gratz Hebrew High School made a huge impact on his Jewish identity. He is a member of the Wilmington AZA, and has received the Brian L. Dombchik Member of the Year award. He has volunteered for the American Heart Association and the Ronald McDonald House, and has worked at the Regal Cinema. Ross plans to attend Delaware Tech Community College, majoring in Business. Ross is the son of Donna and Steve Miller, and Steve Rudnitsky.

RACHEL SAWICKI

Rachel Sawicki is a senior at Brandywine High School. Rachel is active in sports and has won numerous awards in swimming and running, including All State Swimming and All-County Cross Country. Rachel is a member of the National Honor Society. She enjoys volunteering at the Mary Campbell Center for the past four years, and has won the Governor's Youth Volunteer Award. Rachel is a cadet aide at Beth Emeth, and works at the Arden Swim Club and the JCC. Rachel plans to attend Brandeis University as a Biology/Science major and will be on their swim team. Rachel is the daughter of Fran and Bob Sawicki.

RINA WAGMAN

Rina Esther Wagman is a senior at Concord High School. Rina plays both field hockey and soccer, and is a member of her class board, Leader Corp, Student Council and Yearbook. She loves Israeli dancing and is a member of the Harokdim Israeli Dance Group at AKSE. Rina is a

member of the National, Spanish and Science Honor Societies and is an AP Scholar. Rina's most rewarding experience at Gratz has been volunteering at the Mary Campbell Center for the past three years. Among her awards are the President's Education Award, the Ferguson Scholarship, the President's Volunteer Service Award and the Silverman Scholarship. Rina has worked as a dancer for RAK-DAN DJ. She plans on majoring in Journalism. Rina is the daughter of Mark and Sylvia Wagman.

SCOTT WEINBERG

Scott Weinberg is a senior at Concord High School. Scott is a member of the Concord High School Marching Band, serving as clarinet section leader for the past two years, and is a member of the Diamond State Concert Band. He is captain of the Academic Bowl and tennis teams, as well as a member of Leader Corps. A past president of Minyonaires, Scott volunteers at AKSE and the Mary Campbell Center. He is a member of the National Honor Society, the National Spanish Honor Society, Tri-M National Music Honor Society, HOBY representative, Boys State representative, Governor's School for Excellence, and All-State Band and Orchestra. Scott plans to attend The George Washington University and major in political science. Scott is the son of Mark and Gail Weinberg.

DAVID ZUSSMAN

David Joseph Zussman is a senior at Concord High School. His passions include music, singing, hiking, humor, and film. He has been involved in many volunteer activities through Gratz and public school. David's singing accomplishments are numerous, including three-time participation in the Delaware All State Chorus. Other activities include honor societies, Editor of the school yearbook, and leading Junior Congregation at AKSE. David is heading to college to major in business, and will continue to sing for anyone who will listen. David is the son of Mel and Debra Zussman.

MILESTONES In Memoriam

BERGER

Mason A. Berger, age 89 of Wilmington, DE, died Friday, April 28, 2006.

His involvement in the Delaware Jewish community included membership in numerous organizations including Congregation Adas Kodesh Shel Emeth, Montefiore, B'nai Brith Lodge #470, Kutz Home Auxiliary and the Jewish Federation of Delaware.

He is survived by, his wife, Jacqueline; 2 sons, Alan of NY and Mark of VA; daughter, Sally Sklut of Newark, DE; 2 sisters, Mildred Pinkus of Philadelphia, PA and Connie Samuelson of Wilmington, DE; and 8 grandchildren.

A funeral service was held on April 30th from the Schoenberg Memorial Chapel, Wilmington, with interment in the Jewish Community Cemetery on Foulk Road.

Memorial contributions may be made to either the Kutz Home, 704 River Road, Wilmington, DE 19809; or Adas Kodesh Shel Emeth, Washington Blvd. and Torah Drive, Wilmington, DE 19802

FREILICH

Solomon Freilich, died Friday, April 28, 2006.

A World War II veteran, he was a federal employee for more than 40 years. Family and friends revered his story telling abilities and his warm and loving nature.

He was the beloved husband of Clara (nee Oaksman) for over 60 years and will be missed by his children; Barbara and David Nachman of Philadelphia, PA and Barry and Marianna Freilich of Wilmington, DE; his devoted grandchildren, Randy and Anne Nachman, Nina and David Dillard, Seth Freilich, and Lauren

Freilich; and his adored great grandchildren, Morgan and Joshua Nachman and Jessica Dillard.

A graveside service was held on Sunday, April 30, at Haym Salomon Memorial Park, Frazer, PA.

Contributions in his memory may be made to a charity of the donor's choice.

JACOBS

Minnie Jacobs, Age 95 of Wilmington, DE, formerly of NY, died Thursday, May 4, 2006.

Born in Teaneck, NJ, she had been a supervisor at Consolidated Edison Insurance Co. of Brooklyn, NY.

The wife of the late Murray Jacobs, she is survived by her sons, Robert (Mary) and Gerald E. (Bobbi); grandchildren, Bonnie, Philip, Steven and Andrea Jacobs and Francine Katz; and great grandchildren, Rachael, Michael, Marc, and Alea

Jacobs and Jacob Katz.

Graveside services were held Friday, May 5, 2006, in Mt. Ararat Cemetery, Farmingdale, NY.

The family suggests contributions to either Delaware Hospice, Suite 100, Clayton Bldg., 3515 Silverside Rd., Wilmington, DE 19810; or Alzheimer's Assn., 2306 Kirkwood Hwy., Wilmington, DE 19805.

VAN KAVELAAR

Lillian A. Van Kavelaar, Age 72, passed away on Wednesday, May 4, 2006 at Christiana Care, Wilmington. Lillian was born in Chicago, IL to the late Maurice and Lillian Van Kavelaar.

Her introduction to the world of ballet began at the age of 15, when she received a scholarship to the Rhode Island Conservatory of Music. She studied under Marie Laurent Lasseignat at the Laurent School of

Dance in New Orleans. Her passion for creative dance inspired her to compose a poem called "The Dancer", which has been choreographed and performed at Grambling College.

She loved to read and traveled the globe.

She will be missed by her daughters, Diane Raponotti of San Antonio and Jane Perregrino of Austin, TX; sons, Vincent Perregrino of Spring, TX and Phillip Perregrino of Indianapolis, IN; 3 brothers, M.L. Vankavelaar, R.F. Vankavelaar of Wilmington and David P. Vankavelaar of Wyoming, DE; 2 sisters, Carol Nordmeyer of Beavercreek, OH and Amelia Kahn of Wilmington and 8 grandchildren.

A memorial gathering for family and friends was held on May 10, 2006 at the Schoenberg Memorial Chapel in Wilmington.

PERSPECTIVES

Israel shares her freedom with refugee

By Brett Kline, JTA

In the days leading up to Yom Ha'atzmaut, a young African Muslim refugee recalled how the Jewish state shared its hard-won freedom and haven with him.

Chen Geffen, then called Salah, was a child shepherd, taking camels out to the dry fields near Tibesti, Chad.

Soldiers began coming to the village and enlisting local children in the army to fight against rebel forces. The soldiers blindfolded the children, and anyone who tried to escape was shot.

Geffen's older brother and father were taken to an army camp. He never saw them again. However, his mother managed to bribe an officer with a cow, and Geffen found himself in a truck heading for the Sudanese border.

Geffen stayed for three months at his grandfather's house in Darfur, Sudan, never going outside because he saw soldiers rounding up children.

"I heard about massacres, and then my grandfather told me to leave," he said. "In fact, I had walked into another civil war."

His mother had taught him that the greatest Muslim prophet was Musa, known to Jews as Moses, so he prayed to Musa as he walked and hitchhiked to Khartoum, the capital of Sudan.

From there he took a bus to Shelatin, on the border with Egypt. He saw people loading camels onto trucks heading for Cairo, and instinct told him to get a job with them.

In Cairo he met other Chadians, who told him to go to the Sinai region, where there was work in tourism. After police hassled him for not having ID papers, Geffen and a companion made it to the Sharm el-Sheik resort area.

There he met a freckled, redheaded man. His friend said that the "man was a child of Moses and lived in a country called Israel," recalled Geffen, who until then had not heard of Israel. "He said that Israelis ate people and were dangerous. I was afraid of his red hair. But then I talked to him."

The Israeli, who spoke Arabic, told Geffen he could have a better life in Israel. He gave Geffen money and told



Chen Geffen

him to go to Israel.

"I prayed to Musa, and that's when I made the connection between what my mother always told me about the prophet, and Moses of Israel," Geffen said.

He began walking north.

He made it to the border at Taba and found a hill where people crossed over. He tried to pass at night, but was caught by Israeli soldiers and taken to a jail cell in Ramle, in the center of the country.

His jailers were immediately won over by his perpetual, optimistic smile, but didn't know what to do with the teen. They talked about returning him to Egypt.

"I told them I would kill myself," Geffen said.

Israeli officials talked to officials from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. After several days and much paperwork, the youth became a member of the Geffen family on Kibbutz Tze'elim in the Negev.

"I have four children," Ya'acov Geffen said, "and they all took Chen in as a brother. You see, my father came to Mandate Palestine in 1932. Half of his family was killed by the Germans in WWII. They couldn't get out of Poland, and had nowhere to go anyway. Now we have given this kid a place to go."

Geffen stayed several months on Tze'elim but could not resist the lure of the big city. He went to Tel Aviv with a friend from prison and spent a year

there working in a restaurant. Everyone thought he was Ethiopian.

"People treated me very well," he said, "even when I told them I was not Ethiopian and that I was Muslim. I decided then that I wanted to become Jewish. I want to be a part of the people who saved my life."

One contact led to another. Geffen went to live in the Yemin Orde Youth Village, where educator Chaim Peri has put together a school for immigrant youngsters, mostly Russians and Ethiopians.

Geffen studies English, history and math at Yemin Orde and takes classes in religion to prepare for his conversion.

Then came a surprise. After three years in Israel, Geffen was given a medical test to determine his age, which he never knew for sure. He had told the Israelis that he left Chad at age 16, but tests revealed that, in fact, he had left home and crossed three borders at age 13.

The story would end there if not for Peri. Four other African boys aged 13 to 17, two from Guinea-Conakry and two from Sudan, crossed the border from Egypt near Gaza just before Pesach and wound up jailed in the Negev.

Peri intervened with the courts and arranged to have the boys moved to Kibbutz Tze'elim, and for them to attend a seder at Yemin Orde. The UNHCR has granted the

Guinean boys the right to live in Yemin Orde, and they are already enrolled as students there.

However, because the Sudanese boys are subjects of a country officially at war with Israel, Peri says the United Nations has denied them the right to attend school in Yemin Orde and has given them until December in Tze'elim.

"I have a court order signed by an Israeli judge giving them the right to live in Yemin Orde and go to school here," Peri said.

UNHCR official Mickey Bavli denies this, saying it is Israeli law that forbids them, as enemy subjects, to live in the country.

"We do not want to disappoint

them by allowing them to go to school there with the hope of staying, and then forcing them to leave," Bavli said. "We are actively looking for a third country to send them to. No Israeli judge can work against Israeli law."

The four already have a person they look up to in Israel, someone who made the same journey they did —Chen Geffen. Geffen took a petition around to Yemin Orde students, asking that the four be allowed to go to school there. Peri says all 450 students signed the petition.

"I want them here," Peri said. "I believe that kids who escape genocide and make it to Israel should be allowed to live here."

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COMING EVENTS

Congregation Beth Shalom invites you to participate in a camping weekend. Join Beth Shalom for "Shabbat in the Forest" June 16-18 at Belleplain State Forest in Woodbine, New Jersey. The weekend will include Shabbat services, led by Rabbi Michael Beals, nature walks, pot-luck dinners, a campfire/kumsitz, and plenty of time to enjoy swimming, boating, and hiking in the park. Campsites, which can accommodate two tents and two cars, are \$20/night, and yurts (large screened tents with wooden floors and two sets of bunk beds) are \$30/night. Two breakfasts and one lunch will be provided by Beth Shalom for an additional \$9/person. Contact Dina Lipschultz (762-4341 or dina.lip@verizon.net) or Roland Roth (654-4462 or education@bethshalomwilmington.org) for information or to register.

A Must for Memorial Day. Café Tamar once again will provide outstanding performances centered on a Jewish wedding theme. The entertainers will take the stage on Monday, May 29, 2006 at 6:30 PM at Adas Kodesch Shel Emeth synagogue in Wilmington. Tickets are on sale through the synagogue office, (302) 762-4023 and from the performers - Adults \$10.00, Children (under 13) \$5.00. Refreshments are included in the price of admission. You definitely don't want to miss this exciting event, after all - It's a Simchah!

Melton Offers Early Registration Discount. Registration is now open for the Florence Melton Adult Mini School 2006/07. Beginning on September 20, 2006, classes will be offered at the Siegel JCC on Wednesdays 9:15-11:30 am and Thursdays 7 - 9:15 pm., and at Beth El in Newark on Wednesdays 1-3:15 pm.

Melton is a two-year curriculum

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The cost is \$450 per year plus a small materials fee. **REGISTER BY JUNE 30TH AND SAVE 10%.**

Contact Melton Director, Lynda Bell, at the Siegel JCC 302-478-5660 or email lyndabell@siegeljcc.org

AKSE News Notes. Come support Cantor Joel as he once again sings the National Anthem for our own Wilmington Blue Rocks, June 22nd at 7:00 p.m. (Cap Day!) Tickets are \$9.00 and are available by calling AKSE at 762-2705 by May 22nd.

Join the many people who are now enjoying the great Kosher fresh fish from Dawson's Sea Food of Wilmington. If you would like to receive a weekly notice by E-mail of what Kosher fresh fish is available and prices, please send a note to Cantor Joel at jkessler48@comcast.net.

Seaside To Visit Ellis Island. The bus will leave the Seaside Jewish Community on Sunday June 11 at 7 a.m. and will arrive on Ellis Island at 11 a.m. The all-day excursion includes round-trip transportation, a boxed breakfast and ferry transport for a cost of \$55 per adult and \$49 per child under 11 yrs. The return bus will leave Ellis Island at 3 p.m. and arrive back at Seaside approximately 8 p.m. There will be a dinner stop en-route. Dinner costs are not included in the ticket price. There are only eight seats left, so hurry. Make reservations by calling 302-227-1107.

Parents of North American Israelis to Celebrate. The Philadelphia Chapter of PNAI-Parents of North American Israelis will hold their annual closing luncheon on Sunday, June 4th

at 11:30 a.m. The event, which features Israeli dancing and greetings from Israeli Consul General Uri Palti, will be held at the Bala Golf Club, 2200 Belmont Avenue, Philadelphia. The cost is \$24 per person. To reserve your slot, please send a \$24 check to Lucyle Pollock, 93 Rodmor Road, Havertown, PA 19083.

AKSE History Is Ongoing Project. The Historical Committee of Adas Kodesch Shel Emeth is looking for information to further update the history of AKSE. "We will be keeping a current record for the future of our congregation as well", stated Barbara S. Keil, Historian for AKSE.

If you have any information about, or memorabilia from past years, we would appreciate hearing from you.

Information for the Historical Committee can be left at the synagogue office for the committee, or mailed to Adas Kodesch Shel Emeth Congregation, Washington Blvd. and Torah Drive, Wilmington, DE 19802.

12 Friends Needed by JFS! To share volunteer hours each month on an ongoing basis. Basic office responsibilities and tasks as assigned. Any assistance is appreciated - no experience necessary! Please call Volunteer Coordinator Lisa Driban today at (302) 478-9411 for further details.

The Jewish War Veterans of Delaware need new members, young or old and patrons. It is extremely important that this Jewish Organization continue. Please call Len Markovitz at 302-234-4785 or Milt Slovin 302-478-4888. You do not have to be a veteran to join. Join JWV for its Annual Installation luncheon Sunday, May 28, 11:00 a.m. at Harry's Savoy Grille on Naamans Road. All paid up members and their spouses are invited.

Longwood Gardens' summer

concert series kicks off on Tuesday, May 30th with guitarist Allen Krantz. Krantz will perform a classical guitar concert on Longwood's Conservatory Terrace at 7:30 pm. On Saturday, June 3, folk trio Simple Gifts performs music from many lands at 2:30 pm. Later that evening, the Brandywine Ballet graces Longwood's Open Air Theatre stage at 7:30 pm with a classical ballet performance. At 9:15 pm, visitors will enjoy an illuminated fountain show set to music in the Main Fountain Garden.

Admission to these performances are included in the regular Gardens admission of \$14 for adults (\$10 on Tuesdays), \$6 for ages 16-20, \$2 ages 6-15 and free under age 6. The Gardens are from 9 am until one hour after dusk when the Conservatory and outdoor gardens remain open for our evening concerts and fountain displays. Longwood Gardens is located on U.S. Route 1, three miles northeast of Kennett Square, PA, 12 miles north of Wilmington, DE, in the historic Brandywine Valley. For information or a complete schedule of events call 610-388-1000 or visit online at www.longwoodgardens.org.

Aligning Your Desires. A unique weekend for Jewish couples, will take place at Elat Chayyim Retreat Center in New York's Catskill Mountains, July 7-9. The weekend is designed for married or committed couples who seek more connection, passion, and meaning in their relationships within a Jewish framework. Workshops will be led by Rosalie and Efraim Eisen, the founders of Basherte, Inc™, and have presented more than 150 programs for Jewish adults throughout the US, Canada, and Israel. Rates vary depending on accommodations, and include gourmet, kosher meals. Pre-regis-

tration for the weekend is required.

Information/Registration: (800) 398-2630. info@elatchayyim.org. info@basherte.org

JFS sponsors innovative programs:

The Healing Circle - Holistic Transformation of Mind, Body & Spirit-designed for those who have experienced a loss in their lives or who desire a lift in their day. Led by Rabbi Michael Beals, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Shalom in Wilmington, this free, informal gathering incorporates meditation, visualization, deep breathing exercises and ancient mystical language. Call 302-478-9411 for more information and to register.

Bereavement Group. Free and open to the community. Group meets the first and third Thursday of each month, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in the Kimmel-Spiller Healing Center. JFS staff leader on the first Thursday, on the third Thursday, Rabbi Sanford Dresin of Adas Kodesch Shel Emeth will lead the program accompanied by a JFS staff member. Call 302-478-9411 to register.

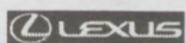
Women in Transition Group - \$20/session or \$75 for entire program. This Discussion group is open to women of any age who are contemplating or experiencing changes & choices in their lives. Join JFS staff member Nona Smolko, LCSW on Wednesdays, 6:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Kimmel-Spiller Health Center. Call 302-478-9411 to register.

Computer Maven Workshop. This program is open to older adults in the community. It teaches basic computer skills such as e-mail and how to surf "the Net" (Internet). Cost: \$25/JCC members, \$35/non-members. For more information, contact Scott Michels at 302-478-9411, ext. 18.

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