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Washtenaw Jewish News
c/o Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor
2939 Birch Hollow Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

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WASHTENAW

JEWISH NEWS

February 2010 Shevat/Adar 5770

Volume XXXIV: Number 5

FREE

The Soul of Tikkun: Spiritual Practice & Social Action

Steve Merritt, special to the WJN

Rabbi Amy Eilberg will visit Ann Arbor for the third annual community-wide program on Jewish spirituality. Her visit will culminate in a workshop on Sunday, February 21, entitled, "The Soul of Tikkun: Spiritual Practice & Social Action." The event will start at 9:30 a.m. at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor.

"We will explore the interconnectedness of spiritual practice and our work in the world," says Rabbi Eilberg. "Both spiritual practitioners and social justice activists can expect to find the usual boundaries between 'inner' and 'outer' questioned."

The workshop format will include lecture, experiential practice, discussion, and a chance to reflect on the ideas presented with a panel and small breakout sessions.

Rabbi Eilberg was the first woman ordained as a Conservative rabbi by the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. She has extensive experience in both the realms of spiritual and community work.

She is nationally known as a leader of the Jewish healing movement. Rabbi Eilberg co-founded a Jewish healing center and directed its



Rabbi Amy Eilberg

hospice care program. She also co-founded a center for Jewish Spiritual Direction. Her current focus is more outer-directed, leading interfaith dialogue programs in St. Paul, Minnesota. She teaches compassionate listening and is involved in peace and reconciliation efforts around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Rabbi Eilberg also works with issues of conflict within the Jewish community.

She will use the Sunday workshop to show how inner spiritual work and outer work in the world can be used to inform and nourish each other.

Rabbi Eilberg will also make two other appearances which are open to the community.

She will visit at Temple Beth Emeth on Friday,

February 19. Her topic will be "Shema Yisrael: The Mitzvah of Sacred Listening." There will be a dinner at 6 p.m. and a service at 7:30 p.m. For more information or to reserve a dinner, go to www.templebethemeth.org or call 665-4744.

Rabbi Eilberg will appear at Beth Israel Congregation on Saturday, February 20, and will speak on "Listening for the Sacred in Our Lives." The program will begin with havdallah at 8 p.m. and be followed by refreshments. For more information, call 665-9897.

Rabbi Eilberg's visit is being co-sponsored by the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah, Beth Israel Congregation, Hillel at the University of Michigan, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, the Jewish Cultural Society, the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, Pardes Hannah, and Temple Beth Emeth.

The cost for the Sunday workshop, including vegetarian meals, is \$30. Students with an ID may attend for \$5. Limited scholarships are available.

For more information or to register, go to www.jewishannarbor.org and click on the Soul of Tikkun Workshop link. For scholarships or other questions, email Dorrie.Rosenblatt@gmail.com or call Dorrie at 665-4186. ■

Op-Ed: "The few and the just"

by Laurel Federbush

This is a meditation about my former involvement with the group Jewish Witnesses for Peace and Friends (JWPF)—just some of my thoughts about that whole experience, and some of my recollections. The title of this is "The Few and the Just," because that's what we thought we were—the few people in Ann Arbor who were compelled, in the name of justice, to do what we did.

Here's what we did, and what, as you may know, the group still continues to do: Every Saturday morning, Jewish Witnesses for Peace and Friends would stand outside Beth Israel Congregation, holding protest signs against the Israeli "occupation" of Palestine.

We called our demonstration a "vigil." Others in the Ann Arbor community use the term "picket" to describe it. While the term "vigil" is probably too gentle to describe what we were doing, I'm going to use that term because that's how I thought of it for years and it's the one that comes naturally to me. Feel free, in your own mind, to substitute the term "picket" if you like.

We weren't popular. In fact, I didn't know anyone, outside of our group, who approved of what we did. But we got the occasional headline in the local paper, some letters to the editor, and we brought attention to our cause.

I myself had always made a point of avoiding news about Israel, the Palestinians, or the Middle East in general. When I was a child, there had been plenty of footage of wars going on in that part of the world, and it seemed so hopeless, so grim, an endless cycle of violence.

But, along with my mom [Marcia Federbush], I joined the group JWPF, hoping to learn more. I had recently decided to acknowledge my Jewish heritage, and I thought this was a way to do it. I had had a secular upbringing. While many of my relatives were



Laurel Federbush

Detroit School of Arts Vision-Male Choral Ensemble at Beth Israel

Elliot Sorkin, special to the WJN

On Saturday evening, February 6, from 8–9 p.m., Beth Israel Congregation will host the Detroit School of Arts Male Choral Ensemble, who will perform a medley of music strongly influenced by African-American culture through the ages in honor of Black History month. People of all ages are welcome to this free concert, which will be followed by an afterglow with refreshments with the performers.

The Detroit School of Arts was established in 1992 by founder and principal, Dr. Denise Davis-Cotton. Detroit School of Arts is one of four magnet schools in Detroit, others being Renaissance High School, Cass Technical High School and Communication & Media Arts High School.

During the nine-hour school day, students follow a rigorous college preparatory curriculum with an intensive study in the arts. The DSA Vision Male Choral Ensemble is



The Detroit School of Arts Vision-Male Choral Ensemble

one of several vocal groups whose mission is to strengthen the spiritual and cultural bonds between students. This group of talented and enthusiastic African-American high school

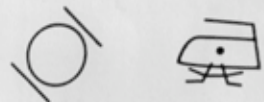
students perform at engagements throughout Detroit and Michigan. The Ensemble is directed by Cheryl Whitney Valentine, vocal director of the Detroit School of Arts. ■

continued on page 8

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Letters/Community

Ann Arbor benefited from Jerry Lax as city attorney

Last month's piece on Judie and Jerry Lax winning the Bernstein Leadership Award for outstanding community service was a welcome commendation for a couple of Ann Arbor's more valuable citizens—but it completely ignored one of Jerry's key contributions to our city.

1969-1973 was probably one of the most intense, tumultuous, critical period in the history of Ann Arbor and it was during those years that Jerry was our city attorney. The issues that arose during his four-years on the job were unprece-

dented—wildly disruptive and potentially very dangerous—but thanks largely to Jerry's performance they turned out to be more interesting than damaging. As city attorney he was at the center of most of that period's conflicts and it was largely his character, attitude and legal insights that kept Ann Arbor on an even keel.

It was our rare good fortune to have him in the City Attorney's office during those years and for that we should be grateful.

Robert Faber

More on "False Witnesses"

What should have been the primary thrust of the article "False Witnesses" [WJN, December 2009], the picketers' rabid, absurd perspective, is only peripherally touched on. Their flagrant anti-Semitism in which all Jews are stereotyped on the basis of ethnicity; their attribution of a political mission to an institution whose mission is religious; their ignoring of the fact that the bulk of the membership of Beth Israel is politically left

of the American mainstream on the question of Israel; their constant analogizing of Israel to Nazi Germany; their imputation of racism to an ideology, namely Zionism, that has nothing to do with race—none of these is discussed. These individuals are so beyond the pale of rational thought that I am incredulous the author of this article couldn't find more convincing material to employ in his quest.

Jessica Lieberman

Dr. Burton Visotzky to be scholar-in-residence

Elliot Sorkin, special to the WJN

Beth Israel Congregation will host Burton Visotzky, Ph.D., as scholar-in-residence from March 19–21. Dr. Visotzky is professor of Midrash and Interreligious Studies at The Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City. With Bill Moyers, he developed the series Genesis: A Living Conversation, serving as both a consultant and a featured participant. He was also a consultant to Jeffrey Katzenberg of DreamWorks SKG for the film The Prince of Egypt. There will be four opportunities to learn with Dr. Visotzky. On Friday, March 19, at 8 p.m., Visotzky will present "The Dysfunctional Family as Moral Exemplar." The evening includes a Shabbat services at 7:30 p.m. and a dinner beginning at 7 p.m. Reservations are required for the dinner part only. (Contact 665-9897 for further details). On Saturday, March 20, at 12:30

p.m. there will be a luncheon Kiddush and a talk entitled "Isaac Unbound." On Saturday evening, March 20, at 7:30 p.m., Visotzky will discuss "Cairo to Qatar and Beyond—Jewish-Muslim Dialogue in the Past Five Years: One Rabbi's Experiences." On Sunday, March 21, at 9:30 a.m., Visotzky will present "Moses Goes to Hollywood." This lecture series is funded by the Alfred and Alice Rosenberg Lecture Fund. All the presentations are open to the public at no charge. For more information, contact Mary at 665-9897.



Burton Visotzky, Ph.D.

Annual Bookstock collection day at the JCC

Halye Aisner, special to the WJN

Bookstock is an annual fund-raiser to help support education and literacy projects. Hundreds of volunteers work throughout the year to collect and sort books and media. Bookstock is a media lover's paradise where tens of thousands of gently used books, books on tape, records, videos, CDs, DVDs and more will be sold from April 18–25 at Laurel Park Place Mall in Livonia. Savvy shoppers and collectors can attend a pre-sale the first morning, April 18, from 8:15 a.m.–11:45 a.m. The cost is \$10 for the pre-sale only. The event itself is free. The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor will have a collection day on Sunday, March 21, from 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Donations can be

dropped off and receipts will be given. Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law. Bookstock is sponsored by the JCC of Greater Ann Arbor, Detroit Jewish Coalition for Literacy, the Oakland Literacy Council, the Jewish Community Relations Council, Detroit Jewish News, and a consortium of Jewish communal non-profit organizations which support education and literacy projects throughout metro Detroit. For further information or to sign up as a volunteer, contact Rebekah Gamble at 971-0990 or rebekahgamble@jccfed.org. For more information on Bookstock, visit www.bookstock.info.

WJN JEWISH NEWS

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The Washtenaw Jewish News is a free and independent newspaper. It is published monthly, with the exception of January and July. It is registered as a Non-profit Michigan Corporation. Opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of its editors or staff

Member of
American Jewish Press Association



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Signed letters to the editor are welcome; they should not exceed 400 words. Letters can be emailed to the editor at WJN.editor@gmail.com. Name will be withheld at the discretion of the editor.

Circulation: 5,000
Subscriptions:
\$12 bulk rate inside Washtenaw County
\$18 first-class subscription

The deadline for the March 2010 issue of the Washtenaw Jewish News is Monday, February 8.

Publication date: Thursday, February 25
Extra copies of the Washtenaw Jewish News are available at locations throughout Washtenaw County.

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Community

JStreet comes to Ann Arbor

Clare Kinberg, special to the WJN

JStreet, the political voice of the pro-Israel, pro-peace movement, is setting up shop in Ann Arbor.

The group, which has sparked conversation in political and Jewish community circles across the country about the connection between Israel's future as a democratic Jewish homeland and achieving a two-state resolution, will officially launch J Street Ann Arbor at a public event on February 4, at 7 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor. The kick-off will feature simulcast remarks by J Street's executive director, Jeremy Ben-Ami, as well as an opportunity for some of J Street's hundreds of local supporters to celebrate the launch and get ready for upcoming campaigns.

J Street Ann Arbor's launch is part of J Street's new national grassroots field program that will both broaden and deepen the presence of the pro-Israel, pro-peace movement in communities across the country. The event in Ann Arbor will coincide with dozens of similar events in other cities.

"We're thrilled that local leaders and activists in Michigan will enhance J Street's advocacy for strong US efforts to achieve peace and security in the Middle East," said Jeremy Ben-Ami. "A grassroots network of pro-Israel, pro-peace advocates is an essential component of our work in pursuit of a two-state solution and a regional, comprehensive peace."

J Street Ann Arbor will integrate the city's Brit Tzedek v'Shalom chapter, and also aims to draw new supporters from J Street's substantial grassroots base in the area.

"By growing the pro-Israel, pro-peace movement in Ann Arbor we aim to create the political space in our community for a vibrant

discussion of how we best secure Israel's future as a democratic homeland for the Jewish people," said J Street Ann Arbor chair, Rebecca Kanner. "We look forward to engaging and mobilizing our community as effective advocates for a two-state solution and true peace and security for Israel."

J Street, billed in a feature story by the *New York Times Magazine* as "The New Israel Lobby," was founded in April 2008 to promote meaningful American leadership to end the Arab-Israeli and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. Its new national grassroots program and field operations fall under the auspices of the J Street Education Fund, Inc, an educational nonprofit which educates targeted communities about the need for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, raises the visibility of a mainstream pro-peace, pro-Israel presence within the American Jewish community, and promotes open, dynamic and spirited conversation about how to best advance the interests and future of a democratic, Jewish Israel.

The J Street family of organizations also includes J Street and JStreetPAC. J Street, a nonprofit lobby, uses online organizing, advocacy and education to political and popular support for American leadership to achieve peace and security in the Middle East. JStreetPAC, a legally independent political action committee, works to demonstrate that there is meaningful political and financial support available to candidates for federal office from large numbers of Americans who believe a new direction in American policy will advance U.S. interests in the Middle East and promote real peace and security for Israel and the region. ■

Spend a day with the Frankel Scholars

Kimberly Kunoff, special to the WJN

The Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies annually assembles a group of outstanding scholars to pursue their research on a common, previously announced theme. For the academic year 2009-2010, a dozen scholars from around the world have gathered to explore the theme of "The Culture of Jewish Objects" and what makes an object Jewish.

The question invites other questions, about the significance of objects within Jewish culture and whether one can speak of a culture of Jewish objects. Jews have obviously used diverse objects throughout their long history and some of these have been endowed with specifically Jewish significance. Ritual objects associated with Jewish religious practices immediately come to mind. Sabbath observance, with its candleholders, Kiddush cup, challah plate, and spice box just to name familiar objects, involves a range of Jewish artifacts that simultaneously expand on and deviate from sacred meaning associated with synagogues or the ancient Temples. But what about other, more mundane, objects that are integral to Jewish life yet not associated with sacred time or space? How does one think about buildings and decorations, book covers and design, kitchen structures and cooking utensils, clothing and jewelry?

The scholars who have come together around this theme represent different disciplinary backgrounds, including art history,

archaeology, anthropology, literature, and folklore. They meet weekly to discuss each other's research.

While the fellow delivers one public lecture each during their stay at the Institute, the public rarely has the opportunity to participate in the discussions and sample their scholarship.

On February 7, the Frankel Institute will partner with the Jewish Forum, Federation's Alliance for Jewish Education, Fed Ed, and The Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit's SAJE (Seminars for Adult Jewish Enrichment) to present a unique day of Jewish learning.

"Each year the Frankel Institute at the University of Michigan hosts an extraordinary group of Judaic scholars from around the world," attests Todd Endelman, interim director, The Jean & Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies. "The Day at the Institute is a wonderful opportunity for the public in the greater Detroit area to learn from and exchange ideas with these scholars."

The event will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at The Jewish Community Center of Metro Detroit. The cost, including kosher lunch, is \$40 per person and \$25 for students, Jewish educators, and Jewish community professionals. Advance registration and payment are required.

To register, call (248) 432-5692 or visit www.thejewishforum.org. ■

Crazy Wisdom Salon addresses question of ethical responsibility

WJN staff writers

We all know when something we see is unethical. What does it take to move us from observation or outrage to action? What societal and/or religious imperatives guide us to move outside our personal interests? These questions and others will be addressed Thursday evening, February 18, at 7 p.m., at the Crazy Wisdom Salon. The Salon is titled, "Ethical Responsibility—What Compels One to Act?"

Crazy Wisdom Bookstore sponsors monthly community Salons that provide an opportunity to creatively address complex topics. February's event will be facilitated by Susan Ayer, long-time editor/publisher of the Washtenaw Jewish News. Guest panelists include:

- Rabbi Nathan Martin, assistant director at the University of Michigan Hillel. Rabbi Martin graduated from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in 2006 and enjoys learning, biking, and dialogue.
- Reverend Ken Phifer, a long-time peace activist. Reverend Phifer served as senior minister (now emeritus), of the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, from 1980 to 2005. He is a graduate of Harvard College and the University of Chicago Divinity School.
- Irene Butter, PhD., professor emerita at the University of Michigan School of Public Health. Born in Berlin, she grew up as a Jewish child in Nazi-occupied Europe when her family was deported to two German concentration camps in the early 1940s. She has been involved in peace and justice projects for most of her life. She is a co-founder of Zeitouna, a Palestinian and Jewish Women's Dialogue group. Butter received her PhD. in economics from Duke University.

For more information, email bill@crazywisdom.net or call 665-2757. Crazy Wisdom is located at 114 S. Main Street. The program is free and open to the entire community.

Schedule

- 9:30 a.m. Check In/Refreshments/Welcome
- 10 a.m. Session One (choose one)
- 1A – Keren McGinity Shiksa: Object of Jewish Desire or Derision?
- 1B – Oded Zehavi Hallelujah: Setting Tehillim (Psalms) to Music
- 11 a.m. Break/Refreshments
- 11:10 a.m. Session Two (choose one)
- 2A – Oren Gutfeld News from the Past: Jerusalem at the End of the Second Temple Period
- 2B – Michal Artzy Excavating Ancient Harbors
- 12:10 p.m. Kosher Lunch
- 1:15 p.m. Session Three (choose one)
- 3A – Chava Weissler Contemporary Tallitot and Their Intersection with Both Renewal and Feminism
- 3B – Michal Kravel-Tovi Visuality, Temporality and Messianism: The Case Study of Lubavitcher Hasidism
- 2 p.m. Break/Refreshments
- 2:10 p.m. Closing Panel How to Talk About Jewish Objects
- Naomi Feuchtwanger-Sarig, Shlomo Berger, Todd Endelman, Chava Weissler and Oren Gutfeld

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AADL hosts "Ignite" talk by Jack Zaiantz on American Jewish music

Tim Grimes, special to the WJN

Ignite Ann Arbor is a biannual event that brings passionate people from throughout the community on stage to present 20 slides in 5 minutes about their interests. At Ignite Second Stage @ AADL, some of the best Ignite Ann Arbor presenters are invited to the Ann Arbor District Library to give an expanded version of their talk.

On Sunday, February 28, from 1–2:30 p.m., in the Downtown Library Multi-Purpose Room, Jack Zaiantz, an Ann Arbor area research scientist who blogs about contemporary Jewish Music at <http://teruah-jewish-music.blogspot.com/> will present "The Silver Age of American Jewish Music is Happening Now! And You're Missing It!"

According to Zaiantz, Jewish music is exploding. Bands and labels and venues are multiplying. Rock. Hip Hop. Reggae. Punk. Klezmer. Sephardic. Choral. Chamber Music. Jazz. Chassidic-Pop. Breslov Techno. Niggunim. Pop-liturgical. Bible-gum. Beat Box. Boy Choirs. House. Socialist Yiddish Gothic. Indie. Weird hybrids. Avant-Garde experiments. Earnest devotion. Jewish music encompasses them all.

"We're not immigrants clustered in tenements, in range of a local Yiddish radio station anymore, says Zaiantz. "A revolution is happening but we're scattered across a big nation with no common media to connect us... except the net. Will it be enough?"

This Extended Play version of Zaiantz's recent 5 minute Ignite Ann Arbor talk will be loaded with more music, a road-map of the contemporary Jewish Music scene, and a case study in social-networking Jewish music.

The Downtown Library is located at 343 South Fifth Avenue. For more information on this event, call the library at 327-4555. ■



Jack Zaiantz

New at the JCC

Merrill Poliner, special to the WJN

Guest Speaker Series for Older Adults

In February, the JCC's SPICE program will host special guest speakers including Irving M. Hermelin Curator of Judaica Eliot H. Gertel, and Executive Director of the Michigan Theater Russ Collins. Both programs will take place at 1 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor and are free of charge.



Elliot Gertel

Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies and a variety of other related University of Michigan departments. Gertel has an M.Phil. in Modern Jewish Studies from Oxford University and has served as curator for over a decade.

Russ Collins will speak on Thursday, February 25. He is a lifelong resident of Ann Arbor and a graduate of the University of Michigan with bachelor and master degrees in arts administration. He teaches Film Appreciation at Eastern Michigan University; is the emcee of the Ann Arbor Area Chamber of Commerce monthly gathering called Morning Edition; is the co-host (with David Fair) of Cinema Chat on WEMU; and leader of the



Russ Collins

For more information or to RSVP to either of these events, contact Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 or merrill@jfsannarbor.org.

SPICE welcomes the Wii

Thanks to a generous donation by Dr. Marc Renner to Jewish Family Services, the JCC's Older Adults Program now has the use of a Nintendo Wii game system. Recent research shows a significant increase in the number of seniors and senior centers around the country using the Wii for various activities. The Wii's sports simulation games require no specific physical ability or expertise, making them accessible to many who can no longer participate in or have access to active sports.

The Wii will make its debut on Tuesday, February 9 at 1 p.m. at the JCC with a demonstration and lessons. Thereafter, the system will be available on alternate Tuesdays from 1–2 p.m. All are invited to take part on a drop-in basis. There is no charge for participating. Call Merrill Poliner, SPICE program coordinator at 971-0990 for additional information.

February SPICE* of Life

*Social, Physical, Intellectual, Cultural, and Educational Programs for Adults

Merrill Poliner, special to the WJN

Tuesdays

11 a.m.: Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. \$4 per session, or 3 sessions for \$10

Noon: Dairy Lunch Buffet. \$3 per person

1 p.m.: Games and Activities. Join in for a variety of games and activities including mahjong, quilting, art projects, and other card games. *New* Bridge club at 1:00.

1:30 p.m.: Yiddish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group). Open to the public as well as University of Michigan faculty, staff and students, all ages and levels welcome. Beanster's Café, ground floor, Michigan League. Free. For more information, call 936-2367.

Thursdays

10 a.m.: Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. \$4 per session, or 3 sessions for \$10

11 a.m.: Current Events with Heather Dombey. A Jewish perspective on this week's news. Bring items of interest for group discussion.

Noon: Dairy Lunch Buffet. \$3 per person

1 p.m.: Thursday Special Events and Presentations (see below for details)

2:15 p.m.: Literary Group facilitated by Sidney Warschawsky, Call Merrill Poliner, 971-0990, for more information and the current book.

Fridays

1:30 p.m.: Yiddish Reading Group at the Jewish Community Center. Call Ray Juni for additional information at 761-2765

Tuesday special events

February 2 through March 23

10 a.m.–noon

The Bible In It's Time with Dr. Liz Fried. This semester the class will cover "The Prophets In their World." Class is tuition free to Washtenaw County residents age 65 and over through the Washtenaw Community College Department of Lifelong Learning. Registration at the first class. Contact Merrill at 971-0990 to register or for more information.

February 9 and 23rd

1–2 p.m. Welcome to the new Wii! Join SPICE for an introduction to Wii bowling. No

experience or physical expertise necessary. Call Merrill at 971-0990 for more information.

Thursday special events

February 4

12:30 p.m. Birthday celebration for all with February birthdays! Bring your family and friends for lunch and birthday cake.

1 p.m. "So Near and Yet So Foreign: an Illustrated Tour of the Jewish Renaissance in Cuba," Elliott Gertel's illustrated presentation on his humanitarian mission to the Jewish community of Cuba in April 2007.

February 11

12:30 p.m. A registered nurse from Care Response will take and record blood pressures and address any questions. Free. (This event is repeated the second Thursday of each month.)

1 p.m. The always popular "Happiness Boys" return with a performance of new songs.

February 18

12:30 p.m. Allison Pollock, MSW, Jewish Family Services geriatric social workers will be available for discussion.

1 p.m. Janet Basset, Elder Law Specialist will lead a discussion on legal aspects of aging for seniors and their families.

February 25

1 p.m. Which films have been nominated for the Academy Awards? Who will win? What do you think? Local movie expert, Russ Collins, executive director of the Michigan Theatre will bring his expertise to SPICE for a pre-awards preview.

Sunday special events

February 6

2–4 p.m.

Opening Reception: Senior Photography Exhibit. Come to the JCC to see the photography, meet the photographers and listen to them speak about their work and enjoy the reception buffet. Free and open to the public.

Elida Silverman, Margaret Singer, Charlotte Vogel, Ann Wasick, Xian Fang Xu

JCC and Orchestra collaborate on piano

Community members attending musical events at the JCC will be the beneficiaries of a new collaboration between the JCC and the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra. A Yamaha six-foot grand piano, donated to the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra (A2SO) by a local supporter, will be permanently housed at the JCC.

The orchestra will use the piano for Afternoon Delights concerts at the JCC as well as concerts at other venues where a piano will be required. The piano will be available for the JCC to use at its musical events. ■

Senior photo exhibit opening

The Senior Photography Exhibit returns, after a several year hiatus, to the JCC on February 1. The exhibit will be displayed until March 31. Many of the photographs will be for sale as a fundraiser for the JCC's senior programs.

There will be an opening reception on Sunday, February 7 from 3–5 p.m. The community is invited to attend the reception, view the artwork, listen to presentations and discussions by the artists and share in the refreshments. There is no admission charge and reservations are not required. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for more information.

As of press time exhibitors include: Barbara Bergman, Mundan Chu, Pat Cornett, Howard Fink, Luda Ketslakh, Joan Levitt, Joel Levitt, Richard Malvin, Nancy Margolis, Irwin Martin, Arnold Mutchnik, Phyllis Perry, Denise Rohde, Fritz Shafer, Judy Schmidt,

Federation

Federation women's event set for March 7

Stacey Martin, special to the WJN

Once again, women in the community can look forward to a day of learning and inspiration this spring, offered by the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor.

A tradition in the Ann Arbor community since 1991, the Jewish Women's Day of Learning has evolved into a experience that local Jewish women can look forward to each year. This year's event will be held on Sunday, March 7, from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor. As planning committee member Happy Feigelson explains, the event is a unique opportunity for women of all ages in the community to come together for a time of learning and intellectual exploring. They will greet old friends and make new acquaintances, while stimulating new thoughts and encouraging conversation.

The theme of this year's event is "The Jewish Perspective in Art and Culture: A Creative Workshop for Women." Discussion topics will include the benefits of unearthing the creativity within us all, as well as the potential spirituality of the creative process. The keynote speaker will be Debra Darvick, author of "This Jewish Life: Stories of Discovery, Connection and Joy" and a book for children, "I Love Jewish Faces." Darvick spoke at the 2009 Ann Arbor Jewish Book Festival. Her discussion will emphasize that creative dreams are part of our Jewish birthright and will detail her "eight steps for pursuing a dream" that she learned along the way to having her first book published.

The day will begin with a light breakfast as attendees arrive and begin to socialize. After a

welcoming presentation, participants will have a chance to attend breakout sessions of their choice. Session leaders include Frankel Center for Judaic Studies fellows Naomi Feuchtwanger-Sarig and Chava Weissler, as well as the Zell Director of the MFA Program in Creative Writing at the University of Michigan, Eileen Pollack. Pollack will give the participants of her session a sneak preview of her new novel, *Breaking and Entering*, which will be published in 2011. As Pollack explains, *Breaking and Entering* is "set in a mythical town not far from Ann Arbor populated by Jews, Unitarians, fundamentalist Christians and a branch of the Michigan Militia." After reading excerpts from the books, she will discuss the true-life events that inspired her to write it and the creative process by which she turned those events into an actual manuscript.

After each breakout session, participants will reconvene for a lunch of light fare catered by kosher chef Cari Herskovitz. As Feigelson says, "There are a lot of creative people in the community, and a vast range of ages of women who come to this event. This 'spanning the ages' brings opens up new perspectives to participants and encourages thoughtful conversations." Those in attendance gain new opportunities to learn about other women in the community and about themselves.

The charge for "The Jewish Perspective in Art and Culture: A Creative Workshop for Women" is \$36, and includes a light breakfast, buffet lunch, and all of the day's activities. For more information or to reserve your place, visit www.jewishannarbor.org or contact Stacey Martin at 677-0100 or stacey@jewishannarbor.org. ■

Jewish Federation introduces Facebook page

Stacey Martin, special to the WJN

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor has launched of a Facebook "fan" page. In this digital age, perhaps no sector of daily life has evolved as much as communication. New technologies such as the Kindle electronic reader and the iPhone have completely revolutionized the way we think of transferring information. Books are no longer defined by having pages than one turns physically, and phones are no longer defined by their ability to solely send and receive calls. Furthermore, print newspapers have largely become replaced with online versions, and rather than meeting friends for coffee, people might chat on Facebook.

Facebook has changed the way people communicate, not only with one's "friends," but also with the community. "Creating a true sense of Jewish community and being able to engage with as many community members as possible is always the goal and the greatest challenge to a Jewish Federation," said Federation Executive Director David Shtulman. The Federation Facebook page will keep community members updated by including photos, event details, and opportunities for community feedback.

The advantage of a Facebook page is the opportunity for the public to engage directly and more easily with Federation staff members and other members of the Jewish community. While the page will not replace Federation's weekly email, "Your Link to Jewish Life," it will supplement it in a way only possible in the medium of online social networking. The page will allow community members to share their own thoughts about issues of Jewish interest. Federation staff encourages people to post pictures of their last visit to Israel or voice their opinion of who makes the best falafel in the Ann Arbor area. The Federation hopes the Facebook page will become an online meeting point for the Ann Arbor Jewish Community. Fans can start a conversation by responding to David Shtulman's "Question of the Week," which has included topics such as being an American Jew at Christmas and security in Israel, or simply write on the "wall" to start your own discussion on Jewish life. Log on and join in!

Become a Fan of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor at www.facebook.com/jewishannarbor.



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Maariv service at 7:30 p.m.
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Melton Mini-School continues to grow

Julie Gales, special to the WJN

The Florence Melton Adult Mini School is designed to help adults acquire Jewish literacy... and Ann Arbor has an eager student body. The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor opened its Melton Mini-School in September 2008 with the assistance of the Covenant Foundation, the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, and a consortium of Ann Arbor's congregations and Jewish organizations. "We were really unsure whether Jewish Ann Arborites would make the commitment to a two-year course of study given all their other personal and community commitments," said Leslie Bash, JCC executive director, "but we were determined to bring this world class program developed by faculty at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem to Ann Arbor. We simply believed in the Melton curriculum."

Bash's conviction paid off as more students than anticipated show up. There were 28 students in the Ann Arbor Melton Mini-School's inaugural class. Two-thirds of the inaugural class returned to take the second year. When the doors opened on the 2009 first-year Melton class, 23 students were ready to learn. "It's very gratifying knowing that Ann Arbor is interested in all kinds of Jewish learning experiences," said Bash. "Melton's pluralistic approach draws upon the best scholarship from all movements of Judaism welcoming Jews of all levels of knowledge and observance to participate."

The Melton Adult Mini-school is not a how-to class. The assumption is that there are a lot of adults that are Jewish and who participate in Jewish life, but who haven't necessarily been engaged in thinking rigorously about Judaism. The two-year curriculum focuses on holidays and life cycle, but it also covers Jewish history, ethics and philosophy. Melton students study varying Jewish views about the Messiah, what

happens after one dies, and why do people suffer. They also examine the different historic turning points for the Jewish people and Jewish responses to those external and internal forces.



Melton students Anita and Howard Merritt

"The mini-school has been a pioneer in adult Jewish learning," said Judy Kupchan, director of educational services and teacher for the Melton school's North American office in Chicago. "The Ann Arbor JCC Melton Mini-School is a wonderful example of how a community can come together and learn," Kupchan said. "For students who want to meet people with varying points of view, this is a great program."

"The best part about the classes are what the students bring to it, such as life experience. It creates a great forum for learning," said Aviva Panush, who teaches the Rhythms Class in Ann Arbor's Melton Mini-school. "For the students, learning with the same group of people each week has led to friendships and the development of a learning community that have enriched their lives and ours as faculty."

For more information on Ann Arbor's Melton Adult Mini-School or if you would like to audit one of the classes to see if Melton is for you, contact Julie Gales, Melton Mini-School director, at 971-0990 or juliegales@jccfed.org.■

Ann Arbor Chabad to offer JLI course, "Portraits in Leadership"

New course explores inspirational avenues to emerge from times of uncertainty

Rabbi Alter Goldstein, special to the WJN

This February, the Ann Arbor Chabad House will launch its winter course with the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI), Portraits in Leadership: Timeless Tales for Inspired Living. Portraits in Leadership is a study of the inspiring life story of six figures whose courage and determination helped Judaism weather its darkest hours. In the face of the first-century Roman assault on Jerusalem, the fundamental institutions of the Jewish people were utterly destroyed. But with wisdom and verve, these leaders took the radical steps that managed to preserve the essence of Judaism to this very day.

"This course is one part history, one part biography—all parts uplifting inspiration," says Rabbi Lazer Gurkow, course author. "It is about decisions made two thousand years ago that continue to shape the contours of contemporary Jewish life."

"Students are constantly looking for tools to deal with day-to-day challenges," says local JLI instructor, Rabbi Aharon Goldstein. "What better way to find guidance than from the wise example of others who encountered hardships and used them as the impetus for growth and change."

Lessons will examine a range of classic Jewish sources, drawing extensively from the stories of the Talmud and modern commentaries that point out their personal significance to our lives.

The course will be taught at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, 7:30–9 p.m.

and at the Chabad House, 9:30–11 a.m. for six Tuesdays starting February 9. The cost is \$75 per person, \$120 per couple. Potential students are welcome to call 995-3276, extension 2, for more information.



Part of the fall '09 graduating class

Portraits in Leadership, like all JLI's courses, is designed for people at all levels of Jewish knowledge. Participants without any prior experience or background in Jewish learning can attend and enjoy this course. All JLI courses are open to the public, and attendees need not to be a member of any particular synagogue or temple.

The Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) is the adult education arm of Chabad-Lubavitch. JLI's classes and programs are offered at various locations in more than 300 cities nationwide and internationally. Every course offered by JLI is taught concurrently in all locations. This unique feature has helped create a truly global learning community. ■

Visit www.myJLI.com for up-to-date information about Portraits in Leadership.

An inspirational experience: the 2009 General Assembly

Karen Shill, special to the WJN

I was privileged recently to attend the General Assembly held in Washington, D.C. November 8–11, 2009. Over 3,000 attended this meeting of national professional and volunteer leadership. The biggest annual conference for the Jewish community in North America, it is organized by the Jewish Federations of North America, (formerly United Jewish Communities/UJC) which protects and enhances the well-being of Jews worldwide through the values of tikkun olam (repairing the world), tzedakah (charity and social justice), and Torah (Jewish learning).

Award ceremonies took place to honor people who had made a difference, including Young Leadership and Jewish Community Heroes. The Covenant Foundation and the Grinspoon-Steinhardt Foundation both presented awards to educators for Excellence in Jewish Education.

Inspirational speakers shared the remarkable efforts being made to address the challenges facing Jewish life in Israel and the Diaspora. Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel, urged that we begin talks NOW with the Palestinians. He claimed that no previous government had made more concessions on settlements in order



Grinspoon-Steinhardt Awards for Excellence in Jewish Education Ceremony, November 9, 2009, The Jewish Federations of North America General Assembly, Washington, DC. L to R: Harold Grinspoon, president, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation; Karen Shill, Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award winner; Rabbi David Gedzelman, executive vice-president, the Steinhardt Foundation for Jewish Life

to resume peace talks. Natan Sharansky, Chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, impressed upon the Assembly the need to strengthen, deepen, build, and defend our Jewish identity. Michael Oren, Is-

raeli Ambassador to the US, who opined that Israel of 2009 "is at a better geopolitical situation than at any time in its history" addressed the Iranian situation.

Delegates were especially excited that Barack Obama was to talk on Tuesday November 10, but understood when he canceled to perform the mitzvah of *menachem aveilim*, providing comfort to families by attending the memorial ceremony in Fort Hood, Texas. Instead, Rahm Emanuel, White House chief of staff, talked on behalf of the Obama Administration, emphasizing US support for Israel and for a two-state solution to the problem in the Middle East.

Particularly impressive presentations included those of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) which, since 1914, has

given global expression to the principle that Jews are responsible for one another, and of Col. Brett Oxman, Chaplain Corps, US Air Force, a chaplain charged with ensuring that Jewish troops (over 10,000 on active duty) remain connected to Jewish life throughout their military service. Col. Oxman and an honor guard of Jewish members of the armed forces were presented with a small, kosher Torah scroll commissioned by the Jewish Welfare Board's "Torahs for our Troops" initiative.

Philanthropic programs highlighted and applauded included PJ Library, Hillel, Birthright, Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit's No Family Stands Alone, and service projects in New Orleans, Ethiopia, Cambodia, and the former Soviet Union. The Jewish Education Service of North America, Inc. (JESNA), offered Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award winners the opportunity to meet with the philanthropists, network, share information, and learn from an educational component.

Attending the General Assembly was the most enriching, inspiring and exciting experience, and I feel honored to be part of a Jewish community that reaches out with such compassion to so many. ■



The Bad Plus

Reid Anderson bass
Ethan Iverson piano
David King drums

Thu, Feb 4 | 7 PM & 9:30 PM
LYDIA MENDELSSOHN THEATRE

The Bad Plus expel all notions of what a jazz piano trio should sound like, proudly recognizing and respecting the rules while ripping them to shreds with their covers of Pink Floyd, Nirvana, Wilco, Radiohead and more. "It's about as badass as highbrow gets," says *Rolling Stone*.

MEDIA PARTNERS WEMU 89.1 FM, METRO TIMES, AND ANN ARBOR'S 107ONE.

Sō Percussion

Sat, Feb 6 | 7:30 PM & 10 PM
U-M MUSEUM OF ART

Called "astonishing and entrancing" by *Billboard* and "brilliant" by *The New York Times*, this Brooklyn-based quartet's innovative work has quickly helped them forge a unique and diverse career. The 7:30 performance features music by Steve Reich (Music for Pieces of Wood, Nagoya Marimba, Four Organs, Mallet Quartet, and Drumming, Part 1) and will be performed in the Museum Apse. The 10 pm concert will begin in the Apse and move to several locations throughout the Museum. Limited availability!

NT Live: Nation

High-definition broadcast by London's National Theatre presented in partnership with UMS and the Michigan Theater

Based on a novel by Terry Pratchett
Adaptation to the stage by Mark Ravenhill

Sun, Feb 7 | 5 PM
MICHIGAN THEATER

Discover a breathtaking new adventure of a boy whose journey to manhood requires the strength to defy expectations and the courage to forge new beliefs.

Angela Hewitt

piano

Wed, Feb 10 | 8 PM
HILL AUDITORIUM

PROGRAM

J.S. Bach Italian Concerto, BWV 971 (1735)
Beethoven Sonata in D Major, Op. 10, No. 3 (1798)
Brahms Sonata No. 3 in f minor, Op. 5 (1853)

CO-SPONSORED BY ROBERT AND MARINA WHITMAN AND CLAYTON AND ANN WILHITE.

MEDIA PARTNER WGTE 91.3 FM.

Luciana Souza Trio

Luciana Souza vocals
Romero Lubambo guitar
Cyro Baptista percussion

Thu, Feb 11 | 8 PM
RACKHAM AUDITORIUM

Hailing from São Paulo, Brazil, Luciana Souza grew up in a family of Bossa Nova innovators and is now one of jazz's leading singers and interpreters. She is joined by guitarist Romero Lubambo, who appeared this Fall with Gal Costa, and percussionist Cyro Baptista, who will return in March for two performances with his group Beat the Donkey.

MEDIA PARTNER WGTE 91.3 FM.

131st Season

ums 09|10 FEBRUARY EVENTS

Schubert Piano Trios

Wu Han piano
Philip Setzer violin
David Finckel cello

Sun, Feb 14 | 4 PM
RACKHAM AUDITORIUM

PROGRAM

Schubert Piano Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 99, D. 898 (1828)
Schubert Piano Trio in E-flat Major, Op. 100, D. 929 (1827)

SPONSORED BY GILBERT OMENN AND MARTHA DARLING.
MEDIA PARTNER WGTE 91.3 FM.

Béla Fleck: The Africa Project

Béla Fleck banjo
Featuring Bassekou Kouyate and Ngoni Ba (Mali)
John Kitime guitar (Tanzania)
Anania Ngoliga multi-instrumentalist (Tanzania)

Wed, Feb 17 | 8 PM
HILL AUDITORIUM

During renowned musician Béla Fleck's travels to Africa, he discovered that though the banjo is traditionally considered an American instrument, its origins lie far from her shores. His travels and explorations of music in Uganda, Tanzania, The Gambia and Mali were documented in the award-winning film *Throw Down Your Heart*. With The Africa Project, Fleck brings to the stage his collaborations with some of Africa's most talented musicians, exploring the origins of the Banjo.

CO-SPONSORED BY DENNIS AND ELLIE SERRAS.

MEDIA PARTNERS METRO TIMES, MICHIGAN CHRONICLE, ANN ARBOR'S 107ONE, AND WEMU 89.1 FM.

Swedish Radio Choir

Sun, Feb 21 | 4 PM
HILL AUDITORIUM

Who does the Berlin Philharmonic turn to when it wants to do something really special and no ordinary choir will do? The Swedish Radio Choir, of course. The renowned ensemble returns to Ann Arbor for the first time since its astonishing 2001 performance of Verdi's *Requiem*.

PROGRAM

Includes works by Hugo Alfvén, Ned Rorem, Mahler, Sven-David Sandström, J.S. Bach, Anders Hillborg, and Frank Martin.

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“The few and the just” *continued from page 1*

practicing Jews, they lived in other states, and we rarely saw each other. Judaism had had little appeal to me, seeming repressive and overly traditional. But my dad had recently taken an interest in rediscovering his Jewish roots, and eventually convinced me to do the same.

This is what I was told by members of the group: What was happening in Palestine was a crisis situation. I was told that the Palestinians were being systematically starved; sealed off from the world within a prison wall; terrorized in every way. And worse, the media didn't report it. The temples and synagogues supported Israel to the hilt. Something needed to be done, and we were the ones to do it. We were among the few people in Ann Arbor—or America—who knew the truth.

There were always group meetings, parties, lectures, or protest actions. Almost every night there was some activity with the group. I found it a bit stifling at first, all this togetherness. But before long I began to feel a lot of camaraderie with the others. I began to participate in more and more of the activities, until I was just as involved as my mom was, and sometimes more so.

A plethora of committees sprung out of our group, some directly related to Palestine, others to left-wing politics in general.

One committee I joined was the Technology Study Group. It turned out to be more of an anti-technology group than anything else. One of the articles presented was the Unabomber's thesis condemning technology. “Someday,” mused the teaching assistant leading the discussion, “the Unabomber will be regarded as a hero.” Everyone else nodded in agreement.

“Don't you think it was wrong for him to kill and injure those people to make his point?” I asked.

The others scoffed. “It's not for us to judge the tactics of the resistance,” was the reply. That attitude—that violence in the name of resistance was always justified—was also the excuse for any violence carried out by Palestinians, and for any attacks against Israel. We weren't out to commit violence ourselves, and said that we abhorred violence, but we were quick to excuse it if violence was committed by the right people.

When the Jewish Community Center [of Greater Ann Arbor] held its annual “Celebrate Israel Day,” a festival of picnics, ice cream, music, games, and other fun activities, we would go with a megaphone to shout them down. How dare they celebrate while the Palestinians were suffering? It wasn't officially a vigil group activity, but the contingent that showed up to protest was made up almost entirely of vigil group members.

The first year I participated, I have to admit I felt a bit guilty that we were being so mean and disruptive to people who were just trying to have a nice picnic with their families, especially when a child near us started crying and wailing uncontrollably.

Other members of our group made comments to the effect that “The children need to be told the truth about Israel. Their parents aren't telling them the truth, so we have to do it. Blame the parents. Besides, children in Palestine are crying because of what Israel is doing to them. We love all children. What we are doing here is an act of love.” But it still didn't seem very loving to me, as I watched the child continue to sob.

The next year, when “Celebrate Israel Day” came around again and our group did our best to ruin it for the participants in the same way, I felt somewhat less guilty, maybe because I knew what to expect. By the third year, I didn't feel guilty at all, and felt quite proud of myself. I took it to mean that I was becoming a more loving person.

When the time for the Ann Arbor Art Fair rolled around, a few of us from the vigil decided to hold a little demonstration for the fairgoers. We basically sat around a large tree on the corner of one of the major intersections, holding our signs from the vigil. When few of the people walking by seemed to notice us, we took to making snide comments about

Ideas that I might have once considered anti-Semitic were all around me.... I digested the idea that the Zionists controlled the world, a tight-knit, elite cabal. We weren't being anti-Semitic by saying that, we thought, because we were talking about Zionists, not all Jews.

them amongst ourselves, about their petty lives, and their contemptible appreciation of trivialities such as art. Why weren't they doing something really important? Why weren't they sitting here with us, holding signs?

Group parties always proved intellectually stimulating. Ideas that I might have once considered anti-Semitic were all around me, and I was eager to take part, to challenge my mind. I digested the idea that the Zionists controlled the world, a tight-knit, elite cabal. We weren't being anti-Semitic by saying that, we thought, because we were talking about Zionists, not all Jews. It would be anti-Semitic to say “The Jews run the world.” But in our own conversations, we weren't so strict about that, so statements like “The Jews run the world” were commonplace. We didn't have to be strict because we knew what we meant. We weren't talking about the Jews in our group or others like us. We were talking about all the other ones. Had Israel really instigated the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center? Maybe. Were the Protocols of the Elders of Zion really written by the Jews? There was no proof they hadn't been. Had rabbis in the Middle Ages really killed babies and drunk their blood? There was some historical evidence of that, according to someone. Anything that put Jews in a bad light was a hot topic of conversation. There were too many Jewish names on the editorial boards of major newspapers, we said. When one of our members was feeling blue, other members would exhort her, “Don't let the Zionists get you down.” We all accepted that Zionism was the true cause of her depression. We despised the United States government, too, which was Israel's biggest supporter. At one

of the houses where parties were frequently held, there was a doormat that was a picture of the American Flag. We delighted in wiping our feet and stomping on it.

I had always thought the Middle East situation was complicated, but I learned from the group that the situation was simple. There was only one legitimate side—the Palestinian side. Anyone who suggested that there might be two sides to the issue would immediately be rebuffed with, “Were there two sides to the Holocaust?”

But, apparently, there *were* two sides to the Holocaust, at least within our group. Holocaust revisionist theories were given credence, and one of our members even went to visit the famed Holocaust denier Ernst Zundel in Germany. Was he persuaded by everything Zundel had to say? Probably not, but it gave him a lot to think about, he said. Had six million Jews really died? At least we could question the number, which was probably closer to a couple hundred thousand. And the hated showers? Probably an attempt to de-louse the concentration camp prisoners. Beneficial, not intended to kill anyone. Besides, Zionists had co-operated with Hitler, according to some source or other, seeing the rise of the Nazis as an excuse to establish the Jewish state of Israel. The Jews had no right to evoke the Holocaust to justify anything, according to our groupthink. However, members of our group compared Palestinian suffering to the Holocaust and compared Israelis to the Nazis every chance we got. While we often accused the Israelis of stealing Arab culture—copying Arab music and food and then claiming it as their own—we in our group stole the Jewish Holocaust experience, denying it to the Jews, and then claimed it for the Palestinians. The Israelis were never just trying to defend themselves, to our thinking. They were motivated by a sense of ethnic superiority and entitlement. They were always the aggressors and the Palestinians were always the victims. I realize that this is somewhat ironic, because we would constantly ridicule Jews for considering themselves to be perpetual victims, and yet that is precisely the status we bestowed upon the Palestinians.

There was truly no shortage of colorful characters in our group: strong personalities, individuals who came into conflict time and time again. In fact, with such strong clashes of egos, it's amazing that our group held together at all. But the point is, it did. The group took on an identity of its own, over and apart from its individual members. It took over. Whatever our individual identities might have been, we became members of one organism, like ants in a colony. In fact, after I left, I felt that I had spent years of my life living in an ant colony and was returning, once again, to the world of humanity.

It was terribly hard for me to leave the vigil. I didn't want to, even though I had had my differences with some members of the group. In spite of the concerns I'm expressing now, I was not one of the more moderate members of the group. While not a courageous person or a leader-type of personality, I often supported the most extreme actions, and argued with those who advocated caution. The most radical members inspired me, and I am as guilty of pushing things over the top as anyone.

I only stopped at the urging of my dad and step-mom, who were against the vigil. I cried bitterly as I made the agonizing decision to leave. But once I did stop vigilling, I quickly realized that I had made the right decision. So much of my inner dissonance was gone. My life wasn't devoted to antagonizing people. With fresh eyes I saw that the people around me weren't murderous Nazis seething with hate. In fact, I learned that the rabbi and many members of the Beth Israel Congregation were quite concerned with finding a just and peaceful solution to the situation in Palestine and had taken constructive steps to bring about positive change.

The people in the vigil think they have good intentions. But, like so many radicals, they are utterly convinced of the truth of their actions, however misguided, and are impervious to reason.

I believe that they are a cult of sorts. I'm not sure exactly what defines a cult, and I was never threatened by anyone into staying in the group against my will. I can't say that they are powerless under the sway of a charismatic leader, although I did find members of the group charismatic and compelling. They were intelligent and quite witty, full of passion and a sense of conviction. I guess they filled a void in my life. What makes them a cult is that they are of one mind. They continually reinforce that mindset among each other not only by the weekly vigil but also by constant e-mails, meetings, rallies, parties, and other interactions. They also try to be a secret organization, convinced that the Zionist machine is out to get them. They are utterly convinced of the rightness of their own views and the wrongness of anyone with a contrary opinion or interpretation of facts. They have a sense of mission. The fact that their actions seem bizarre and repulsive to most people is of no consequence to them.

Not that one should necessarily be persuaded by popular opinion—often it's a vir-

Our attitude—that violence in the name of resistance was always justified—was also the excuse for any violence carried out by Palestinians, and for any attacks against Israel.

tue to stand by one's convictions in the face of opposition. But the vigil mindset and the actions it leads to are so alienating, so outside of average behavior, that they cut the members off from the outside world.

It is also of no consequence to the vigilers that their actions reflect badly on the very cause they're supposedly promoting: that is, human rights for the Palestinians. Many activists who have devoted themselves to that issue are vehemently opposed to the vigil because anyone who speaks out on behalf of the Palestinians, or on behalf of peace-seeking Israelis, on a local level is immediately identified with the vigilers and may be judged to be anti-Israel. The vigilers are

continued on page 13

False Witnesses II: The devil's in the details (or vice versa)

By Stephen Pastner

In Art Aisner's article on the Beth Israel Congregation stalkers [WJN, December 2009], Federation Director David Shtulman notes that, while annoying, the "Herskovites" are not fatal. I concur, at least as to the small group of BIC Sabbath "regulars," who have been ineffective in their efforts to unilaterally demonize Israel/Jews while turning a blind, and even an approving eye, to the blatant misbehaviors of the Palestinian/Arab/Muslim world. But if one journeys only a short way into the Herskovites' personal and internet connection to the wider "boycott Israel" and bogus "human rights=Israel/Jews are bad; all things Palestinian/Arab (even Jihadi variety) are good" set, a far more sinister and arguably dangerous picture emerges.

First as to the reported Herskovite synagogue harassers' ejection of extremist Blaine Coleman and his mate, Mozghan Savabieasfahani, who have carried swastika signs at BIC and worn a "fuck Israel" sandwich board at city council meetings, in front of the Peoples Food Coop, and the Ann Arbor Library—in fact, they all remain joined at the hip.



Mozghan Savabieasfahani

This was on ample display during recent food coop electioneering (when Herskovitz made a disastrous run for the board), and in their frequent hectoring for "boycott Israel" movements in front of both the University of Michigan Student Assembly and the Ann Arbor City Council. Consequently, the MSA changed its bylaws on community speakers to curtail such antics.

Coleman and others in the group regularly contribute to the *Arab American News* in Dearborn, which readily provides a forum for what in Ann Arbor have clearly become borderline characters.

All of the above activities are promoted on the anti-Semitic website zionistsout.blogspot.com produced by Michelle Kinnucan, who many may remember from the Bathsheba dance performances, where she was the burly figure suspending a huge Palestinian flag from the upper level of the U-M Power Center.

The Green Party connection, alluded to by Aisner, should be amplified because all of the above people are in one way or another allied to it.

Nationally, the party's 2008 presidential candidate, Cynthia McKinney, was briefly detained by the Israel Defense Forces when she and fellow pro-Hamas boat passengers attempted to run an Israeli blockade of Gaza in the recent war. Herskovitz, with typical off-the-wall hyberbole, has referred to this as "kidnapping of a presidential candidate" on the *Michigan Daily* website thread.

In her own brief congressional career in Georgia, Cynthia is best known as the daughter of former state legislator Bill McKinney, who, on losing an election, attributed his loss to "THE J.E.W.S.!"

Locally, the "Greens," once a respectable environmental advocacy group, are headed by hijab-bedecked Aimee Smith (who is Catholic), who many readers know from her screeching through a bullhorn at JCC events, and sometimes unconscionably using her small child as a prop, per the photo in the Aisner piece. Her co-head of the "Greens," Charles Loucks, with Herskovitz, was part of the unsuccessful bid for the food coop board.

Loucks' reaction, after a horrible showing with the voters, is on ample display on the local website *Arbor Update* [arborupdate.com] from that period, in which he interminably and childishly vilifies both victorious candidates and the electorate.

Another broader group to which many Herskovites are tied is the International Solidarity Movement (ISM), which is prominent in many of the global "boycott Israel" attempts in domains as diverse as film festivals, academia and grocery stores. The local "honcho" of that movement for a time was also a charter member of Herskovitz' synagogue



Blaine Coleman

harassers, Thom Saffold, an ex-Protestant minister who converted to Islam and whose image can be seen on the SPURN website (the group that raises money for Magen David Adom, the Israeli equivalency of the Red Cross, in response to the picketers) He is the one pictured photographing congregants on their way to worship. He also has done "community outreach" for the Ann Arbor Islamic Center.

The ISM, like the pro-Palestinian American Friends Service Committee, has strong connections to the local Friends Meeting House (the Quaker congregation) and in an earlier screed to his followers, Herskovitz indeed notes that "Jewish Witnesses for Peace" might be more accurately called the "Quaker Witnesses...."

Then there's Friends of Sabeel/Sabeel International, an international organization founded by Palestinian Protestant priest Naim Atek. Locally, the group has members affiliated with a variety of Protestant congregations. Its official platform, endorsed by notables like Bishop Desmond Tutu and Jimmy Carter, calls for a two-state solution, which on the face of it is fine! Indeed, this was the case in a full-page ad the group ran two years ago in the *Ann Arbor Observer*. All the key Herskovites were signatories, which only speaks to their capacity for dissimulation since their local signage and verbiage are unequivocal in the call for a one-state, Hamas-dominated polity in what is now Israel. Indeed, a further search in the International Sabeel web postings reveals a similar "Arab supremacist" long-term goal for the area, with co-existence seen as but an expedient short-term tactic.

Aside from the above mentioned large-scale

international organizations, some smaller ones to which individual Herskovites belong operate on the theme of "dredge up old and isolated incidents to show how nasty Jews/Israel are." These include:

- "USS Liberty Remembered"—a 1/2 century-old tragic attack by Israel on a U.S. warship, shrouded in controversy and long ago "forgotten and forgotten" by the U.S. government—is Herskovitz's latest cause, per some of his postings on utterly unrelated threads on the *Michigan Daily* website.
- Deir Yassin Remembered—a case from the 1948 War of Independence in which Palestinian civilians were indeed killed by Israeli forces, for which the Israelis themselves have repeatedly expressed guilt, is an annual "Jew bash" day in Ann Arbor and elsewhere, with the local cheerleader being sometime-synagogue harasser, coop boycott advocate, Shirley Zempel.
- Electronic Intifada—a "Jihadi-lite" website on which Herskovitz regularly posts.



Charles Louks

I'll conclude by reiterating what many already understand: that criticism of specific Israeli policies is sometimes both warranted and legitimate. But that's not what the Herskovites are doing. Instead, they deny Israel's very right to exist and openly support Jihadist groups like Hamas, that have genocidal goals toward Jews in general (not just Israelis). And apart from this overt anti-Semitism they similarly demean/defame Arabs/Muslims by treating them as children, endlessly unaccountable for self-destructive behaviors and beliefs that are central to their undeniable misery. All this is window-dressed by self-congratulatory verbiage about "human rights," "peace," and "progressive" values, none of which they remotely embody, any more than Michael Vick, who in 2007 was convicted for his role in an extensive and illegal interstate dog fighting ring, embodies an "animal lover."

Such tunnel vision critics of Israel operate along a spectrum that ranges from the well-meaning but addled ("anyone who suffers at a given moment is more virtuous than those who don't, irrespective of the real historical complexities involved"), to the truly malicious and anti-Semitic (whether from a disease of the soul or the psyche). The Herskovites and their local apologists individually exhibit this range, although the most visible (per Aisner's and the above) cluster at the latter end of the spectrum.

Despite the forbearance toward them, and the "just ignore them and they'll go away" position shown by many in the local Jewish and wider

community, the recent Ft. Hood shootings suggest that folks with Herskovite ideologies shouldn't be treated so cavalierly and dismissively.

Likewise, the advanced age of many of these "geriatric Jihadis," as I call them, has also been a source of comfort to many (the "wait em' out and they'll just die off!" approach). But most are spring chickens compared to, say, the late Holocaust Museum shooter, an 88-year-old white supremacist.

Groups like the international anti-boycott academic group "Scholars for Peace in the Middle East" (SPME), a chapter of which may soon be forming at the U-M, have long ago recognized that such folks are ignored only at one's peril. One hopes the wider Ann Arbor community, including the Jewish one, becomes a bit more proactive in promoting Federation Director Shtulman's goal of making these people into the "pariahs" they so richly deserve to be. ■

Steve Pastner is an internationally-known sculpture and retired anthropology professor who has done extensive research in the Islamic world. He also has published on extremist cults and sects, hence, in part, his interest in the Herskovites.



Thom Saffold

Herskovitz name change

Henry Herskovitz, the subject of the article "False Witnesses" [WJN, December 2010], wrote to clarify that his original birth certificate shows that his given name was Henry Herskovitz. He further explains that it wasn't until two years after his birth that his parents legally changed their surname to Henry, thus amending the original birth certificate on August 6, 1948. Known for many years by friends and coworkers in Ann Arbor as Henry Henry, Herskovitz did revert back to his birth surname of Herskovitz at some point prior to founding his group that pickets weekly at Beth Israel Congregation. Herskovitz also questions the WJN article's motives in addressing this point, stating, "Perhaps he [Aisner] was calling into question the authenticity of my Jewish roots." Herskovitz offered no explanation in his correspondence with the WJN as to why his parents changed their name or why he chose to revert back to the surname Herskovitz.

Crisis in Haiti

Jewish community mobilizes giving to Haiti

By Jacob Berkman

NEW YORK (JTA)—The Haitian earthquake has been a major fund-raising boon at the Krieger Schechter Day School in suburban Baltimore.

The Jewish elementary school normally collects about \$200 per week from its 420 students, and the money goes to various charities. But when the school's headmaster, Paul Schneider, decided to direct last week's giving to the American Red Cross to help the Haitian relief effort, the weekly tally jumped to \$4,600.

"A fair amount of it was from children cracking open their piggybanks," Schneider told JTA.

The American Jewish community has cracked open its collective piggybank as Jewish organizations small and large have raised millions of dollars to help in the relief effort following the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that shattered Port-au-Prince last month, killing an estimated tens of thousands in Haiti.

Dozens of Jewish organizations from the Reform movement to the Orthodox Union have set up links on their Web sites for constituents to donate money toward the relief effort.

Most have directed their giving to the American Jewish World Service and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee—two U.S.-based organizations that do work in the developing world—or to IsraAid, the Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid, a coordinating organization for 17 Israeli and Jewish humanitarian groups that has sent a team of rescue workers to Haiti.

As of January 19, AJWS had raised an estimated \$2.4 million to distribute to the grassroots economic development organizations it already works with in Haiti.

The JDC, the foreign aid agency backed by the Jewish Federations of North America, has brought in nearly \$1.5 million that it will direct to the Jewish Coalition for Disaster Relief, which is sending money to the Israeli field hospitals in Haiti. The coalition is comprised of some 30 organizations, including the Union for Reform Judaism, the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, World ORT, the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, AJWS and the American Jewish

Committee.

While some relief efforts have been slow to reach Haiti in the aftermath of the quake, on the ground Jewish dollars already are at work. The AJWS says that all of the 10 organizations with which it normally works in Haiti are now in emergency mode and have shifted focus to help in the aid effort.

For instance, one AJWS-funded group in the Dominican Republic that normally focuses on helping Haitians in the Dominican Republic has formed a caravan from that country to Port-au-Prince to bring feminine hygiene supplies, diapers and other needed items into Haiti.

Aside from providing funding for the IDF and IsraAid field hospitals in Haiti, which Israeli officials say can treat up to 500 patients per day, money from JDC and the Jewish Coalition for Disaster Relief is going to organizations such as Heart to Heart International and Partners in Health to provide emergency medical supplies.

If past experience is any guide, some of the money the Jewish community raises in the coming weeks for Haiti relief will not be spent for months or even years. In the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia, B'nai B'rith International raised \$900,000, which it spent on relief and rebuilding efforts over the next four years. Similarly, the JDC took five years to spend the \$18 million it raised following the tsunami.

The immediate days following the earthquake tend to be the most critical for fund raising. About 90 percent of the \$18 million the JDC raised for Southeast Asia was raised in the month immediately following the disaster.

The president of AJWS, Ruth Messinger, said it becomes more difficult to raise money when the issue disappears from the headlines.

"This is when most people get alerted to the situation," she said. "They want to know who is raising money and who has a plan for what is being raised and what they are doing and who can explain to us what is different and discrete about what we are doing."

Meanwhile, organizations and donors large and small are pitching in. Billionaire George So-

ros, who is Jewish, gave \$4 million to the relief effort through his Open Society Institute. The Workman's Circle and the New Yiddish Repertory are organizing a benefit concert for later this month with the goal of raising \$20,000.

The swiftness of the response owes in part to the internet and the flourishing in online giving.

By January 19, AJWS raised \$1.8 million from more than 16,000 people via its Web site. The JUF-Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago raised \$283,000 in five days from 2,200 donors. Almost all of it—nearly \$260,000—came in online, from 2,058 individuals. UJA-Federation of Greater Toronto raised \$173,240 so far, much of it online.

Those involved in the fund-raising effort say the Jewish community's gifts to the people of Haiti stem from Jewish values.

"Here is a vast group of people in desperate need, and we are committed to helping them, and in helping them we are bettering the world," said the executive director of the Workman's Circle, Ann Toback. "It combines our cultural identity with our commitment to social justice and improving the world."

Giving also provides a teaching opportunity said the Krieger Schechter school's Schneider.

"I think some of the older children understand what is happening in Haiti. I have talked to them about it. They are concerned. They wonder how these people are going to survive, what will they eat? Will they still be alive when someone finally comes to try to find them?" he said. "We talk to the children all of the time the importance of human life and 'pikuach nefesh'—saving lives. 'The children know all human life is sacred, not just Jewish life. This is an opportunity to teach that.' ■

Donations to the Haiti relief effort can be made via AJWS at ajws.org and via JDC at jdc.org

The amount of donations noted in this article, were as of January 20.

Locally owned ReCellular donates proceeds of used phone sales for earthquake relief

Mike Newman, special to the WJN

ReCellular is offering a new way for Americans to provide support to the millions of victims of the January 12 earthquake in Haiti. Used cell phones can be sent in by downloading a prepaid mailing label at www.phonesforhaiti.com, with the proceeds going to the American Red Cross' charitable efforts.

"The devastation in Haiti is slowly becoming all too clear," said Steve Manning, ReCellular CEO. "Sending in your used phone is a simple and effective way to help with the rescue and rebuilding efforts already underway."

There are an estimated 130 million phones retired in the United States every year. If even a small percentage of them are sent to Phones for Haiti, it would contribute millions of dollars towards relief from the devastating earthquake. ReCellular will give 100% of the phone value as a contribution to



the American Red Cross; charities have already earned more than \$20 million dollars in contributions through their partnerships with ReCellular.

With rescue and repair missions already underway, it is critical that funds get to the region quickly. By using the postage paid label, supporters can have their used phones to ReCellular within just a few days, allowing for the rapid distribution of funds. All phones are accepted, though newer phones will provide the most value to the charity—in some cases \$100 or more.

"The overwhelming response from all Americans to the crisis in Haiti reflects the depth of generosity of the American people," said Manning. "We are proud to be able to coordinate this opportunity when the need is so great."

With offices in the United States and Hong Kong, ReCellular Inc. is the world's leading electronics-sustainability firm. They provide solutions for the collection, reuse and recycling of used personal electronics that generate financial return for their partners, quality products for their customers, funding for charity organizations, and protection of the environment.

Op-Ed: The Jewish way of responding to natural disasters

By Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

NEW YORK (JTA)—See. Feel. Act.

These three words are Judaism's answer to the questions that occur to religious people at this time of great human suffering in Haiti.

There are two kinds of questions that we find ourselves asking when we are confronted with scenes such as the disaster that has struck the island nation.

On the one hand, we ask "why?" Or, more intensely, "How can God have allowed this to happen?"

On the other hand, we ask "what?"—"What can I, a single helpless individual hundreds of miles away from the tragic scene, do to help?"

Quite simply, our tradition insists that we "shelve" the first type of question. It has been asked before, perhaps millions of times over the course of history. Answers abound, and the theological literature deals with it at length. But none of the answers has ever totally dispelled the question.

Judaism insists instead that we ask the question of the second type. We must inquire as to the response that God requires of us. And to

that inquiry the answer is powerful and clear: See! Feel! Act!

First, we must "see." We cannot yield to the understandable temptation to block the scenes of suffering from our visual senses. We must watch scenes of the catastrophe and allow ourselves to be impacted by them.

Second, we must feel the pain of those who are suffering so horribly. We dare not anesthetize ourselves to that pain. We cannot allow ourselves to in any way explain the suffering away, with sick, silly, smug but sadly comforting statements such as "they must have deserved it." We must see the victims as humans no different from ourselves, innocent and blameless, who are in a condition of desperation and dire need.

And then we must act to respond to that need. There are always ways to act, no matter how distant we are from the scene of tragedy, no matter how impotent we might legitimately feel.

Moments of tragedy and crisis are not the times to philosophize about God. This is not the time to speculate about "why bad things happen

to good people." It is the time to ask, "What can I do to help those poor good people?"

Those of us who have lived lives of faith and religious commitment know that the answers to our doubts about God do not come forth from our philosophical quest. Rather they slowly issue from the context of a life of moral action, from deeds of charity and compassion.

The Jewish community, in its entirety, can be proud of its response thus far to the Haitian catastrophe. Rescue teams from the State of Israel and millions of dollars from the Jews of America are but examples of our response. Whatever the motivation for these responses, this has been a religious response, a Jewish response.

The way to deal with religious doubt and skepticism about God is to act compassionately and to respond generously, in faith and certainty, and in confidence that our actions will allow us ultimately to bear witness to God's benevolent love. ■

Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb is the executive vice president emeritus of the Orthodox Union.

Congregations

Temple Beth Emeth February activities

Rabbi Lisa Delson, special to the WJN

Women's Torah Study with Cantor Rose February 1 and 15

The Women's Torah Commentary provides great insight into the Torah, written by women for everyone. These two weeks, Cantor Rose will provide discussion for the weekly portions of Yitro and T'rumah. The first of these Torah portions teaches about leadership models and ways of interacting with one another. The second teaches about the free-will offerings that each person gives to the building of the Mishkan in the wilderness.

Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Robert Levy

Fridays, February 5, 12, 19, and 26, at noon
"Issues of Israel over Time and Space." Each week Rabbi Levy will lead a discussion on Israel as a hope, dream, fantasy, power, home and destination through the lens of Israel as an eternal idea and also a modern nation state. Feel free to stop by for one or all of the sessions. Bring your lunch.

TBE's Twenties and Thirties

Pot-Luck Shabbat dinner
Friday, February 5, 6:30 p.m. at Rabbi Lisa Delson's apartment

Last month TNT enjoyed Shabbat dinner at Tuptim Thai restaurant. This month they are celebrating Shabbat at Rabbi Delson's. It will be an evening of good food, Shabbat warmth, and even some board games. Bring a dairy/vegetarian dish to share. RSVP to ldelson@templebethemeth.org or call 665-4744, with what you are bringing and directions will be provided.

Bible, Morality, and the 21st Century with Dr. Cobi Sacerdoti

Monday February 8, from 7:30–9 p.m.

TBE hosts the third of a three-part course on Bible, Morality and the 21st century. This course looks at the emotional journey into the moral wisdom of the Bible where, arrogance, pride, jealousy, love and devotion impact human life. This class discusses the way Jewish ancestors' moral faults and strengths shape Jews today and serve as a lesson in the 21st century. Dr. Sacerdoti will discuss Absalom's Rebellion – nobody can acquire honor by doing what is wrong.

Dr. Sacerdoti, an Israeli-born scholar, taught Hebrew language and literature at the University of Michigan and was the department head of Hebrew at the Frankel Academy of Metropolitan Detroit. She has published many books and articles on a wide range of Jewish topics as well as Israeli life.

Movie Tuesday

February 9, 1–3 p.m.

Movie Tuesday is a free way to explore Judaism and Jewish culture through film for those with flexible schedules. In February, participants will watch *A Price above Rubies*, starring Renee Zellweger and Juliana Margulies. This movie charts the difficulties of one young, married woman in the Hasidic Jewish community. Child care is available with advanced notice.

Black and White Purim Masquerade Party

February 27

Purim is not just for children anymore. TBE is throwing a huge adult Purim party

on Saturday night, February 27. This year the adults get to party with a DJ, a Texas Hold 'Em Tournament, special themed drinks from the cash bar, and a costume contest. Come in either a costume of your choosing or dressed in all black and white. There will be music, desserts, and silliness to celebrate the Jewish victory over evil Haman. The party starts at 8 p.m. and tickets are \$20 each, purchased online at www.templebethemeth.org or at the door. This event is open to the entire Ann Arbor Jewish community.

TBE Purim Megillah Reading and Purim Carnival

Sunday, February 28, 5–7:30 p.m.

All are welcome to attend the annual megillah reading at Temple Beth Emeth at 5 p.m. in the sanctuary. Noisemakers of all kinds are encouraged to blot out the name of Haman, as Rabbi Levy does his animated reading of the Megillah. The carnival opens following the reading, with games for all ages run by the temple's AARTY youth group. Tickets to play the games are 4/\$1 and can be purchased at the carnival. Prize tickets are awarded and can be redeemed at the prize table during the evening. Pizza and beverages will be available for purchase for dinner. Sisterhood will again sell delicious hamentashen.

Families with Young Children Tot Purim Carnival

Sunday, February 28, 5:30–7 p.m.

Families with young children will get to celebrate Purim too this year. Join us for age-appropriate games, face-painting, and prizes in the lower level of the temple, while the big kids play upstairs. Come dressed in your favorite costume, kids and parents alike.

Parsha Mishpatim

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, special to the WJN

The Torah portion for Saturday, February 6, is called "Mishpatim." It contains the laws of the goring ox. The Torah distinguishes between two categories: the "shor tam," a bull that is not known to be a gorer, and the "shor mu'ad," a bull that has gored three times. Such an animal is considered dangerous and likely to gore again.



Rabbi Aharon Goldstein

Everything in the Torah can be understood on many levels. Thus not only does the law of the goring ox pertain to animals, it also applies to a person's soul. In general, the ox is symbolic of the animal soul. (According to Chasidut every Jew has two souls, a Divine soul and an animal soul.) The animal soul, by itself, is not necessarily bad. It has many positive qualities and is a powerful force that can be harnessed for good. Nonetheless, like the physical ox, it must be closely guarded to prevent it from inflicting damage.

The natural state of the animal soul is "a bull that is not known to gore." As it is created, the animal soul does not crave forbidden things, only those that are permissible and necessary to sustain life. If the animal soul falters and commits a sin, it is the exception rather than the rule, and runs contrary to its true nature. In this instance it is relatively easy to do teshuva (repent) and repair the damage.

However, if a person commits the same sin over and over again "until it seems permissible," he is considered "a bull that has gored three times." Having already been reinforced several times, his negative behavior is now second nature to him, and he is considered likely to repeat it in the future.

How does a person turn "a known gorer" back into "a bull that is not known to gore"? Simply by training it. According to Maimonides, the transformation is complete "when little children can poke [the ox] and it still doesn't gore."

The same rule applies in our service of God. The "repeat offender" must work hard on refining his animal soul and weakening its desires. Then, when he finds himself facing the exact same temptation, yet he remains strong and doesn't falter, his status reverts to "a bull that is not known to gore."

Of course, this is not an easy thing to accomplish, so the Torah offers us another method of attack. According to Maimonides, when a "known gorer" acquires a new owner, the slate is cleaned and the animal is considered "a bull that is not known to gore." Because the new owner relates to it differently, the animal's nature also changes for the good.

In spiritual terms, any Jew who wants to undergo a similar transformation must also acquire a new "owner," immersing himself completely in the realm of holiness: learning Torah, doing good deeds and engaging in prayer. His ingrained bad habits will automatically lose their grip on him, and he will become "tam" - literally "perfect and whole."

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah updates

Aura Ahuvia, special to the WJN

Beit Sefer changes

With enrollment slightly up, the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah opened a new classroom for its youngest complement of kids, welcoming former Hebrew Day School graduate and current University of Michigan freshman Sophia Blumenthal as its new teacher. The new class will be called *K'tanim*, Hebrew for little ones, and will include late preschool through first grade children.

The two remaining classes were also renamed. The new middle class, comprised of mostly second and third graders, will be called *Yeladim*, Hebrew for children. It is taught by the Beit Sefer's head teacher, Shoshana Maloff Jackson. The new older class, called *G'dolim* (older ones), includes students primarily from grades 4 to 5, with a few sixth graders.

Topics in this weekly school vary, with a mixture of teaching on holidays and Jewish values complementing an individualized Hebrew reading program. For enrollment information, contact Beit Sefer Director Aura Ahuvia, 975-9045 or Aura613@gmail.com.

Lay leader's training

The Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah has begun training a new group

of eight members to grow their skills as lay-leaders. The class, entitled, "Opening the Door," just met in January, and now meets monthly. Topics range from learning the general *matbeah ha-t'fillah*, or order of the service, to specifics such as how to effect smooth transitions or construct effective *kavannot*, or little teachings, within the service. Upcoming topics will include music, leading discussions, constructing good questions, and more.

Learning services continue

Last month became a living art museum, and participants became docents, as the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah revisited Jewish history as part of its monthly Learning Services. The "timeline of Jewish history"—a bright yellow rope looping around the entire room—held artwork created and shared by participants, who then told stories of war, peace, roiling disagreements, judges who were warriors, kings who behaved badly and more, as the group learned more about the broad sweep of Jewish history, and its impact in formulating our prayer service. Upcoming months promise to be no less colorful, even as the topics shift from history to specific prayers themselves.

Learning Services are held the first Saturday of every month from 10 a.m.–noon at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor. They are open to non-members, and no RSVP is necessary. For more information, contact Aura at 975-9045 or Aura613@gmail.com.

Session 6, February 6

The Shema. Why does this prayer stand at the center of Jewish faith? How can we unpack its theology? This session seeks to understand the Shema on multiple levels.

Session 7, March 6

The Amidah. Why does this prayer stand at the center of the Jewish service? How is it qualitatively different than the prayers which precede and follow it? How can we work with it in a more meaningful way?

Session 8, April 3 (first day after conclusion of Pesach).

The Torah Service. How did it evolve into its current form? What was its original intent? Why is it seen as the highlight of the service? How can Reconstructionist communities address the challenges this service poses, including making its deeper meanings more apparent and felt?



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Congregations

Beth Israel February activities

Elliot Sorkin, special to the WJN



Sarah Rontal (left) and Dana Margolis (right), BIC World Wide Wrap 2009

World Wide Wrap

On Sunday, February 7, at 9:30 a.m., Beth Israel will sponsor locally the "World Wide Wrap." This program is a project of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs that encourages Jews around the world to put on tefillin and pray together. Beth Israel will provide extra sets of tefillin and experienced tefillin teachers will be available to assist everyone who would like to participate in this important mitzvah.

Beth Israel is known for its post service Polar Bear Tefillin Photo that captures all the tefillin-clad participants in the out-of-doors, regardless of the weather.

Following the Shaharit service, participants will enjoy a brunch of bagels, lox, and coffee. Beth Israel's 7th graders will participate in the morning program.

Henry Gershowitz Memorial Shabbat

On Saturday, February 13, starting at 9:30 a.m., the annual Henry Gershowitz Memorial Shabbat will take place. Henry Gershowitz was a former president of Beth Israel. A regular on Saturday mornings, he always encouraged new members to participate in leading the service, thus fostering the kind of participatory service Beth Israel is known for today. On this Shabbat people are encouraged to learn to lead a new part of the service. It is followed by a Kiddush.

Walking with God —Medieval Texts through Modernity

This course, designed by the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, will present a wide range of insights and conceptualizations of God. Through exploring Sacred Texts of various time periods, students will engage in critical study and grow in their own relationships to God. This course will include reading one short essay in preparation for each session. Each session will include some small group text study and discussion. Texts will be distributed in Hebrew and English. In order to prepare materials in advance, registration is required. Contact Mary, at 665-9897 or email rabbisoffice@tds.net with further questions. It is not necessary to have participated before to join this course. All classes begin at 7:30 p.m. with Maariv, the evening service. This class, on February 2 and 9, will be facilitated by Rabbi Kim Blumenthal.

Kabbalat Shabbat Service with wine tasting

On Friday, February 12, the Shabbat Evening Service at 7:30 p.m. will be followed by a wine tasting event at 8:30 p.m. There is no charge for the evening.

How are various wines different from Manischewitz? What countries are making kosher wine? Where can I find a good selection in town? What do they really taste like? These "four questions" will be answered as well as others. Oenologist, Alan Lamphear, will lead participants through a tasting of kosher red and white wines available locally to grace one's table on Passover, Shabbat, or any other occasion. The wine tasting will be accompanied by dairy snacks, both sweet and savory. There is no charge for this program.

A Star Trek to Purim

On Saturday, February 27, at 7:30 p.m., Beth Israel Congregation will offer a full Megilla reading of the Scroll of Esther including a multi-media *purimshpiel* entitled "A Star Trek to Purim." This skit recounts the involvement of Captain Kirk and First Officer Spock from the Star Ship Enterprise in the Purim story. Framed as the Court Martial of Captain Kirk for violating the Prime Directive by



directly interfering in historical events, everyone, (both adults and children) are encouraged to dress in costumes (star fleet, science fiction, Purim

characters, and more). A Star Fleet Bar will provide hamentashen, hot cocoa and coffee throughout. A short service with a few surprises precedes the Megilla reading and will take place in the large Social Hall.

Purim Seuda brunch

A Purim seuda brunch with "juggling, shtik, and Purim mayhem" will be held on Sunday February 28, at 11:15 a.m., following the Shaharit service and Megilla Reading that starts at 9 a.m. There is a no charge for the brunch. Contact the Beth Israel office for further details.

Judaism 101: An Introduction and a Refresher

Judaism 101 is a continuing class meant for anyone who is looking to learn or review some of the fundamentals of Judaism. Two topics are still to be covered through the end of the course: Conservative Judaism and Sacred Texts. Each topic will be explored for three weeks. Adults are welcome to sign up for one topic, or two topics. Contact Mary at 665-9897 to sign up for this free course. All classes begin at 7:30 p.m. with Maariv, the evening service, and are facilitated by Rabbi Kim Blumenthal. The session on Conservative Judaism take place on March 10, 17, and 24. The sessions on Sacred Texts take place on April 21, 28, and May 5.

Amy Eilberg, first woman Conservative rabbi, to speak

On Saturday evening, February 20, at 8 p.m. Rabbi Amy Eilberg, the first woman Conservative Rabbi, will speak on "Listening for the Sacred in our Lives" at Beth Israel Congregation. Rabbi Amy Eilberg directs interfaith

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dialogue programs in the Twin Cities after many years working in pastoral care, hospice and spiritual direction. She teaches the art of compassionate listening in venues throughout the country. There is no charge for this presentation.

Dr. Burton Visotsky to be scholar-in-residence

Beth Israel Congregation will host Burton Visotsky, Ph.D. as Scholar-in-Residence from March 19–21. Dr. Visotsky is professor of Midrash and Interreligious Studies at The Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City. There will be four opportunities to learn with Dr. Visotsky. On Friday, March 19, at 8 p.m., Visotsky will present “The Dysfunctional Family as Moral Exemplar.” The evening will include Shabbat services at 7:30 p.m. preceded by a dinner beginning at 7 p.m. Reservations are required for the dinner part only. (Contact 665-9897 for further details). On Saturday, March 20, at 12:30 p.m., there will be a luncheon Kiddush and a talk entitled “Isaac Unbound.” On Saturday evening, March 20, at 7:30 p.m., Visotsky will discuss “Cairo to Qatar and Beyond—Jewish-Muslim Dialogue in the Past Five Years: One Rabbi’s Experiences.” On Sunday, March 21, at 9:30 a.m., Visotsky will present “Moses Goes to Hollywood.” This lecture series is funded by the Alfred and Alice Rosenberg Lecture Fund. All the presentations are open to the public at no charge. For more information, contact Mary at 665-9897.

Tot Shabbat

Tot Shabbat is a special Saturday morning service for parents and their children 2–5 years old on February 13 and February 27 at 11:15 a.m. that includes songs, stories, and prayers. This program is run by Peretz Hirshbein on the second Saturday of each month and Jessica Kander on the fourth Saturday of each month. Preschool-sized tables are set up for the regular Kiddush so that families may easily attend with their children following Tot Shabbat. There is no charge for this bi-monthly program.

Kehilat Shabbat and Moadon on Saturday mornings

This Saturday morning program for K–fifth graders will take place on February 13 at 11 a.m. It will include a morning service to celebrate, to schmooze and to learn, led by Gabe Pachter. Moadon, a gathering place for elementary school aged children, starts at 10 a.m. every Saturday, and provides a Junior Congregation experience at 11 a.m. on weeks where there is no Kehillat Shabbat.

Child/Parent Room

Starting at 9:30 a.m., parents have the use of Room 14 that is stocked with toys, books, and snacks during the morning service that lasts until 12:15 p.m.

General community is always welcome

All of Beth Israel’s events, plus all educational offerings are open to the general community, often at no cost. For further information, call 665-9897 or visit www.bethisrael-aa.org.

Purim in the Jungle

Brynne Stiefel, special to the WJN

Anyone who has celebrated Purim with Chabad over the past few years would already be accustomed to expecting the unexpected. Whether participating in the event involved a visit to the circus, a tour of Israel, or even being transported back in time to the European shtetl, it is clear that Chabad has learned the trick of bringing history and age-old traditions to life with a modern and fun twist—which is what Purim is all about — finding the hidden miracle in a stream of seemingly lucky and fateful events, and the complete transformation of desperation and grief to victory and joy.

This year’s Purim celebration promises to be even more unique. Purim in the Jungle, taking place on February 28 at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, will begin with a Megillah reading at 3:30 p.m., and be followed by a host of jungle-themed entertainment and amusements for all the family, including a full buffet jungle dinner. Nelson’s Wildlife Adventure will present a “Jungle Adventure,” featuring many animals from the wild, including a Brazilian Python, various wildcats, reptiles and birds. This is all besides the typical Purim singing and dancing and the annual masquerade contest, in which all children and adults are invited to participate.

Due to popular demand, Chabad requests that you book prior to the event if you would like to attend. Early bird bookings will receive a discount. Each child arriving in costume will receive a prize.

For more information, call 995-3276 or visit www.jewmich.com.

HDS Purim basket fundraiser

Rachel Siegal, special to the WJN

Purim is coming! And with it, the Hebrew Day School’s annual *Mishloah Manot* (Purim greetings and gift exchange) purchase and delivery service. The mitzvah of giving of gifts to one another on Purim helps create a sense of community. There is a rabbinic teaching that we should not only give gifts to friends, but to someone who is new to the community, to those who are needy, and to those whose spirits would be bolstered by knowing that someone cares.

Each year, HDS parent volunteers, led by Jennifer Siegel and Stephanie Chervin, pack over 400 Purim gift bags filled with delicious gourmet items, including many Israeli products. The baskets are delivered to community members with a card containing a personal greeting from every family who has ordered a gift bag for that recipient.

The price to add your name to the list of people sending bags to a particular person or organization is \$10 if the recipient is already on the HDS Purim recipient list, or \$15 for other community members. Should one wish to send bags to all current HDS families and staff, the cost is \$150.

If you would like to participate in the mitzvah of *Mishloah Manot* at HDS, email purimbaskets@hdsaa.org or call the school at 971-4633. Orders will be accepted until February 8.



“The few and the just” continued from page 8

anti-Israel, but many people who are truly concerned about fairness for all the inhabitants of the Middle East are proud supporters of Israel and the best interests of the Israelis.

The group ideology is a substitute for real life, real feelings and opinions. It’s a prepackaged way of thinking, complete with its own jargon. Participating in group activities gives meaning to life, and little by little edges out other aspects of life until the group essentially becomes one’s life.

Jewish Witnesses for Peace and Friends is not interested in peace. If they were, they would not use such a disruptive tactic as the vigil. The very fact that it causes so much pain and distress to the members of the congregation would be reason enough for a normal person to abandon that tactic, or more likely, never take it up to begin with.

I became a member of the Beth Israel Congregation, and am so grateful for the kindness and forgiveness I have received there. Where I am right now on the issue of Israel and Palestine: I’m trying to find out more, and I don’t have the answer. But I don’t pretend to. And I have zero confidence in the solutions put forward by people such as those in the vigil group who talk in slogans and think in absolutes. I don’t think that carrying a sign about peace or justice is the same thing as taking the actions necessary to create the conditions of peace and justice.

The vigil was born of a lie, that the congregation’s rabbi would not allow someone to speak about the cruelty of the occupation because the congregation supposedly “wasn’t ready.” In fact, that person was not allowed to speak because he wanted to say that the modern state of Israel as a Jewish homeland should never have been created in the first place. The signs displayed in the vigil give the impression that the congregation is jingoistic in its support for Israel and completely indifferent to the humanity of Palestinians. Since becoming a member of the congregation, I have never heard anyone in Beth Israel demand uncritical support for Israel’s policies, and have heard frequent expressions of compassion for the plight of suffering Palestinian civilians. In truth, the congregation’s real crime, in the eyes of the vigillars, is its support for the existence of Israel at all. If their signs would say that, at least they would be honest.

The vigillars mean to be there forever, or at least as long as Israel exists as a Jewish homeland or Jewish state. They won’t admit that to outsiders, of course, because that would belie the image that they were reasonable people eager to negotiate, stymied by the brick walls of the synagogue. That’s not true. They don’t

want to negotiate or compromise. They are the most single-minded of ideologues, absolutely certain that they’re right and that anyone whose views are even a shade different from theirs is akin to the most heinous Nazi.

When I was in the vigil, we would defend ourselves time and time again against the charge that we were motivated by hate. “Hate? Us? Nothing could be further from the truth.” Now it seems clear to me that we were indeed motivated by hate, as well as by dissatisfaction with our own lives, by a romanticized view of one side of a complex conflict and a romanticized view of our own ability to change things. We hated ourselves, too—those of us in the group who were Jews. How else could a Jew go out of his or her way to present Jews as the arch-villains of the world? “The term ‘self-hating Jew’—how ridiculous!” we used to say.

But how appropriate the term actually was.

So, those are some of my reflections about my involvement in the vigils. My intent is not to give the vigillars yet another outlet for their propaganda and more publicity and I hope that by giving an account of certain anti-Semitic ideas that they express, I haven’t given new energy to those ideas. Anti-Semitism is a hateful, despicable phenomenon and needs to be denounced, period. I am hoping to shed light on what is already out there, because hatred and lies flourish in secrecy.

These are my own ideas, and do not reflect the opinions of the Beth Israel Congregation or any other organization. Thank you for reading this. ■

Laurel Federbush was a member of the Jewish Witnesses’ group when they began picketing Beth Israel Congregation in the fall of 2003. She ended her relationship with the group in 2007 and in 2008 became a member of the synagogue. She is a freelance harpist with a bachelor of music degree from the University of Toronto and a doctor of musical arts degree from the University of Michigan.



They deny Israel’s very right to exist and openly support Jihadist groups like Hamas, that have genocidal goals toward Jews in general (not just Israelis). And apart from this overt ant-Semitism they similarly demean/defame Arabs/Muslims by treating them as children, endlessly unaccountable for self-destructive behaviors and beliefs that are central to their undeniable misery.

Pluralism wars reignite, U.S. Jews join fight

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA)—A string of controversies has reignited the pluralism wars, prompting a loose alliance of American and Israeli Jews to wage a renewed campaign against Orthodox control in the Jewish state.

Among the litany of developments making headlines: The arrest of a woman for wearing a prayer shawl at the Western Wall; protests by fervently Orthodox, or haredim, against a parking lot open on the Sabbath and against the Intel branch in Jerusalem for working through the Sabbath; a battle over gender-segregated public buses; and the burial in Spain of a child converted to Judaism by a Conservative rabbi in a corner of a cemetery reserved for non-Jews.

In response, activists have organized protests in Israel and the United States against the perceived hegemony in Israel of haredi-aligned rabbis. Organizers say that their goal is to keep Jews caring about Judaism and Israel, despite what they describe as the increasingly alienating behavior of Israel's Orthodox religious authorities and members of the country's haredi population.

"People are saying enough is enough," said Andrew Sacks, director of the Israel branch of the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly. "You have a segment of the American Jewish community that cares deeply enough to want to change it, but you have a second less desirable effect, among younger people especially, that says if that's what Israel is all about, I don't want any part of it."

Rabbi Jacqueline Koch Ellenson, who directs the Women's Rabbinic Network, helped organize a day of solidarity and support of Women of the Wall on December 17 that encouraged Jewish women across the United States to hold meetings, read from the Torah or pray in support of women who choose to pray at the Western Wall, including those who wear religious vestments. Separately, another group is organizing a similar protest in San Francisco on January 10.

"My intent was to give people a way to support people in Israel, and to support Israel around an issue women and men feel strongly about," Ellenson told JTA.

"It is not 'Love Israel, right or wrong,' or 'I can't be connected,'" she said. "We need to look at the complexities of this country that we love, we can't reject it, nor can we be silent when there are issues that require our involvement."

Activists on both sides see the Western Wall as something of a battlefield. In recent years, the site's government-funded Orthodox rabbinate has banned mixed groups from singing, an action that precludes Israel and American Jewish youth groups from a tradition of bursting into Hatikvah to celebrate the wall's return to Jewish control in 1967.

One protest against the Orthodox monopoly took place in Jerusalem on the evening of November 28. Protesters marched from Paris Square to Zion Square in Jerusalem's city center, carrying signs that read "Iran is here—we're sick of haredi violence," "Jerusalem will not fall," and "We are sick of (religious) coercion."

Nofrat Frenkel, whose arrest at the Western Wall a couple of weeks before helped spur the recent demonstration, delivered a message that explicitly addressed the threat of the alienation of Diaspora Jews from Israel and religion.

"The crowd gathered here today proves to the Jewish people everywhere, in Israel and in the Diaspora, that 'offense against public sensitivity' is not the sole province of the ultra-Orthodox," the medical student and gay rights activist reportedly said. "We are also the public, the public who pays taxes and serve our country, in the IDF and National Service."

Michael Oren, the Israeli ambassador to Washington, told an audience of Conservative movement leaders that Frenkel was "led away" from the Wall, not arrested, the *Forward* reported. He later issued a statement correcting the misimpression and confirming that Frenkel was, indeed, arrested. Oren said he has asked his government to investigate why he was misled. However it is resolved, the incident illustrates the sensitivity of Israeli officials explaining the practices of their country's rabbis to American Jews.

Oren, who was in Israel, could not be reached for comment.

The flurry of controversies in Israel come at a time when American Jewish pluralism has become more expansive than ever. Guests at the White House Chanukah party ranged from Chabad rabbis to Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum, who heads Beth Simchat Torah, a gay synagogue in New York.

Some groups, particularly among the Orthodox, reject the activism as Americans imposing their mores on Israel.

Israel "is a country that has functioned with a certain understanding among its religious and not religious Jews," said Rabbi Avi Shafran, the spokesman for Agudath Israel of America. "If the activists don't want to alienate Jews, they shouldn't thumb their noses at the traditional Jews in Israel."

Shafran also noted that the most vocal haredi protesters were minorities within their own communities. Much has been made of the continued protests outside Intel's offices, but these were sharply reduced in number after a compromise last month that allowed non-Jewish workers to work through the Sabbath. But this has gone unnoticed, Shafran said.

"The main haredi groups were in favor of the compromise, but there are always holdouts," Shafran said.

Other American Orthodox leaders, however, fret about the possibility of alienation from Israel. They note that alienation could extend even to the modern Orthodox because of a recent crisis in conversion policy that has threatened to discredit the majority of Orthodox converts.

Rabbi Avi Weiss, who heads the Amcha activism group and Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, a liberal Modern Orthodox seminary, called for dialogue. "The greatest threat facing us, more than external enemy, is a divisiveness within our people that is so dangerous, God forbid, it could lead to calamity," he said.

Weiss noted that Orthodox authorities defend their actions by citing "*humra*"—the strict application of Jewish law. "In a world of *humra*, there's got to be a stress on the *humra*

of *Ahavat Yisrael*," the love of the Jewish people, Weiss said.

Abraham Foxman, the national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said Israel was suffering periodic social pangs that arise when there is relative peace, and suggested that these needed to be addressed indigenously, and not due to U.S. Jewish pressure.

"Every time there's a lull in daily threats of terrorist acts, normal life brings to the fore many of these unresolved social tensions," he said. "Some of them impact on relations with Diaspora Jews, but it's more important for Israelis to deal with them because of their own need of religious tolerance, than because of the Americans' need."

The New Israel Fund, a group that has long advocated for a role for Diaspora Jews in making the case for pluralism, welcomed the attention on the issues, said its spokeswoman, Naomi Paiss.

"The whole premise of the New Israel Fund is that you can love Israel and you can fix it," she said. "The Israeli government has a special responsibility—what is made law in Israel signifies the closest we have to a religious ruling, even for those of us who don't live in Israel. We American Jews do take this personally and we should."

An example was the 13-year-old boy who died this month in Madrid. The order to bury him in a segregated corner of the Jewish cemetery came from Rabbi Shlomo Amar, Israel's chief Sephardic rabbi.

NIF is currently organizing a petition drive among Jews in Israel and the Diaspora urging Yisrael Katz, Israel's transportation minister, to ban publicly funded buses from segregating male and female passengers.

"If he yields to haredi pressure, we expect to become louder in response both here and in Israel," she said. "We will use every means at our disposal to educate the American public about the issue." ■

Left and right join on religious expression statement

By Eric Fingerhut

WASHINGTON (JTA)—The Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Baptist Convention may butt heads over where the line ultimately should be drawn on the separation of church and state, but representatives of both organizations say they agree on where the law now stands—and with more than two dozen other experts they have come together to help explain it to the rest of the country.

After nearly four years of work, the organizational representatives have issued a 32-page document titled "Religious Expression in American Public Life: A Joint Statement of Current Law."

Written in a question-and-answer format and including extensive endnotes, the document explains the state of the law on religious expression, answering queries such as "Are individuals and groups permitted to use government property for religious activities and events?"; "May employees express and exercise their faith within secular nongovernmental workplaces?"; and "Does the First

Amendment place restrictions on the political activities of religious organizations?"

(The short answers: Yes with restrictions, sometimes, and no.)

Members of the 28-person drafting committee say they plan to distribute the document to state and local governments, civic and religious organizations, and other grass-roots groups. Having the document as a reference, the members say, can defuse many controversies over religious expression before they ever start.

"Frankly, a lot of the discussion of religion in public life in America when it hits the front pages or 24-hour cable shows is often presented in a hysterical mode that either a theocracy is being imposed" or that anyone expressing religious beliefs "is being run out of town on a rail," said Nathan Diamant, the Orthodox Union's director of public policy and a members of the drafting committee.

The significance of the document is "showing that there really is a lot of common ground and common understanding" on these issues, said Diamant, whose organization favors a low-

ering of the church-state wall on certain issues. "It has the potential to bring more sanity and civility to this area of the law."

The document also has the backing of the Anti-Defamation League, which generally sides with those fighting to maintain a robust separation of church and state. It "shows that religious expression 'is very much a welcome part of public life, but there are also lines we draw and shouldn't cross,'" said the ADL's director of legal affairs, Steven Freeman, another member of the committee.

The drafting committee included religious scholars; representatives of strict separatist organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union and People for the American Way; and leaders of a number of religious groups, including Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Christian groups spanning the political spectrum—from the National Council of Churches on the left to the American Center for Law and Justice on the right. In addition to the ADL and the OU, the panel included representatives from the Reform movement, the

American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress.

The drafters stressed that the document outlines the consensus on how the U.S. Supreme Court has defined current law, not the law as various groups would like to see it.

"There are things in the document that we're not necessarily pleased by, but they're current law," Freeman said.

"Sometimes the state of the law is not what we would like it to be, but we agree on what the current state of the law is," said drafter Richard Land, president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, which favors a more prominent role for religion in American public life.

Land quipped that if the report dealt only with the areas on which the groups agreed what they would like the law to be, "it would be a much shorter document."

Drafter Marc Stern, acting co-executive director of the American Jewish Congress, noted,

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Bar mitzvahs without God: Secular Judaism keeps next generation in the fold

By Sue Fishkoff

FOSTER CITY, Calif. (JTA)—When Mark Neuman celebrated his bar mitzvah seven years ago at the Peretz Centre for Secular Jewish Culture in Vancouver, B.C., he didn't read from Torah, wear a yarmulke or pronounce Hebrew blessings. He gave a talk on the psychology of Jewish humor.

His brother Ben's bar mitzvah "portion" was a report on their grandfather's escape from Nazi-occupied Poland.

That's typical in the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations, a loose-knit group of some two dozen North American communities that emphasize Jewish history and culture while eschewing Jewish ritual, faith and anything that smacks of a deity. In contrast to the better-known Society for Humanistic Judaism, founded in 1963 by the late Rabbi Sherwin Wine, Secular Jewish communities are lay led and emphasize Yiddish rather than Hebrew. But the philosophy and beliefs of both groups are quite similar.

"I feel Jewish," says Mark, now 20 and a teacher at the Peretz school. "To me that means upholding the culture. It's about the history, the Holocaust, the holidays, the language—all these are very important to me. But I don't believe in the religious aspects."

Now celebrating its 40th anniversary, the secular congress is tiny compared to larger synagogue movements. But it has demonstrated an ability to attract and hold its next generation in a world where most Jewish organizations wrack their brains trying to figure out what young people want. At a recent West Coast regional conference of Secular Jewish communities, two, three, even four generations showed up in family units, and the conference chairs themselves were two young women who had grown up in the movement.

"Our generation was all born into it," says Neuman, who came to the conference with half a dozen other 20-something secular Jews from Vancouver.

Fine, but why do they stick around? For 36-year-old Jamie Ireland of Castro Valley,

California, who grew up in a Secular Jewish community in Southern California, it's about seeking her comfort zone. She explored Hillel at college, but found it "too religious."

By contrast, national conferences of the secular congress were filled with the secular Jews she'd known since childhood. "It's where my friends were," she says. "I feel this is where I belong."

Other longtime members of Secular Jewish communities say kids stay involved because parents do. Instead of dropping off their children for religious school, parents in most Secular Jewish communities come inside for their own adult classes, modeling the concept of lifelong Jewish learning.

"It's very clear to us that our parents and grandparents are very committed to this," says 22-year-old Shoshana Seid-Green of San Mateo, Calif., who co-chaired this year's West Coast Regional Conference with her 20-year-old sister Ya'el.

There is a conscious effort to bring the next generation into the movement's leadership. Young people sit on the national board, teenage representatives elected by teenagers who attend national conferences join in, and at those gatherings, teenagers, parents and grandparents lead and attend many of the same sessions.

"The young people are really involved; they are not just window dressing," says the executive director of the secular congress, Rifke Feinstein.

Jewish secularism, which engaged a large number of American Jews in the early 20th century, seems to be making a comeback.

Jonathan Sarna, professor of American Jewish history at Brandeis University, has posited that as the Holocaust and Israel cease to resonate with young American Jews, they look to Jewish culture, history and ethical values as the basis for their identity.

Jews are more secular than Americans in general, and their numbers are growing fast: 37 percent of Jews claim to have "no religion," according to the 2008 American Religious Identification Survey, versus 20 percent in 1990. Among Americans in general, those figures were 8 percent in 1990, rising to 15 percent in 2008.

Younger Jews are more secular than their elders, according to the same study, and they are overwhelmingly the ones flocking to the new cultural expressions of Jewish identity: film festivals, music concerts, Yiddish classes. This all works to the advantage of the country's small but committed core of Jewish secularists. Their ranks aren't growing, but neither are they shrinking—both the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations and the Society for Humanistic Judaism boast about the same number of affiliated communities as they did a decade ago.

Seid-Green attended this fall's West Coast conference with her sister Ya'el, mother Debby Seid, grandmother Ethel Seid, and aunts Ruthy Seid and Rabbi Judith Seid (formerly of Ann Arbor), all of whom are secular Jewish activists.

"I don't think I was ever uninvolved," says Shoshana, who, like other young people at this conference, founded a secular Jewish organization on her college campus.

Grandma Ethel, like most first-generation secular Jews in this country, grew up with Labor Zionist parents, and went to Yiddish-speaking, socialist-oriented schools and summer camps. She brought up Judy, Ruthy and Debby as secular Jews, with a strong attachment to Jewish culture, history and ethical values, but no ritual or religion. She never held seders, she recalls, "just a dinner on the first night."

As the years passed, the family grew less stridently opposed to Jewish rituals, at least those

with a cultural or historical connection. Judith, one of 10 non-theistic rabbis ordained by the Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism, says when she got married, she and her husband bought a menorah. Her grandmother's response upon seeing it: "What's the matter; you getting religious?"

"I grew up with a Judaism that was a family, ethical, historical thing," says Shoshana, who admits she finds religion strange, but isn't hostile toward it. "I didn't meet religious Jews until college, and by then I was comfortable with who I was."

Wendy Berenson Garcia sends her 11-year-old daughter to monthly classes run by the Secular Humanistic Jews of the Tri-Valley, in Pleasanton, California.

Berenson Garcia grew up in a secular household—her mother, an avowed atheist, wrote a secular Passover Hagadda, which eliminated all reference to God. But she inherited a strong Jewish identity from that same mother, who fled Nazi Germany and bristles at the Christmas tree in Berenson Garcia's home.

If she hadn't married a Catholic, Berenson Garcia doubts she would have sent her daughter to the Tri-Valley Sunday school. "I want her to have a knowledge of the Jewish religion, so she knows what people are talking about," Berenson Garcia says. "If she ends up believing in God, that's fine. But I don't think she will, if she listens to her dad and me." ■

National secular Jewish organization has local roots

Laurence Kirchmeier, special to the WJN

"The idea for the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO) was an outgrowth of a conversation over bagels and lox," recalls Julie Gales, Jewish Cultural Society's *Madrikha* (philosophic and ceremonial leader). In 1968, her father Harold Gales was the president of the Jewish Parents Institute (JPI), a secular Jewish community in Detroit. "My Dad's goal was to bring together North American secular Jewish community leaders to share educational materials and to build a national community of like-minded people." He spent the next two years identifying and contacting secular Jewish communities and then organizing a conference. In 1970, the first conference was held at the Jewish Community Center in Detroit, and people from a dozen communities across the United States and Canada attended.

Members of Ann Arbor's Jewish Cultural Society attended that very first CSJO conference. Rabbi Judith Seid, then executive director of the Jewish Cultural Society, was one of the Ann Arborites attending the early conferences and promoting JCS' affiliation with the CSJO. According to Seid, "The CSJO would provide our members with a place in the international secular Jewish community. We wouldn't be an isolated outpost of cultural Jews, but rather a part of a larger movement." Forty years later, the Jewish Cultural Society continues to be the vibrant home for Ann Arbor's secular Jews and their families.

Holiday programming and life cycle celebrations at the JCS have a decidedly different feel than those in more religious Jewish communities. The emphasis is on understanding Jewish history, celebrating Jewish culture, and making connections between our collective past and our present. "Jewish rituals are reinterpreted to

make them relevant to modern day Jews," Gales states. "Prayers have been replaced with other creative outlets. Storytelling, plays, and readings by community members comprise much of the major celebrations, and the children always have a part in the observances."

The JCS Bar and Bat Mitzvah program focuses on helping students find their place in the chain of Jewish life. "The work the students complete for their mitzvah is a balance between community service, researching their own family history, writing about an aspect of Jewish life that is particularly interesting to them, and developing a secular Jewish identity project," says Julie Gales. "The celebrations are very personalized and inspiring examples of the student's commitment to their community and their roots."

Adam Liebowitz, JCS president offers that education doesn't end with the children's mitzvah celebrations. "Our adult education programming is as important to us as our Sunday School," stated Liebowitz. "When our JCS kids see their folks engaged in Jewish learning, they appreciate that their entire family embraces Jewish values." Reflecting on his own sons' experiences at the JCS, Liebowitz added, "My wife Cathy and I had our share of struggles getting our kids through Sunday School and the Mitzvah program, but now Avi and Jacob are interested in attending the First Friday Shabbat at JCS each month. We couldn't have expected that, but are so proud that they seek to have an active role in our Jewish community."

The Jewish Cultural Society meets at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor. More information can be found at www.jewishculturalsociety.org or by calling 975.9872.

Religious expression, from previous page

for instance, a disagreement among committee members about whether the IRS restrictions on the political activities of nonprofit organizations is constitutional—but they can agree that those are the rules the Internal Revenue Service has laid out.

And while there was disagreement on how much a supervisor can say about religion in the workplace to his employees, the members could agree on general principles.

The wide breadth of drafters should give the document credibility with both the left and the right, participants said.

"The drafters are as important as the draft itself," said Melissa Rogers, director of the Wake Forest University Divinity School's Center for Religion and Public Affairs.

Rogers led the effort after suggesting the idea at a Freedom Forum conference on religious issues in late 2005.

The document was modeled after a similar effort to clarify permissible religious expression in the schools that some of the same experts worked on in the mid-1990s. It was distributed by the U.S. Department of Education.

The committee never met formally in the same room, but exchanged drafts via e-mail over the past four years in a process that members described as cooperative despite the differences in opinions on the issues.

The committee did not have the time to confront every controversial religious question—the hot topic of federal funding for religious groups is not included, and such heated controversies as same-sex marriage and abortion are not addressed. And some sections of the document may not be entirely clear because the Supreme Court has not been clear, such as its muddled decisions on public display of the Ten Commandments.

But, Stern said, having a resource available that offers an informed view on the issues should help to cool the slogans and epithets that often are part of the debate on religious issues.

"The impact is not necessarily in a visible way," he said, but "in the fact that they show people what they're fighting about may not be worth fighting about" and "a lot of times what seems like a controversy goes away." ■



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ECC Preschool project benefits seniors' Chanukah gift bags

Natalie Wiesend, special to the WJN

Jewish Family Services (JFS) got a lift from the JCC Early Childhood Center's Kangaroo Room just in time for Chanukah. The Kangaroo Room raised \$258 to help JFS distribute 200 gift bags to senior citizens in the Ann Arbor area.

The Kangaroo Room teachers, Natalie Wiesend, Nancy Witter and Kelly Wade, began a long term Tzedakah project when the 3 and 4 year-olds became interested in putting money into the classroom tzedakah jar. Witter said, "Recognizing the children's good deeds on a classroom mitzvah tree (initiated by Wiesend) inspired them to bring coins for the tzedakah

pictures to add to the bags. The children made marker and paint drawings of menorahs and dreidels. They also created pictures of themselves and their families to give to the "bubbes and zaydes."

Wade said, "The children were really excited about this project. It was nice for them to have a plan for where the money was going. Plus, the children enjoyed making the bags and pictures for the seniors. They were glad to make gifts for others."

JFS Director of Older Adult Services, Abbie Lawrence-Jacobson, visited the Kangaroo Room to thank the children for all of their help. Lawrence-Jacobson brought in a box of gift bag



1. Sam Ball and his mother, Rebecca, put tzedakah in the tzedakah jar.
2. Talia Dauer picks out a picture to add to her gift bag.
3. Korinne Baker, Arielle Pedersen work on Hanukkah pictures to add to the gift bags.
4. Arielle Pedersen, Leor Bashan, Talia Dauer, David Gankin, Lewis Perry sort coins into containers.

box. Singing about Jewish values with ECC song leader Debbie Gombert also helped the children stay excited about helping others. Of course, family support of the child's giving was the most meaningful."

The teachers introduced the project to the children during classroom circle time. When the teachers asked the children what tzedakah is, they said, "Tzedakah is money to help people." "We give money to people who don't have any." "Tzedakah is food for people who need it." The children already understood the Jewish value of charity: giving to those in need.

The children brought in coins and dollars every week after that and put the money in the tzedakah jar. The teachers collected the money when the children were dropped off and at their weekly Shabbat celebration. The Kangaroo teachers felt pleasantly surprised with the amount of money that the families donated. The families were very generous and the teachers appreciated their support.

Towards the end of the project, the children learned the values of pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters when they sorted the coins into different containers. A preschooler said, "Some are dirty, some are golden and some are green!"

The children also helped count the money after sorting it by putting the coins in stacks. These activities fostered the children's counting and sorting skills. During the activity, a 4 year old said, "I have a stack of pennies. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. I have 5 pennies! Look how many pennies!"

The Kangaroos worked diligently during different times of the day to create Chanukah

supplies and each child helped put a gift bag together. The bags consisted of chips, cookies, a peppermint patty, chocolate gelt and a piece of children's artwork from the Kangaroo room. Lawrence-Jacobson told the children, "Many older adults with whom JFS works don't have family living nearby. These gift bags let them know that there are people thinking of them at Chanukah time. Your tzedakah project will bring light and joy to bubbes and zaydes who can't celebrate Chanukah with their own grandchildren. They will be so happy to receive your beautiful drawings!" The Kangaroo teachers were honored to work with JFS. The agency was very supportive of their efforts.

Deborah Renner, volunteer services and community outreach director for JFS, was extremely appreciative of the efforts of the Kangaroo Room students, families and teachers. "It's always wonderful to connect with members of the Jewish community to meet the needs of the seniors served by Jewish Family Services. The children learn about tzedakah and the older adults are always very touched by our Chanukah Gift Bag deliveries—everyone wins. JFS has many opportunities to get involved in serving the community and we're always happy to work with individuals and groups to find the right match for a service project," she said.

Reaching out to JFS created a sense of community in the classroom, according to the teachers. The project was a meaningful experience and genuinely nurtured an awareness of generosity and philanthropy for the preschool children. ■



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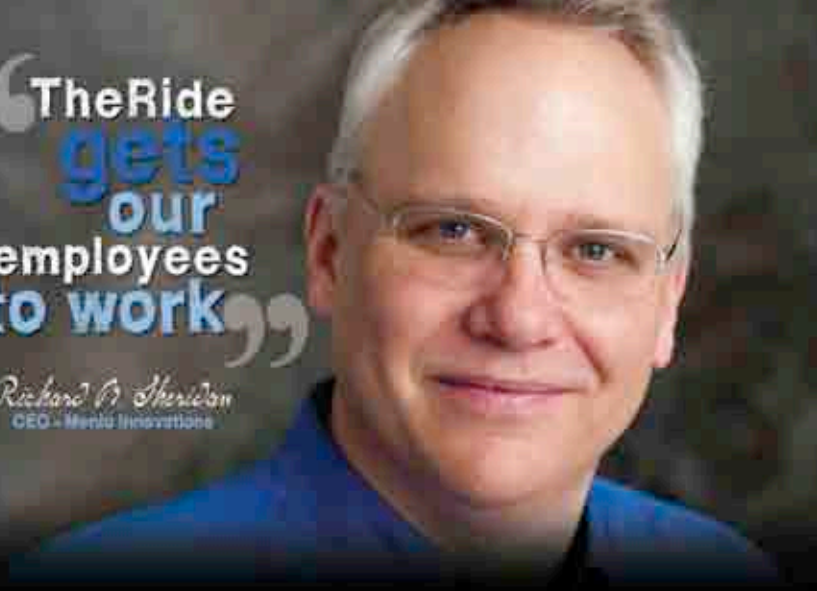
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Dating Jews—or not

Noa Gutterman, staff writer

Female seeking male. Petite female who loves reading good books, eating ice cream, and going to summer camp. Looking for tall, dark and handsome, 16–19 years old. 5'8" to 6'2" male who loves to watch movies, listen to music and travel. Must be a good cook. Needs an extrovert who's not afraid to talk about his feelings. **MUST BE JEWISH.**

While many Jewish teenagers, myself included, will say religion is an important factor in a future husband and/or wife, dating is an entirely different story. Living in America, as a religious minority, dating another Jew is not always a priority or even an option. It is easy to prolong the idea of marriage to that far distant place in the future where we will no longer worry about skin quality or cumulative GPA. However, as everybody's favorite love holiday approaches, I've been considering the idea that dating non-Jews for the rest of my life may eventually result in

a marriage to a non-Jew, a future that doesn't fit into my life plan. As kids, my sister and I asked our parents for their opinion on marrying other Jews. While they didn't explicitly say that they would prefer for us to marry other Jews, I understood, even then, that an intermarriage would not be their, or my, first choice.

In the book of Ezra, the Jews have recently returned from the exile to Babylon and have brought with them foreign wives and children. These wives and children were not Jews and we do not know whether or not they had interest in converting. All we know is that Ezra demanded that these wives and children be expelled from the small community of Jews. Just to be clear,



Noa Gutterman

I in no way support this. However, the fact that this kept Judaism alive in a difficult time is undeniable, and while it is inapplicable in our society, we are approaching a future that may lack a strong Jewish population. Activities such as Jewish youth groups, extra-curricular clubs, and Jewish summer camp help to facilitate Jewish dating in teenagers. But, even I find myself with non-Jewish dates for homecoming dances and potential valentines.

Intermarriage is a difficult issue. We no longer have to marry within monetary rank, social class, or even because of physical location. With modern technology we can send love notes via text message, profile

our personalities on Facebook, and even find our soul mates over the Internet. With sites like match.com and eharmony.com, we can find our valentines simply by comparing lists of interests and personality traits. We can choose to marry a non-Jew and still raise our children in Jewish homes. Some of my most religious friends were brought up in homes with only one Jewish parent and have still chosen to seriously practice their Judaism. There is no true way to ensure that a marriage of two Jews will produce Jewish children or that a mixed marriage will produce non-Jewish children. At the age of 17, I am sure that I don't have enough life experience to formulate my opinion on intermarriage. The experience that I have had with dating has not given me enough information to make a final statement about whether or not I will end up with a Jew or a non-Jew. But for now, "MUST BE JEWISH" will stay on my personal ad. ■

Your child is grounded: why that's a good thing

Dina Shtull, special to the WJN

Grounding your child doesn't necessarily mean he has to spend the rest of the evening in his room. Grounding your child can mean that he or she will be given the confidence, knowledge, and critical skills needed to successfully contribute to and navigate a diverse modern society. This is what grounding means at the Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor (HDS). Sending a child to HDS has a private school price tag; yet many parents feel it is priceless. In deciding to enroll a child in HDS, how can a prospective parent determine how much the education is actually worth? How does one assess the value of a girl who excels at learning languages because she was immersed in a second language in elementary school? How does one assess the value of a student who, in a literature class, can quote Biblical references?

Hebrew Day School recently conducted a survey as well as personal interviews of parents of preschoolers to explore views on Jewish education. Most parents are serious about their child's Jewish upbringing. Some parents value religious training; others focus more on the importance of practicing Jewish traditions, values and ethics. But all want their child to grow into a confident, proud, Jewish young person who will be successfully navigating our diverse modern society with its multiple and varied opportunities.

Some parents wanted to achieve this vision while enrolling their child in public school. Others wanted to opt for a Jewish day school education. They believed that through this type of schooling, they will most likely succeed in raising deeply-grounded, proud, and successful learners who, upon graduation, will contribute to a diverse world in a uniquely Jewish way. They believe that a Jewish day school offers the best education because it is immersed in the Jewish intellectual and ethical tradition—an education measured not in annual tuition, but in a myriad of unique experiences such as performing a play in modern Hebrew or questioning a passage in Biblical Hebrew. Parents who choose to spend their hard earned dollars on this kind of education often speak about TVMs—Tuition Validating Moments. "There have been many of them," says Peretz Hirshbein, Assistant Director of the JCC's Early Childhood Center, whose daughter came home from Tappan middle school and thanked him and his wife Laura



HDS Graduates, Class of 2009
Left to Right: Danielle Turner, Avishag Eliav, Maya Burgard

for having sent her to HDS. Abigail says: "My Jewish friends who did not go to a day school, don't really want to talk about being Jewish. I do." Abigail also commented about her ability to befriend Muslims and children from other ethnic background. "They are like me," she said (referring to their similar experience of being immersed in a culture).

How does a child who attends HDS excel academically, emotionally and socially in the comfort of the school and still remain a citizen of the world at large? Why is this formula worth the tuition? There are five main reasons.

HDS nurtures each and every child and provides unparalleled individual attention. Through its RTI system (Response to Intervention), a team of teachers and support staff meets regularly to discuss both the functioning of each class as a whole and the functioning of each individual child within that class. Services are provided to either advance or boost a student in a particular area, and progress is monitored closely. Every teacher knows every child, and every child knows every child. No one falls through the cracks. HDS parent, Jennifer Siegel, describes her experience: "Each of my two daughters has a distinct learning style. HDS teachers customize learning opportunities that are sensitive and effective. My girls are celebrated for their uniqueness. They receive personal attention that ensures success and builds self-esteem."

The curriculum that follows local and national standards is complemented with Jewish content, helping students identify with and participate in a proud intellectual tradition of questioning and analyzing that results in outstanding critical thinking skills. The day is infused with values on a daily basis, immersing children in Judaism's proud ethical tradition.

Each child is given the gift of a second language, and a language that is not only the primary language of the Bible, but one that also opens door to employment in high tech and international marketing. Israel is second only to North America in the number of companies listed on NASDAQ.

Children become deeply grounded and confident young people who feel comfortable with themselves, and proud enough of their Jewish identity to be part of a diverse world in a uniquely Jewish way.

Day School graduates tend to excel in their various pursuits. One recent graduate recently

won a national competition in web-site design (as part of a team of African-American students). Another student won a national writing contest sponsored by a Scholastic children's magazine. An HDS alumnus was the speaker at his University of Michigan graduation ceremony.

As families begin planning for their preschooler's entry into kindergarten next fall, the following checklist may be helpful:

Is your child's intended school a nurturing, caring, warm environment, where every teacher and administrator knows every child?

Does the school have a stellar reputation in critical thinking—in math, reading, writing, bilingual education, arts, and science?

Will your child develop a sense of comfort with her/ himself, a strength that flows from years of deep grounding in a personal identity based on values and ethics from his/her own tradition?

Will your child speak a second language by the time she/he approaches middle school, ensuring success in foreign language acquisition?

Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor is offering private tours for those who want to find out why families are choosing HDS for their children. Call 971-4633 to schedule a visit, find out more information about financial aid or learn about the HDS full day kindergarten. ■

Habonim Dror activities are just heating up

Yael Warshai, special to the WJN

The local branch of the Habonim Dror youth movement, Ken Pardes, ended last semester with a bang. About 30 kids aged ten and up attended the Chanukah party in December, complete with a messy *sufgania* (donuts) eating contest and silly theatrical performances of the story of Chanukah. The Ann Arbor group was joined by some new faces as well as their Detroit counterpart, the Ken Afikim youth group branch.

Also, about 10 local leaders just returned from the national leadership convention in the Pocono Mountains of Philadelphia. They brought back a renewed vigor and excitement for the semester to come and everyone is looking ahead to this summer at Camp Tavor,

which is located near Three Rivers, Michigan.

Youth group activities to come this semester include the annual Winter Olympics, where members will once again join with Ken Afikim in a series of friendly competitions in the snow. In addition, the older and younger kid sleepovers, and a promising new Tikkun Olam project are just around the corner.

For more information about Ken Pardes and Habonim Dror, contact Yael Warshai at yaelw07@hotmail.com or Ron Sussman at ronsussman@aol.com. New participants from ages 9–15 are always welcome. If you are interested in information regarding the summer camp, email Kate Sandler at registrar@habonimdror.org.

JCC Youth Department news

Deborah Huerta, special to the WJN

Maccabi Informational Meeting to be held February 9

Interested teens ages 13–16 and their parents are invited to attend an informational meeting about the JCC Maccabi Games on Monday, February 9, beginning at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor and is geared toward both new athletes and returning Maccabi athletes. At the meeting, families will be able to learn more about the JCC Maccabi Games, register for Ann Arbor's team, and begin planning for the 2010 Games. A free dinner will be provided for all meeting attendees.

The JCC Maccabi Games is an Olympic-style sporting competition that incorporates community service and social activities to combine for an unforgettable experience for Jewish teens. Ann Arbor sends a team to the Games each year; this year Ann Arbor's team will attend the JCC Maccabi Games in Omaha, Nebraska, from August 1–6, 2010. At the Omaha Games, teens will be able to compete in basketball, soccer, volleyball, bowling, dance, golf, swimming, baseball, table tennis, or tennis. Athletes of all abilities are welcome to participate and scholarship assistance is available to help defray the costs of attending the Games. Teens must be ages 13–16 as of July 31 to participate.

For more information about participating as an athlete, coach, or volunteer, visit www.jccannarbor.org or contact JCC youth director Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 971-0990. A limited number of spots on the team are available, so interested families are encouraged to contact the JCC as soon as possible.

Registration opens for Camp Raanana

Camp Raanana is the JCC's outdoor summer day camp for children entering grades K–8. Located on a beautiful private beach front at Independence Lake, the camp offers nine 1-week sessions each summer and provides swim lessons, arts & crafts, Judaics, nature exploration, music, sports, free swim, weekly special events or field trips, and Shabbat celebrations. Camp Raanana experienced record enrollment in 2009 and is busy preparing for another incredible camp season this year.

At Camp Raanana, campers entering grades K–2 enjoy the benefits of engaging camp activities and experienced and nurturing counselors. Campers entering grades 3–5 have the opportunity to enhance their camp experience by

choosing a different specialty each week; this year's options may include Boating, Digital Photography, Martial Arts, Drama, Drumming, Clay Creations, World of Sports, Edible Art, Dance, Silly Science, and more. Meanwhile, campers entering grades 6–8 participate in Camp Raanana's Pioneer Adventure Program, which features exciting field trips and fun mitzvah projects each week. Camp Raanana also offers a CIT program for entering 9th and 10th graders.

The camp dates for summer 2010 are June 21–August 20 (an additional Summer Fun Days program from August 23–27 will also be offered through the JCC). Camp registration opens in early February and brochures will be available at the JCC and at www.CampRaanana.com. The final registration deadline is June 1, but families are encouraged to register in advance to reserve their space and take advantage of savings op-



Campers having fun at the waterfront

portunities. Families that register by March 15 will be eligible for early bird rates, and those that register by May 3 will be entered in a raffle for a free week of camp and other prizes. Camp Raanana also provides scholarships to families who need financial assistance; the scholarship application deadline is April 15.

Camp Raanana hiring staff for 2010

Camp Raanana, the JCC's outdoor summer day camp, has several staff openings for this summer. Counselor-in-Training positions are available for teens who have completed 8th or 9th grade, Junior Counselor positions are available for teens who have completed 10th, 11th, or 12th grade, and Head Counselor and specialist positions are available for college and post-college students.

The Counselor-in-Training program is a fun and supportive program for teens who have completed 8th or 9th grade and are making the

transition from camper to counselor. CITs receive training and hands-on experience in child development, leadership and team-building, conflict resolution, program planning, and first aid. CITs also get to participate in social activities and special field trips. Teens may register for one or both four-week CIT sessions (\$360 for the initial four-week session, \$60 for a second four-week session) and will receive an honorarium for their work upon successful completion of the program. Teens must fill out an application and meet with the camp director to receive approval to enter the program. Accepted applicants will be required to attend several pre-camp training sessions in June. A limited number of CIT positions are available; interested families are encouraged to contact the camp director in January or February.

Teens who have completed 10th, 11th, or 12th grade are eligible to work as Junior Counselors at camp. This is a paid position that requires a four or eight week commitment. Camp Raanana's Junior Counselors work directly with a group Head Counselor who acts as a mentor and involves the Junior Counselor in planning and implementing all camp activities. Junior Counselors must have previous experience in a camp setting and be able to attend several pre-camp training sessions in June. Interested teens should contact the camp director in December or January to request an application.

Camp Raanana is also seeking mature and talented individuals to fill several eight-week Head Counselor and Specialist positions. Applicants for these positions must have completed at least one year of college (or equivalent), have previous experience in a camp setting, and be able to attend several pre-camp training sessions in June. Positions available may include lifeguard, arts & crafts specialist, Judaic programs specialist, sports specialist, nature specialist, special needs coordinator, aftercare coordinator, general counselor, and middle school travel group counselor. Applications will be accepting beginning in December; interested individuals should contact the camp director as soon as possible to request an application and obtain details about the available positions.

School's Out Program on February 15

On February 15, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor will offer a School's Out/JCC's In program from 8 a.m.–6 p.m. for JCC members only in grades K–5; middle school students may also participate as helpers for a reduced fee. Students will enjoy a

variety of fun activities at the JCC to celebrate President's Day.

The cost for the School's Out day is \$36 for care from 8 a.m.–4 p.m. (\$32 for additional siblings) and \$10 for Extended Care from 4–6 p.m. Registration and payment are due by Thursday, February 11. Students should bring a nut free, dairy lunch and appropriate clothing for playing outside.

February Break Programs

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor will offer February Break Fun Day programs from 8 a.m.–6 p.m. from February 22–26. Each February Break Fun Day will feature a fun field trip or special activity, plus crafts, games, and gym time or outdoor recess. Students may sign up for one or more days. Programming details for each day will be available in early February.

The February Break Fun Day programs are for JCC members only in grades K–5; middle school students are also welcome to participate as helpers for a reduced fee. The cost for each day is \$36 for care from 8 a.m.–4 p.m. (\$32 for additional siblings) and \$10 for Extended Care from 4–6 p.m. Registration and payment are due by Monday, February 15. Snow Days for Grades K–8

The Youth Department of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor will once again offer Snow Day programs this winter. On days when the JCC is able to open but Ann Arbor Public Schools are cancelled due to winter weather conditions, a Snow Day program will be offered from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. for students in grades K–5; middle school students may participate as helpers for a reduced fee.

Students will enjoy games, gym activities and fun in the snow under the supervision of youth director Deborah Huerta and other available staff. Students should bring a nut free, dairy lunch and appropriate clothes for playing outside (weather permitting).

The Snow Days program is for JCC members only and the program fee is \$50 (additional siblings and Kids' Konnection / Kids' Club participants receive discounts). Registration in advance is not required, but parents will be asked to fill out a registration form and submit payment when they arrive. ■

For more information on all JCC youth programs and camp, or to request applications, contact JCC Youth and Camp Director Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 971-0990.

The best kept secret in town—Keshet Ann Arbor

Milka Eliav, special to the WJN

The next generation of Hebrew is taking shape right here in Ann Arbor. Imagine this: 20-plus teens attending a Hebrew language high school course. Hebrew is these teens' language of choice. It proudly fulfills their foreign language requirement needed to graduate from high school and to enter many colleges and universities around the country. To be exact, not one course is offered, but rather four, each accommodating a different level, from introductory through intermediate to advanced. All classes cover a wide range of topics which support the grammatical and structural learning of the language. The courses adhere to standards set

by the Ann Arbor Public Schools, which require, for example, that teachers be "experts in their field" and that the course would be monitored by a public schools representative. Students' progress is evaluated through tests and other assignments, and grades submitted and registered in students' transcripts as is the case for every high school class.

These students, who come from all around town, opted out of French, German or Latin in favor of "Ivrit" (Hebrew). They learn everyday communication, develop and enhance their reading, writing and speaking skills in Hebrew, and enjoy hanging out with their peers during break time.

Sound incredible? Keshet Ann Arbor is

where all this is a reality. Keshet provides four weekly hours of Hebrew in the evenings for high school students in Ann Arbor. It employs highly experienced professional teachers of Hebrew and offers an optimal learning environment for its students. Students learn Hebrew as the modern, live, evolving language that it is today; they also engage with modern Israeli culture through movies, songs, language games and more. At Keshet, Hebrew "comes to life" outside the synagogue, and is marked as an integral part of a teen's high school education.

To join Keshet, students need one thing: the will to learn. Motivation is not an empty word here, it is the force that gets very busy

teens to class twice a week in the evening, after they're done with soccer, saxophone lessons or swimming; it is what drives them to dedicate at least five hours a week to language learning, and what makes their Hebrew time worthwhile.

Keshet is a unique joint effort by a number of organizations in town, including the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, Beth Israel Congregation and Temple Beth Emeth. It is also supported and sustained by generous Hebrew language lovers in the Ann Arbor community who value quality instruction and serious learning.



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Teens/Youth

Camp Gan Israel gears up for summer

Brynie Steifel, special to the WJN

There are many Ann Arbor children eagerly awaiting the summer's arrival this year, and there are quite a few who will give you the same reason why: Camp Gan Israel of Ann Arbor. "Our son cannot wait to go to Gan Izzy again next summer," attests Erika, a mother of an enthusiastic CGI camper, and there are many other parents who echo her excitement. Limor, who also plans on sending her son to camp this year, has warm memories from previous years. "My son loved getting up every morning to go to Camp Gan Israel. The staff was wonderful, loving and caring, and the different combination of indoor and outdoor activities kept each day exciting. He always came back with great stories."

If you speak to Camp Director, Shternie Zwiebel, she is quick to mention that she considers the success of the past 11 years to be mostly due to the one-on-one attention given to each and every camper. "Kids return year after year after building a strong connection with the counselors," she claims. Counselors are handpicked to ensure they have strong leadership skills and enthusiasm to create the safe, friendly and wholesome camp spirit that Camp Gan Israel campers have come to love.

Of course, the varied and creative schedule featuring onsite activities at the wonderful Clonlara campus, as well as camping excursions and trips don't hurt either. Lynn, who sent her five year old daughter to CGI last year, commented, "The hard work of the staff and Shternie is so evident in the fantastic and organized field trips, the special guests that arrive at camp who teach the kids about science, animals, dance and much more and just in the day to day activities and fun the kids have. My daughter absolutely loved it!"

This year, it seems, there will be even more to look forward to. In addition to the regular crafts, swimming, guest entertainers and sports activities, the camp has developed a special skills-building program to enable campers to master a new skill in a non-stress environment. At iCamp, children will have three hours a week to learn a skill of their



Counselor Chaya Cunin Campers Gaby and Hannah Bergman

choice taught by professionals from the Detroit Metro area. "The friendly atmosphere and nurturing environment allows children to grow in their skills and accomplish new things to make the child feel accomplished, and their summer a more meaningful one," explains Zwiebel, who is constantly searching for ways to make a child's camp experience even more memorable.

Another addition to this year's camp will be the welcoming of 4 year olds into the Junior Division, (catering to children entering pre K-1st grade), where a typical fun-filled day's schedule will include swimming, crafts and sport as well as the skills-instruction "iCamp" program. Highlights of each session will include bi-weekly trips and guest entertainers. The Sabra Division, (designed for children entering Grades 2-4), provides a mix of sports, swimming, field trips, educational activities and crafts. A week generally includes two trips, an overnight, and two choice program days as part of the all-new iCamp program. Much effort is taken in ensuring that each schedule provides age-appropriate fun, so that campers and parents alike enjoy a summer that will provide a lifetime of good memories. ■

Adventure Pioneers at Camp Gan Israel

Brynie Steifel, special to the WJN

After 11 years of directing Camp Gan Israel of Ann Arbor, Camp Director Shternie Zwiebel is proud to say that she feels it has "grown into a family of its own." With a growing attendance of over 100 children who return year after year, it is perhaps the parents who best explain the reason that this camp is so beneficial for their children.

"I really liked the personal attention my son received at CGI," Carrie Thorpe explained. This sentiment was echoed by many other parents, who were quick to appreciate the consideration and support their children received from their counselors.

Speaking to Zwiebel, it is easy to see why kids love coming to camp—she is totally committed to ensuring that each and every child is happy. "The true success of camp is the total devotion of the counselors to the camp and the campers," she explains, "it is so beautiful to see so many children joining together from all walks of life. It is a true Am Yisrael Chai." To that end, she not only ensures that her camp is run by a responsible, cohesive staff group, but takes great care in planning a varied and stimulating schedule for all campers.

Many children who have attended Camp Gan Israel in the past want to attend this year as well, even those who have outgrown the current

program. After discussions with parents and campers, the decision was made "not only to add a new division for the older child, but to pay attention to every detail in order give the kids a time of their lives." The Adventure Pioneers will be a completely separate division for children entering 5th-7th grades, with a new schedule especially geared towards this age group.

Longer and more frequent overnight trips are planned, and activities such as horse-riding, rock climbing, camping, amusement parks and teambuilding initiatives will be offered. The improved iCamp skills-building workshops, should also be a highlight.

"The reason for our continued change is to give the kids a fun-filled summer like they never had before with a taste of Judaism. That means keying in to this age group's greater ability for understanding group dynamics, self-discovery and adventure. So hand in hand with the swimming and athletics, hiking and skills-building activities, campers will experience the typical Camp Gan Israel friendship and spirit that creates last memories for each child," explained Zwiebel.

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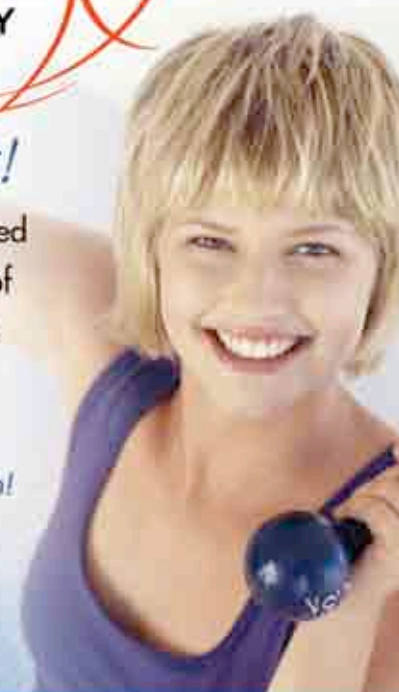
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Denmark: myths and facts

By Ben Harris

COPENHAGEN (JTA)—In the center of this European capital, just minutes walk from parliament and other institutions of Danish authority, sits the quasi-autonomous community of Christiania. Most of the literature describes it as a hippie commune, and that's more or less accurate. Streets are unpaved, buildings are covered in colorful artwork and surprises seem to lie behind every corner. Walking along the dark muddy streets one evening, I encounter a young girl in a fluorescent yellow vest riding a pony.

Along Pusher Street—the thoroughfare actually shows up on Google Maps—marijuana is sold nearly as openly as it is in Amsterdam. Several vendors sell varieties of hash and pot from small white plastic jars. Around the corner, a cafe boasts that it is the “safest in the world,” thanks to 6,000 armed police inspections in the past five years.

As with all experiments in utopia, time and the encroachment of commercialism have somewhat diluted Christiania's once idealistic *raison d'être*. There have been sporadic acts of violence in the recent past, and the drug trade attracts the usual litany of anti-social types. And while free love and communitarianism have given way, at least partly, to drug dealing and delinquency, the place still stands as something of a testament to Danish free-spiritedness and progressivism.

It is that same spirit that animates one of the central narratives of Danish Jewish history: the rescue of some 8,000 Jews—nearly all of Denmark's Jewish population—in 1943. The Jews were spirited away to Sweden over several weeks in October where, for the next 22 months, they were sheltered from the Nazi storm. In stark contrast to what transpired elsewhere in Europe, nearly all Denmark's Jews survived the onslaught. Or so the story goes.

Like many Holocaust narratives, this one has been subjected to some degree of revisionism in recent years. Danes profited more significantly, and were subject to considerably less risk, than the popular story would have us believe. According to a document prepared by Sofie Lene Bak, a historian at the modest Danish Jewish Museum, families paid as much as 50,000 kroner for their passage to safety—a sum equal to about \$200,000 in today's currency.

Though the whole story may not paint the Danes in quite as positive a light as the version

with which most of us are familiar, the fact remains that Denmark's Jews fared far better than their coreligionists elsewhere in Europe.

Like Christiania, the truth is less unvarnished than the myth. But there remains much beauty in the myth. And much truth, too.

No requirements

Bent Lexner lives in a row of modest but stately apartments overlooking Osterport Station in the eastern part of Copenhagen. Denmark's chief rabbi since 1996, Lexner is rushed the morning we meet, cutting short an early interview because of a death in the community.

Danish Jews can barely spare a soul; only about 2,000 are members of the Jewish community. And depending on how you count, there are perhaps as many as 8,000 or 10,000 more. No one really knows.

Lexner ministers to a population well integrated into one of the world's most secular cultures, a group that overwhelmingly does not share his Orthodox practice and has a high rate of intermarriage.

All of which has led Lexner to adopt a more pragmatic posture than many of his Orthodox colleagues. He counsels couples facing the prospect of an intermarried son or daughter not to pressure too much, not to cut ties and certainly not to sit shiva if the marriage goes ahead.

Children are admitted to the Jewish day school even if they are not halachically Jewish, though the expectation is that eventually a conversion will take place under Orthodox auspices.

I ask the community president, Finn Schwarz, if conversion was obligatory.

“You're in Denmark. We don't have requirements,” Schwarz tells me. “We have a common understanding.”

Denmark's Jews are disappearing—perhaps not entirely, not as individuals. But as a distinct religious subgroup, it's increasingly hard to see how the community can persist much longer in anything other than a highly truncated form.

In the middle decades of the 20th century, the community had about twice as many members as it has now. Lexner predicts that in 50 years the community will be “very, very small,” and really more of a “friendship club” than a religious community.

In a sense, Danish Jews are victims of their own good fortune. Virtually alone among Eu-

ropean countries, Denmark has been remarkably welcoming and protective of its Jewish minority. But that degree of openness has exacted its price, and the consequence may be the dissolution of a community with nearly 400 years of history.

You get a sense of some of that history at the Danish Jewish Museum, a typical Daniel Libeskind concoction with slanted floors and disorienting corridors that makes you feel slightly off kilter. It's an effect that works well in Berlin and Osnabruck, where the museums in question are meant to illustrate the discontinuity and anxiety wrought by the Nazis.

But Danish Jewish history is astonishingly uncorrupted by the sort of ruptures that beset other European Jewish communities. The museum is appropriately modest in size, but its display cases tell the story of a community embracing of its Danishness even as it absorbed successive waves of immigrants fleeing oppression in the East. Absent those waves, the friendship club of Lexner's imagination would likely have already come to pass.

The Danish lesson would seem to be this: In a peaceful, prosperous, tolerant, stable, democratic, liberal, bike-loving country—absent thronings of other Jews—Jewish life will wither.

Like I said, it's rather depressing.

Nothing rotten

Arne Melchior is my kind of guy. For starters, he sees the world like I do, in terms of the weather. Denmark's national character, he explains, has been shaped by meteorological conditions—neither too hot in summer nor too cold in winter, the mild Danish climate has helped forge a culture distinguished mostly by its moderation.

Second, Melchior is still spry at 85. Within minutes of taking a seat in his living room, he offers me a cigar, despite it being barely past 10 in the morning. And as the smoke fills the room, he launches into a spirited soliloquy about his homeland, leaping from the “golden balance” Danes have struck between socialism and capitalism to a spirited defense of Danish tax rates—the highest in the world, and he wouldn't have it any other way.

Melchior is an elder statesman of Denmark's most prominent Jewish family. His father and brother served as chief rabbis, and his nephew Michael is a member of the Knesset. Arne himself was a minister in two

Danish governments and served in parliament for more than a quarter-century.

A seventh-generation Dane, Melchior tells me that his grandchildren are the ninth generation of observant Jewish Melchior in Denmark.

Impressive, but one wonders for how much longer. Even Melchior, with his irrepressible Danish boosterism, sees the writing on the wall. In 20 to 30 years, he predicts, the community won't be able to support two rabbis any longer, or a cantor, or a synagogue choir. He even worries about the fate of the Jewish school, which is more than 200 years old.

When he tells me that Denmark's Jewish school has 85 percent of its tuition covered by the state, he launches seamlessly into a Talmudic sing-song defense of the practice.

“If I had four children, if they would not have been in the Jewish school, they would have gone in a public school and the state should pay anyhow,” he says. “Very fair—that is a very typical Danish example.”

Prayer time

On my final morning in Copenhagen, I awake before the sun—not such a great feat in Denmark in November, mind you—and head for the Great Synagogue for morning services.

The Copenhagen synagogue is located just off one of the main shopping streets in the city center, down a small winding lane that is the very definition of charming. Inside, barely a dozen men have gathered beneath the massive vaulted ceiling, painted in blue and gold. From the outside, the building is unremarkable and easily missed. But the sanctuary is large and regal, its size seeming to magnify the smallness of the number of worshipers.

The service already is under way and moving along at a good clip when I duck inside a few minutes after the 7 a.m. start time. I receive a curt nod from one man engrossed in his prayers, the closest thing that anyone comes to greeting me. A younger bearded man wearing a messianic Chabad kippah is present, but otherwise the group is composed entirely of men of late middle age.

By 7:35 the service is finished and, this being Denmark, several worshipers strap on their bicycle helmets and head out into the cold. ■

This article was adapted from Ben Harris' blog blogs.jta.org/wanderingjew.



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News Analysis: Can West Bank improvements hold in 2010?

By Leslie Susser

JERUSALEM (JTA) — In Israel and the West Bank, 2009 was the year that ended without a bang—and people were grateful for it.

For the first time in a decade, Israel experienced a year without a suicide bombing. According to official Israeli figures, five Israelis were killed in incidents in or with attackers originating from the West Bank (In all, 15 Israelis were killed in 2009 by terrorism, including nine during the Israel-Hamas war last January). By comparison, 17 Israelis were killed by West Bank terrorism in 2008 and 429 in 2002, at the height of the second Palestinian intifada.

Shooting attacks were down to 22 in 2009 from 83 the previous year, while the use of explosive devices fell to 13 from 54. Of the 633 recorded terrorist incidents in 2009, more than 90 percent were considered minor—including the throwing of stones or Molotov cocktails.

The decline owes both to Israeli and Palestinian practices.

The security fence Israel erected in the West Bank is proving to be a highly effective barrier against terror spilling over from the West Bank into Israel proper.

Inside the West Bank, besides the deployment of roadblocks and checkpoints, Israeli troops have honed a successful modus operandi around Palestinian cities: During the day they usually stay out of sight, and at night, acting on real-time intelligence, they move in on would-be terrorist cells.

More important than enhanced Israeli anti-terror capabilities, however, is the sharp decline in Palestinian efforts to wage terrorist attacks.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud

Abbas, in power since 2005, has consistently opposed the use of violence as a means of attaining Palestinian goals. He argues that when pitted against Israel's military superiority, it is ineffectual and ultimately self-defeating.

Terrorism also does not sit well with PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's two-year state-building project, which requires a modicum of stability and a great deal of international support.

The West Bank also is in the midst of a major economic boom, which a new round of terrorist attacks would undermine.

Underpinning the newfound calm is the successful training and deployment of local Palestinian forces, responsible for law and order in major West Bank cities. Since 2006, U.S. Lt.-Gen. Keith Dayton has been building a Western-style gendarmerie intended to provide the security foundation for the would-be Palestinian state. The carefully vetted recruits are sent on intensive four-month training courses at a base near Amman, Jordan, run by U.S., Canadian, British and Turkish instructors, and return to the West Bank imbued with new Western standards of policing.

The results on the streets have been dramatic: Armed gangs have disappeared and crime rates are down, and there is a new can-do social and economic atmosphere fueled at least partly by the new sense of law and order.

In the context of local Palestinian politics, the National Security Force, known derogatively as "Dayton's Army" by its detractors, is very much an arm of Abbas' Fatah Party. As such, it is helping to keep a lid on violence by its more radical Hamas

rivals. This also helps explain the decline in terrorist acts against Israelis in 2009.

The establishment of the new security force is an integral part of Fayyad's state-building plan. Not only are Dayton's men set to provide the security nucleus of the emerging Palestinian state, their uniformed presence on the streets is perhaps the most overt sign for Palestinians that their state indeed may be on the way, again reducing the incentive for Palestinian violence.

The law and order imposed by the combined efforts of the Israel Defense Forces and the Palestinian security force has enabled Israel to eliminate dozens of roadblocks and checkpoints, allowing more freedom of movement. This has helped accelerate the economic boom in the West Bank, itself one of the strongest brakes on Palestinian terrorism.

By any standards, the boom in 2009 has been impressive. Economic growth in the West Bank reached 7 percent—far higher than in Israel or the West. Tourism to Bethlehem, which doubled to 1 million in 2008, was up to nearly 1.5 million in 2009. New car imports increased by 44 percent. Gleaming new shopping malls opened in Jenin and Nablus. Palestinian developers are planning to build the first modern Palestinian city, Rawabi.

Law and order, the boom and the state building all augur well for peacemaking over violence.

"One of the things holding back progress towards a permanent settlement is an Israeli concern that there is no one on the other side capable of cutting a lasting deal," Shlomo Brom, director of the program on Israel-Palestinian relations at the

Tel Aviv-based Institute for National Strategic Studies, told JTA. "But the more you go forward on the state-building project, the more you will be able to overcome that lack of confidence."

Yet as encouraging as today's trends are, it all could unravel very quickly.

With Israeli-Palestinian peace deadlocked for more than a year, Palestinian leaders have begun showing a degree of ambivalence toward terrorism. In late December, Abbas commemorated the 50th anniversary of the birth of female terrorist Dalal Mughrabi, and the governor of Ramallah named a square in her honor. Mughrabi was one of the leaders of a 1978 bus hijacking in which 38 Israelis, including 13 children, were killed.

Also in late December, Abbas dubbed as "holy martyrs" three terrorists shot dead by IDF forces after killing a Jewish settler in a roadside shooting.

Security experts estimate that potential Palestinian militants have about 120,000 weapons hidden underground in the West Bank, all of which could come out should the situation deteriorate. That's aside from the possibility that in a crisis, Palestinian security forces could turn their guns on Israel; that happened when the second intifada broke out in 2000.

Past experience shows that economic prosperity alone is no guarantee of peace and quiet. Both previous Palestinian intifadas, in 1987 and 2000, erupted at a time of economic growth.

Whether the West Bank terrorism statistics rise or fall in 2010 could depend on whether or not serious peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians get off the ground. ■

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On Another Note

Deborah Katz, music educator

Sandor Slomovits, staff writer

For the past five years I've written here primarily about performing musicians, concerts and recordings. Last year I did profile an ardent music fan, and this month I'd like to introduce you to a music teacher. After all, where would we musicians, or our audiences for that matter, be without music teachers?

Deborah Katz is a longtime Ann Arbor resident and music educator. She is married to Ralph Katz, a well-known local clarinetist who I profiled in these pages a year ago. She is also the president of Temple Beth Emeth. We talked during the holiday break in December.

WJN: How long have you been teaching?

Katz: I start my 32nd year when I go back in January. I'm the band director at Scarlett Middle School. I also teach beginning band at Carpenter and Pittsfield Elementary schools. I started my career up in the Thumb.

WJN: Is that where you're from?

Katz: No. I'm from West Bloomfield. We moved to West Bloomfield in 1956. At that point it was a farm community. I always say to people that I grew up not in the West Bloomfield that anybody knows now. You could see from the window of my bedroom to our friends' house, three quarters of a mile down the road.

When I started teaching, there weren't a lot of women who were band directors.

I taught for about four years up in the Thumb. That was my introduction to what it was really like to be a band director. I did the K-12 music-teaching thing. After four years of that I needed to take a little time to think about whether that was really my life's work or not. I came back to school, did grad work at U-M, studied flute real hard and decided that I missed teaching, that that's where I wanted to be. But also, that I wasn't really a small town girl. I needed to be more in the city. So I worked part time in West Bloomfield for a little while and then got a full-time teaching job in Berkeley. Taught there for about six, seven years and then became coordinator of music for Ann Arbor Schools.

WJN: How long have you been at Scarlett?

Katz: It's my third year at Scarlet. I had six years at Pattengill, teaching elementary music and beginning band. I'm not moving again. This is my last one. Next one will be retirement.

WJN: What it's like to start out kids those first few weeks, when they've never touched an instrument before.

Katz: It's really exciting because they just can't stand it, they're so anxious to start to play!

WJN: When do they start?

Katz: Fifth grade. We spend about a month at the beginning of the year trying everything under the sun. They buzz brass mouthpieces, blow in clarinet mouthpieces and flute head joints, and pluck string instruments, find out what it's like to hold a violin under their chin. So they're very ready to play when we finally put instruments in their hands the first week of October. They're so excited you can hardly hold them back. The sounds are

interesting! (Laughter) For a while I taught at Dicken in the multi-purpose room, which was wide open, and the main office was right across the hall. I told the secretary that we start out making a lot of noise, and somewhere in the year it begins to transition to music, and that when she hears music for the first time, she should come and say something. And in February, she said, "Deb, it's music! I hear music!" That's really about the time frame, from when it's noise to when it becomes recognizably music.

WJN: So the strings and band instruments split up after that initial month?

Katz: Yes, I have a partner who is a string teacher and that first month we work together, having the kids try everything. Then the kids say what they want to do. Ann Arbor is such an amazing place. Practically nobody does what we do. Every child in fifth grade plays. There's no fee, they don't rent an instrument. We put an instrument in the hand of every single fifth grader. They play for a year, we don't ask them if they want to. We ask them what they want to play. It's just built into the curriculum in fifth grade. After that first month we assign kids to instruments, generally it's their first choice, and sometimes it's their second choice. Then we spend a couple of weeks on mouthpieces and barrels, they figure out how to safely put their instrument together and take it apart, how to make those first three or four notes. I tell them somewhere around Halloween that they now can make a sound that won't scare their parents too much, and they can take the instruments home. Then we can say to them, "So work on that between now and next time." Which is a great thing, because at that point they will.

This year, in some ways we're a little ahead of the game. They're playing Twinkle, which is six notes. We do a bunch of three-note stuff and a bunch of five-note stuff, and just before they went home for the holiday I gave them that sixth note.

WJN: How often do you meet with the kids?

Katz: Twice a week for 36 minutes. That six is just some thing that has to do with how many minutes of planning time classroom teachers need.

WJN: How has that changed over the years? Do you see the kids less, or more than you have in the past?

Katz: The biggest change is how they're grouped. When I first got to Ann Arbor, the model was that a group of music teachers, three or four, depending on the size of the school, would go into a school for an afternoon or a morning and they would pull kids out of their classroom in small groups. So they would have a flute class, and a clarinet class and a trumpet class. They don't do that anymore, for a couple of reasons. One is that the

demands on classroom teachers for progress with kids are so intense that they just don't feel they can afford to have an entire half-day, that's impacted twice a week, with kids coming in and out of the room. That really changes the way they have to teach. And also fiscal issues: we now provide planning time, where before we weren't part of the release time at all.

WJN: With the cuts in education funding in Michigan, what do you foresee?

Katz: We're immensely fortunate here. It's a community that clearly values music, and values instrumental music, in particular, very highly. And it's very vocal about that. We've basically been in a budget-cutting mode since I arrived here 21 years ago. Every year there's some discussion of reductions. A couple of times they've explored eliminating fifth grade instrumental music, and it's never come to pass because there's a great deal of will to have it, and there's perhaps not the will to fight the fight it would require to eliminate it. The finances of the state make that dicier now than it's been.

WJN: I'm not telling you anything you don't already know, but it's obvious that you don't get the kind of award-winning music programs like you have at Pioneer and Huron High, without the work you're doing in fifth and sixth grade.

Katz: I think that's very true. And it's also true that there's a strong commitment to

general music education and vocal music education starting in kindergarten. The fact that we've held on to that has a lot to do with how we're able to do our job in fifth grade. The kids come to us understanding a lot about music, having had a fair amount of aural training. They have some awareness of staff, of note reading. They have to relearn it all when you put an instrument in their hands, but they've had it before. And that's huge. If Ann Arbor were to take fifth grade instrumental music out of the mix, it would have an impact. It would be very fast, that change.

The general music component in Ann Arbor has changed, but it's incredibly powerful. It used to be a lot more focused on vocal training and there's certainly some people who do a great deal of vocal training, but it's much more a general music approach in elementary school than it used to be, and I think it's right for the time. The kids sing a lot, and they learn a lot and they're incredibly well-primed for what we do in fifth grade.

I've taught beginning band in sixth grade and in fifth grade over my career and in terms of the musical development of the kids if they start in fifth grade or sixth, I think it's a wash. What's different is the pool. If kids start in fifth grade then kids in kindergarten see themselves as a child who will play eventually.

WJN: Because they're in the same building.

Katz: Right. They see those cases walking down the hall, they talk to us. I talk with kindergartners and first graders every single time I'm at the elementary school. We're talking all the time about how many years it's going to be till they play and what they might like to play. So they get a huge amount of exposure to this and they see it as a foregone conclusion that they'll play. If you take that out of fifth grade and put it into middle school, even if every kid did it in sixth grade, the visibility piece is gone and I think that's gigantic. If it was going to start in sixth grade, it would have to be for all the kids and that would require a huge change in the way our sixth grade year is structured. By sixth grade now it's a choice. And a lot of kids choose to play.

WJN: How did you choose this? Did you grow up in a very musical family? Was it a foregone conclusion that you would play music?

Katz: It wasn't a foregone conclusion that I would play music. My grandfather, and my grandmother on my mother's side, who I never met, were both very musical people. My grandfather had a baby grand piano and one of my older brothers, who is just immensely innately musical, would sit down at that piano every day we'd go over there, and play. When he was about six, with a lot of begging and pleading for piano lessons, and my grandfather not using the piano in his house, it was moved to our house. He started piano lessons and I started a little after him. Couple of years of piano, but as soon as they put a flute in my hands I stopped playing piano, which was a huge mistake, but I was too young to understand that.

WJN: Who put a flute in your hands?

Katz: School. I started in fourth grade. We did a semester of recorder in fourth grade and then you could choose to play an instrument. My school had the chamber ensembles from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra came out every year and do little concerts. I remember Albert Tipton, he was the principal flutist in the DSO at the time, came and played at our school. I looked at that and said, "I want to play that."

WJN: That's how it works.

Katz: Yes. It took me awhile to figure out. I couldn't make a sound on the thing at all. My brother picked it up and played it immediately and my parents told him he wasn't allowed to touch it. I couldn't do it at all. It's good for me as a teacher, because I can say to my kids, "It took me a month to get a sound, but I figured it out." It also took me a couple of years to figure out that there was a connection between practice and success. Once I figured that out, I went from being the worst flute player in the school to being a competent player.

I didn't figure out at all that this was going to be my life's work until the end of my senior year in high school. I was planning to be a biochemist and was admitted to Kalamazoo College as a biochem major, had my roommate, and was all set to go off to school. Meanwhile, during my senior year at West Bloomfield High School, they

continued on page 30

"Everyone Knows"

*Wherever you go
someone will know
Jerry and Judie Lax*

*Their contributions are great
Do-gooders first-rate
They gladly pursue each task*

*So these gems we salute
And commend this tribute
Which all would agree are the facts*

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Jerry and Judie Lax**

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Calendar

February 2010

Monday 1

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email andre@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Tuesday 2

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., \$4/session or \$10/3 sessions; \$3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, and weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Portraits in Leadership: Jewish Learning Institute. “Timeless Tales for Inspired Living.” Winter semester course studies the inspiring life story of six figures whose courage and determination helped Judaism weather its darkest hours. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC.

The Bible in Its Time: JCC Seniors. Class led by Liz Fried. This semester’s topic is “The Prophets in their World.” Class is tuition free to Washtenaw County residents age 65 and over through Washtenaw Community College Department of Lifelong Learning. Registration at the first class. Contact Merrill at 971-0990 to register or for more information. 10 a.m.–Noon. *February 2 through March 23.*

Yiddish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster’s Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

“How to Sell on eBay”: TBE Sisterhood. 7:30 p.m.

“Walking with God Part I—Medieval Texts through Modernity”: BIC. Presented by Rabbi Kim Blumenthal. 8 p.m.

Topics in Jewish Law: AAOM. Class led by Rabbi Glogower covering various topics treated over a period of one to several weeks. Material is presented in English and Hebrew. 8 p.m. at U-M Hillel.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Wednesday 3

“48 Ways to Wisdom: Understanding of the Heart”: EMU Hillel. Knowing yourself is the essence of being alive. If you don’t know yourself, you’re not living. Learn some great tools for how to know yourself. 8 p.m. at the Hillel Building.

Thursday 4

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy—for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., \$4 or 3/\$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week’s news, 11 a.m.; \$3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Weekly special events and guest presentations (see description below); Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Presentation and Birthday Celebration: JCC Seniors. Birthday celebration for all with February birthdays featuring lunch and birthday cake for family and friends. Followed at 1 p.m. by a presentation by Elliott Gertel titled “So Near and Yet So Foreign: An Illustrated Tour of the Jewish Renaissance in Cuba.” The presenta-

tion will cover his humanitarian mission to the Jewish community of Cuba in April 2007.

Kick-Off Event: J Street Ann Arbor. Launch of local field office as Ann Arbor Brit Tzedek becomes part of new J Street National Field Program, an organization of the pro-Israel, pro-peace movement. 7–9 p.m. at the JCC.

Talmud Study Group—Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 5

Lunch and Learn: TBE. “Issues of Israel over Time and Space,” with Rabbi Levy. Noon.

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Tot Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Dinner, songs and popsicles. 5:30–7 p.m.

Super Bowl Tailgate Shabbat: EMU Hillel. 12:30 p.m.

Shabbat Dinner: TBE TNT. 20s and 30s dinner at Rabbi Delson’s. 6:30 p.m.

First Friday Shabbat: JCS. Once monthly Shabbat observation with songs, candlelighting, wine and challah. Includes short thematic program. Following Shabbat, there is a meal. This year’s theme for First Friday meals is “Local Ann Arbor,” focusing on local favorites, locally owned businesses, and locally grown foods. \$10/person or \$25/family of four for dinner. RSVP online at www.jewishculturalsociety.org. 6:30–9 p.m. at the JCC.

Friday Night Live Service: TBE. With Youth Choir and Middle School Shir Chadash. 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: See listing at end of calendar.

Saturday 6

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Chapel Minyan at 9:30 a.m.

Blood Drive and Pancake Breakfast: TBE Brotherhood. Sign up to donate blood at givelife.com with the organization code of TBE. Breakfast for all donors. 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Soul Food: Torah Study Lunch: EMU Hillel. 12:30 p.m.

Havdalah Hang Out: EMU Hillel. 6:20 p.m.

Concert: BIC. “Vision—Detroit School of Arts Male Ensemble Concert” in honor of Black History Month. 8 p.m.

Youth Group Concert Night: BIC Kadima. Concert presented by Detroit School of Arts Male Ensemble followed by ice cream and chance to meet some of the performers. 8 p.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah—for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat—Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: See listing at the end of calendar.

Sunday 7

The Culture of Jewish Objects: Frankel Institute. “A Day at the Institute” is an invitation to meet and study with the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies’ visiting fellows, at the Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit, 15110 West Ten Mile Road, Oak Park. Through a day-long program of seminars and discussions, explore the theme of *The Culture of Jewish Objects*. Cosponsored by The Jewish Forum, Federation’s Alliance for Jewish Education, and The Jewish Community Center of

Metropolitan Detroit's Seminars for Adult Jewish Enrichment (SAJE). \$40/including lunch. \$25 for students, Jewish educators and Jewish community professionals. 9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m. For more information, visit www.thejewishforum.org. To register, call 248-432-5692.

World Wide Wrap: BIC. Followed by a brunch. 9:30 a.m.

Storytime: BIC. For 3 and 4 year olds and their parents with BIC Librarian, Stacey Tessler. 9:30 p.m.

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book—for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Sixth Grade Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family Series: BIC. 11 a.m.

PB&J-a-thon: BIC Kadima. Peanut Butter and Jelly-a-thon at Jump City. Noon.

Photography Opening Reception: JCC Seniors. Senior Photography Exhibit Opening Reception where participants will view photos, meet local senior photographers as they speak about their work, and enjoy a reception with refreshments. 3–5 p.m.

Super Bowl Bash: EMU Hillel. 6 p.m.

Jewish Concepts—for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 8

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email andre@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Board Meeting: TBE Brotherhood. 6:30 p.m.

Board Meeting: TBE Sisterhood. 7:30 p.m.

Speaker: TBE. Dr. Cobi Sacerdoti will speak on “Bible, Morality and the Twenty-First Century.” 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday 9

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., \$4/session or \$10/3 sessions; \$3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including Mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Movie Tuesday: TBE. With Rabbi Lisa Delson. Viewing of the film *A Price Above Rubies* starring Rene Zellweger and Juliana Margulies. Noon.

Portraits in Leadership: Jewish Learning Institute. “Timeless Tales for Inspired Living.” Winter semester course studies the inspiring life story of six figures whose courage and determination helped Judaism weather its darkest hours. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC.

The Bible in Its Time: JCC Seniors. Class led by Liz Fried. This semester's topic is “The Prophets in their World.” Class is tuition free to Washtenaw County residents age 65 and over through Washtenaw Community College Department of Lifelong Learning. Registration at the first class. Contact Merrill at 971-0990 to register or for more information. 10 a.m.–Noon. *February 2 through March 23.*

Wii Bowling: JCC Seniors. Join SPICE for an introduction to Wii bowling. No experience or physical expertise necessary. For more information, phone Merrill at 971-0990. 1 p.m. *Also February 23.*

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Maccabi Info Meeting: JCC Teens. For interested teens ages 13–16 and their parents. Both new athletes and returning Maccabi athletes, along with their parents, will learn about the Games, register for the Ann Arbor team, and begin planning for the 2010 Games. Dinner will be provided for all attendees. For information, contact Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990.

Men's Torah Study: TBE. Discussion of the weekly torah portion led by Roger Stutesman. 7:30 p.m.

Heart Health and Healthy Eating for Women: Hadassah. Featuring UM cardiologist Lisa Jackson, MD, UM and cardiology nutritionist Kathy Rhodes, PhD, RD. Dr. Jackson will speak about cardiac concerns for women and Dr. Rhodes will present heart-healthy versions of famous Jewish recipes. Heart-healthy appetizers will be served and Dr. Rhodes will provide recipes. RSVP to Martha Young at marthayoung@comcast.net or phone 769-7523. 7:30 p.m. at the JCC.

Topics in Jewish Law: AAOM. Class led by Rabbi Glogower covering various topics treated over a period of one to several weeks. Material is presented in English and Hebrew. 8 p.m. at U-M Hillel.

“Walking with God Part I—Medieval Texts through Modernity.” BIC. Presented by Rabbi Kim Blumenthal. 8 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Wednesday 10

Jewish Mamas Group: JCC ECC. This group focuses on the book *Blessings of a Skinned Knee* by Wendy Mogul, which discusses how to raise self-reliant, compassionate and ethical children. Four sessions for \$60, includes cost of book, snacks and childcare. 10:30 a.m.–Noon. For information, contact Noreen DeYoung at 971-0990 or email noreendeyoung@jccfed.org. *Also March 10, April 14 and May 12.*

Battle of the Bands: Semi-finals: EMU Hillel. Join EMU students for this fourth annual competition between amateur rock bands to get to the finals in March. 8 p.m. at the EMU Student Center.

Thursday 11

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., \$4 or 3/\$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; \$3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Weekly special events and guest presentations (see description below); Literary Group with Sidney Warschusky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy—for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

Health Check and Music: JCC Seniors. At 12:30 p.m. a registered nurse from Care Response will take and record blood pressures and address questions. (This event is repeated the second Thursday of each month.) At 1 p.m. the popular “Happiness Boys” return with a performance of new songs.

Study Group—Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 12

Lunch and Learn: TBE. “Issues of Israel over Time and Space,” with Rabbi Levy. Noon.

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Tot Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Dinner, songs and popsicles. 5:30–7 p.m.

Kabbalat Shabbat: BIC. Followed by wine tasting oneg. 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Saturday 13

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Chapel Minyan at 9:30 a.m.

Memorial Shabbat: BIC. Henry Gershowitz Memorial Shabbat. 9:30 a.m.

Sixth Grade Shabbat Program: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

Kehillat Shabbat: BIC. For 1st through 5th graders. 11 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. For preschoolers and their families. 11:15 a.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah—for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat—Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 14

Beth Israel Café: BIC Women's League. 9:30 a.m.

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book—for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Bowling: BIC Chalutzim. Noon.

Jew-lentine's Day: EMU Hillel. Romantic comedy movie night. 6 p.m. at the Hillel Building.

Basic Judaism: TBE. With Rabbi Lisa Delson. 7:45 p.m.

Jewish Concepts—for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 15

School's Out/JCC's In: JCC Youth. On days when Ann Arbor Public Schools are closed but the JCC is open, the JCC Youth Department offers full day programs featuring field trips or special activities for JCC members only in grade K-5. Middle school students may participate as helpers for a reduced fee. \$36/day; \$32/additional siblings. 8 a.m.–4 p.m. For information, contact Deborah Huerta at 971-0990 or email deborachhuerta@jccfed.org.

Womens Torah Study: TBE. With Cantor Annie Rose. 7 p.m.

Tuesday 16

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., \$4/session or \$10/3 sessions; \$3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including Mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, and weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

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Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Book and Film Club: TBE Sisterhood. 7:30 p.m.

Topics in Jewish Law: AAOM. Class led by Rabbi Glogower covering various topics treated over a period of one to several weeks. Material is presented in English and Hebrew. 8 p.m. at U-M Hillel.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Wednesday 17

Caregiver Conversations: JFS. Monthly drop-in educational and support group for adult children in a variety of caregiving roles for aging parents. This month's topic is “The Importance of Preventing a Fall.” Caregiver Conversations is sponsored by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, and co-sponsored by the JCC, AARH, TBE, BIC, and JCS. For information, contact Abbie at 769-0209 or email abbie@jfsannarbor.org. 6:30–8 p.m. at the JCC.

“48 Ways to Wisdom: Awe.” EMU Hillel. In the face of tremendous force like the Grand Canyon or a hurricane, human beings feel small. Master your power of awe. 6:30 p.m. At the EMU Student Center.

Meditation: TBE. 7:30 p.m.

Thursday 18

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., \$4 or 3/\$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; \$3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Special events and guest presentations, 1 p.m.; Literary Group with Sidney Warschusky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy—for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

Discussion: JCC Seniors. Allison Pollock, MSW, Jewish Family Services geriatric social workers will be available for discussion at 12:30 p.m. At 1 p.m., Janet Basset, Elder Law Specialist, will lead a discussion on legal aspects of aging for seniors and their families.

Games Night: TBE Brotherhood. 7 p.m.

“Ethical Responsibility—What Compels One to Act?.” Crazy Wisdom Bookstore Salon Series. Featuring Rabbi Nathan Martin, assistant director of UM Hillel; Reverend Ken Phifer, long-time peace activist and senior minister emeritus of First Unitarian Universalist Congregation; and Irene Butter, professor emerita of UM School of Public Health. Facilitated by Susan Ayer, long-time editor of Washtenaw Jewish News. For more information, contact bill@crazywisdom.net or phone 665-2757. 7 p.m. at Crazy Wisdom Books, 114 South Main Street.

Talmud Study Group—Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 19

Lunch and Learn: TBE. “Issues of Israel over Time and Space,” with Rabbi Levy. Noon.

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Tot Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Dinner, songs and popsicles. 5:30–7 p.m.



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“**Shema Yisrael: The Mitzvah of Sacred Listening**.” TBE. Rabbi Amy Eilberg, first woman ordained by the Conservative movement, visits Ann Arbor this weekend. Rabbi Eilberg will give a talk as part of the third annual community-wide Jewish spirituality program. Dinner at 6 p.m. followed by a service at 7:30 p.m. Also, performance by adult choir, Kol Halev. For more information or to reserve a dinner, call 665-4744 or visit www.templebethemeth.org.

Adult Shabbat Dinner: TBE. Salmon Dinner. To reserve, call 665-4744. 6 p.m.

Breakfast for Dinner Shabbat: EMU Hillel. 6 p.m. at the Hillel Building.

Friday evening services: See listing at end of calendar.

Saturday 20

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Chapel Minyan at 9:30 a.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah—for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat—Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

“Listening for the Sacred in Our Lives:” BIC. Rabbi Amy Eilberg, nationally known for her work in Jewish spirituality and healing, will give this talk as part of the third annual community-wide Jewish spirituality program. Program will begin with Havdallah at 8 p.m. For information, phone 665-9897.

Shabbat services: See listing at end of calendar.

Sunday 21

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book—for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

The Soul of Tikkun: Spiritual Practice and Social Action Workshop: JCC. Rabbi Amy Eilberg is the featured guest for the third annual community-wide Jewish spirituality program. This all-day workshop will explore the connection between our inner lives and our actions in the world. \$30 per person including meals; \$5 for students with ID. For more information or to register, go to www.jewishannarbor.org and click on event link.

Tanya—Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Tie-Dye and Tights: EMU Hillel. Tie-dye shirts for local social service agencies while watching Mel Brooks’ comedy classic *Robin Hood: Men in Tights*. 6 p.m. at the Hillel Building.

Basic Judaism: TBE. With Rabbi Lisa Delson. 7:45 p.m.

Jewish Concepts—for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meaning to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 22

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email andre@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

February Break Fun Days: JCC Youth. During the February school break, the JCC Youth Department offers full day programs featuring field trips or special activities for JCC members only in grade K-5. Middle school students may participate as helpers for a reduced fee. Students may sign up for one or more days. \$36/day; \$32/additional siblings. 8 a.m.–4 p.m.; \$10 for aftercare from 4–6 p.m. Reg-

istration due by February 15. For information, visit www.jccannarbor.org or contact Deborah Huerta at 971-0990 or email deborachhuerta@jccfed.org. *Through February 26.*

Tuesday 23

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m.; \$4/session or \$10/3 sessions; \$3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, and weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Portraits in Leadership: Jewish Learning Institute. “Timeless Tales for Inspired Living.” Winter semester course studies the inspiring life story of six figures whose courage and determination helped Judaism weather its darkest hours. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC.

Wii Bowling: JCC Seniors. Join SPICE for an introduction to Wii bowling. No experience or physical expertise necessary. For more information, phone Merrill at 971-0990. 1 p.m.

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster’s Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Men’s Torah Study: TBE. Discussion of the weekly torah portion led by Roger Stutesman. 7:30 p.m.

Topics in Jewish Law: AAOM. Class led by Rabbi Glogower covering various topics treated over a period of one to several weeks. Material is presented in English and Hebrew. 8 p.m. at U-M Hillel.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Wednesday 24

Busy Women’s Lunch: TBE. Zingerman’s Roadhouse at 11:30 a.m.

“48 Ways to Wisdom: Mastering Fear”: Roller coasters and horror movies—we pay good money to be scared out of our wits. Find out how to harness the energy of “fear” for positive purposes. 8 p.m. at the Hillel Building.

Thursday 25

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., \$4 or 3/\$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week’s news, 11 a.m.; \$3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Special events and guest presentations, 1 p.m.; Literary Group with Sidney Warschusky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy—for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

Discussion: JCC Seniors. Pre-Academy Awards discussion of which films have been nominated and who may win. Led by Russ Collins, Executive Director of the Michigan Theatre. 1 p.m.

Talmud Study Group—Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 26

Lunch and Learn: TBE. “Issues of Israel over Time and Space,” with Rabbi Levy. Noon.

Meditation: TBE. 1 p.m.

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Tot Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Dinner, songs and popsicles. 5:30–7 p.m.

Friday evening services: See listing at end of calendar.

Saturday 27

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Chapel Minyan at 9:30 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. For preschoolers and their families. 11:15 a.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah—for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat—Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Adult Purim Costume Party: TBE. \$20 per person. Reserve online at www.templebethemeth.org.

Grand Gala Purim Celebration: Chabad. Come dressed in costume for a big party with Purim Shpiel, Megillah reading, gragars, dancing, singing, food, door prizes, hamantashen, raffles and fun. 7 p.m.

“Star Trek to Purim” Service: BIC. Service at 7:30 p.m. followed by annual Megillah reading extravaganza and Purim Shpiel at 7:45 p.m.

Megillah Reading: AAOM. 8:30 p.m. at U-M Hillel.

Shabbat services: See listing at end of calendar

Sunday 28

Purim Services and Activities: Chabad. Services with Megillah reading at 9 a.m. Send out Mishloach Manot (Purim Baskets) during the day. Dinner and Megillah reading at 5:30 p.m.

Shaharit Service and Megillah Reading: BIC. 9 a.m.

Purim Morning Service: AAOM. 9:30 a.m. at UM Hillel.

Purim Celebration: JCS. Games, crafts, music, a Purim shpiel and costume parade. Pizza and hamantashen available for purchase. Costumes encouraged. 10 a.m.–noon at the JCC.

Tanya—Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Purim Seudah Brunch: BIC. Featuring juggling, schtik and Purim mayhem. 11:15 a.m.

“The Silver Age of American Jewish Music is Happening Now:” Ann Arbor District Library. Presented by Jack Zaiantz, an Ann Arbor research scientist who blogs about contemporary Jewish music at <http://teruah-jewishmusic.blogspot.com>. Mr. Zaiantz will play music and offer a roadmap of the contemporary Jewish music scene, a case study in social networking Jewish music, and the greatest Jewish song you’ve never heard. 1–2:30 p.m. at the Downtown Library, 343 South Fifth Avenue. For more information, call 327-4555.

Purim Megillah Reading and Carnival: TBE. 5 p.m.

Basic Judaism: TBE. With Rabbi Lisa Delson. 7:45 p.m.

Jewish Concepts—for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meaning to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Weekly Friday night Shabbat services

Shabbat Service: AAOM. Services held at UM Hillel. 4:45 p.m. Call 994-9258 in advance to confirm time.

Shabbat Service: BIC. 6 p.m.

Shabbat Service: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 5:30 p.m. followed by Shira at 6 p.m.; Shira: Traditional Service at 7:30 p.m. For information, call 665-4744.

Shabbat Service: Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah. 6:15 PM at the JCC the last Friday each month. Musical Shabbat service followed by vegetarian potluck. Tot Shabbat with optional kid’s pizza dinner at 6:00 PM. All are welcome to attend. For information, call 913-9705, email info@aarecon.org or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Service: Chabad. Begins at candle-lighting time. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals and Jewish holidays. Call 995-3276 in advance.

Weekly Shabbat services

Shabbat Services: AAOM. Morning service, 9:30 a.m. Evening service, 35 minutes before sunset. Call 662-5805 for information. Mincha/Ma’ariv with Seudah Shlisheet and Dvar Torah every week. Torah topics and a bite to eat. Discussions led by Rabbi Rod Glogower and other local scholars. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals. U-M Hillel.

Shabbat Services: BIC. 9:30 a.m.; 6 p.m. Mincha. Morning childcare from 10 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Shabbat Services: AA Reconstructionist Havurah. Discussion-based format with topics changing monthly. For info, email info@aarecon.org or call 913-9705 or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Services: Chabad. Morning services at 9:45 a.m. Afternoon services 45 minutes before sundown.

Shabbat Services: Pardes Hannah. Generally meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Call 663-4039 for more information. 10 a.m. Led by Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg.

Shabbat Services: TBE. Torah Study at 8:50 a.m. Chapel Service at 9:30 a.m. Sanctuary Service at 10 a.m. Call the office at 665-4744 or consult website at www.templebethemeth.org for service details.

Home Hospitality for Shabbat and Holiday Meals: AAOM. Call 662-5805 in advance.

Home Hospitality and Meals: Chabad. Every Shabbat and *yom tov* (Jewish holiday). Call 995-3276 in advance.

Phone numbers and addresses of organizations frequently listed

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM)
1429 Hill Street 994-5822

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah (AARH)
P.O. Box 7451, Ann Arbor 913-9705

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC)
2000 Washtenaw Ave. 665-9897

Chabad House
715 Hill Street 995-3276

EMU Hillel
965 Washtenaw Ave., Ypsilanti 482-0456

Jewish Community Center (JCC)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 971-0990

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 975-9872

Jewish Family Services (JFS)
2245 South State Street 769-0209

Jewish Federation
2939 Birch Hollow Drive 677-0100

Pardes Hannah
2010 Washtenaw Ave. 761-5324

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE)
2309 Packard Road 665-4744

U-M Hillel
1429 Hill Street 769-0500

Shabbat Candlelighting	
February 5	5:32 pm
February 12	5:13 pm
February 19	5:29 pm
February 26	5:58 pm

continued from page 25

hired a new band director, a woman. There were no women then. She was one of two in the state of Michigan, who were band directors.

WJN: What year was that?

Katz: 1971–1972. There were no women playing in major orchestras, certainly not in the wind section, maybe in the back of the string section. It never entered my mind that this was something I could do. It wasn't that I said, "Oh, I can't do this, because a woman can't do this." I never thought of it as being a possibility. I thought of being a biochemist, and I didn't say, "I can't be a biochemist because I'm a girl." My mother was very prominent in metro Detroit, working. I didn't question that I could or would work. But it never entered my consciousness that I could be a musician. It wasn't that I thought of it and discounted it. It didn't come up. And then this woman, June Ludwig, came to work in our school district, and I absolutely fell in love with the way she worked, and second semester I had all my credits to graduate, so I dropped all my classes and worked with her all day. I taught during the summer some, and at the end of that summer, I remember going out to the back porch and saying to my parents one evening, "We have to talk. I don't want to do this. I don't want to go be a biochemist. I don't want to go off to this school that's brilliant in science. I want to be a musician. I want to be a music teacher." To my parents incredible credit, they didn't say, "What, are you crazy?" They didn't say, "Well go to school for a year and think about it." They said, "So, what do you want to do?" And, tears streaming down my face, I said, "I don't know."

So we talked for a little bit and they said, "Go over to the high school and talk to your counselor." So I went the next morning and said, "I've come to this understanding. This isn't what I want to do. What do I do now? Where could I go to school?" And he got on the phone and got me an audition that afternoon at Oakland University, where the DSO wind players were applied faculty. At that point Irv Monroe was the principal flutist for the DSO and I played for him and apologized all over the place that I hadn't prepared an audition and he said, "Any musician who means anything can play an audition any minute." I'm not sure I agree with that! (Laughter) But, he invited me to come to school and I started the next day.

My parents taught me a lot about the wisdom of listening that day. ■

Ethiopian Cuisine and Hospitality

David Erik Nelson, staff writer

Blue Nile co-owner Habte Dadi originally had no interest in restaurants: He came to Louisville, Kentucky, from his native Ethiopia in 1981, following in his older brother's footsteps to attend university and study business. Eight years later, while working as a consultant, Dadi happened to walk into the original Blue Nile restaurant (then in Detroit), and he fell in love with both the restaurant and the owner's sister, Almaz Lessanework. Shortly thereafter Dadi and Lessanework married and came to Ann Arbor, where they opened their own Blue Nile (221 E. Washington, 998-4746). The couple have been "partners both ways" every since.

The Blue Nile's trademark offering is their "Ethiopian feast": a platter ringed with tidy portions of seven dairy-free vegetable dishes (red lentils, cabbage, yellow peas, spicy peas, mixed veggies, green lentils, and greens). At the center are four meat dishes: mild chicken cooked in herb butter, chicken in spicy berbere sauce, tender lamb cooked in garlic and onions, and shredded beef simmered in berbere sauce (this last something like a spicy dream brisket). All are eaten without utensils; parties dine family style around traditional woven "basket tables," picking up their food using strips of injera bread (a supple matzot, like a spongy crepe). These dishes are made from fresh and local ingredients, often purchased at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market just a few blocks away. All fat is trimmed from the meat, which is then marinated overnight in fresh lemon juice; the results are both lean and succulent. And, of course, since it is a feast, dinners are encouraged to enjoy "all you care to eat." As Dadi explains: "Everyone has a different taste; each of these foods has a different flavor, texture ... taste all of these, and then make a decision. Should they care to eat, they can have as much as they want to This kind of dining takes time. We never rush the people.... If we offer a feast, then guests have to have time to enjoy it."

Two Blue Nile beverages deserve special note: the coffee and the wine. The coffee—bold, sweet, and slightly astringent—is brewed from the Blue Nile's own freshly roasted organic, Fair Trade yrgacheffee imported from the Kaffa region of Ethiopia. (Coffee takes its name from Kaffa; the plant is indigenous to the Kaffa highlands, and was discovered there in 850 C.E. by a shepherd curious to determine the cause of his flock's "queer antics" after they cropped the ripe berries from the bushes. A stimulating beverage brewed from the roasted pits of the coffee plant's ripe cherries quickly gained a reputation throughout



Almaz Lessanework and Habte Dadi

the Middle East, then spread world wide.)

While the Blue Nile offers a full bar and a wide variety of beers and wines, their jewel is the Blue Nile label honey wine, which Dadi proudly offers as "the best wine on the planet." Honey wines were separately discovered and developed throughout the world. Most are like the European meads associated with Viking feasts: strong, heavy, syrupy, and often cloyingly sweet. Ethiopian tej, on the other hand, can be strong, but is smooth and light. The Blue Nile's honey wine, made with hops, is light and sweet, but still complex, complimenting their spiced, garlicky cuisine.

Although Dadi and Lessanework excel in the kitchen, it is not just their culinary zeal that has kept them afloat, especially in such lean economic times. According to Dadi, "I love cooking because I love the people, and if I love the people then I have to serve something I believe is good. And also, I want to make my living, and in order to make my living I have to be with the people What excites me at the Blue Nile is seeing the people walk in and look around at the basket tables like they've never seen them. The second thing that excites me is when they come from the cold air and have their hot towels. The hot towels, we serve them to clean their hands with, but at the same time they use them to clean their face, which is already frozen in this cold weather. To offer that, it really excites me The other day I was standing by the host stand, and a couple of ladies walk in, it was terribly cold—'Woohooohooohoo! It's so cold and my face is frozen!'—and I didn't get a chance to serve them at their table, just to serve them their hot towels while they are standing at the host stand, and I can't tell you how happy they both were, just the look on their faces, just shining. People love this, and I love to see that."

Despite the constricted economy, Dadi and Lessanework have maintained their "all you care to eat" menu, "because we are serving the loyal customer that has been with us for years. I

still see the person I saw in 1992, still coming, so how can I quit on him?...Everyone is cutting back, losing jobs...one of the reasons that we survive now... is because one of the major customers we have is the Jewish community, and so we are really very supportive." The Blue Nile has enjoyed long, close relationships with the Jewish communities both in Ann Arbor and the Metro area—often contributing to fundraising efforts with Jewish Family Services both here and in West Bloomfield—but Dadi and Lessanework hardly limit themselves to working only within the Jewish community. According to Dadi, "I just

love to be with the society and community, and just be helpful to any kind of association, as long as it is helpful to the community."

As the economy has tightened, the Blue Nile has chosen to eschew harsh cutbacks and downsizing, instead looking to sustain themselves by expanding and diversifying their business, offering more, and further opening themselves to the community: The Blue Nile is once again open for lunch, with an expanded and seasonal menu, kosher catering, and even wider days and hours of operation to "give customers more options and more alternatives in the menu...we have to deal with customer ability and affordability ...Everybody is cutting back, looking for something little, a small plate."

Along with an expanded menu and hours of operation, Dadi and Lessanework have also physically expanded the Blue Nile, doubling its size. The restaurant can now accommodate parties as large as 200, using either conventional tables or the traditional Ethiopian basket tables. The Blue Nile also offers a semi-private 60 person dining area that can be separated from the main restaurant for receptions and other large gatherings, as well as two fully private rooms. Each private room seats around 18 people, and has separate climate control, audio/visual capabilities, and white boards tastefully concealed in dark wood cabinets; while these spaces are especially popular with the university and corporate clients looking to host large working lunches, they are also great for family gatherings or small parties.

Throughout the year Dadi and Lessanework hope to add new special and ongoing events, such as Sunday Brunch. Dadi is especially eager to launch a daily Ethiopian-style kaffeeklatsch (in Ethiopia, coffee traditionally goes hand-in-hand with schmoozing). In mid-February the Blue Nile will celebrate Valentine's Day with live entertainment and a special lover's menu—which Dadi and Lessanework suggest might best be accompanied with a few glasses of their honey wine, a "dangerously romantic drink." ■

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Vitals

Mazal Tov

Jonah Ahuvia on his bar mitzvah, October 17.
Aliyah Kiesler on her bat mitzvah, December 5.
Abigail Lauer on her bat mitzvah, December 5.
Brian Pinsky on his bar mitzvah, December 12.
Ben Vinnik on his bar mitzvah, December 12.
Claire Fishman on her bat mitzvah, January 9.
Benjamin Seagloff on his bar mitzvah, January 16.
Matthew Parent on his bar mitzvah, January 23.
Benjamin Schreiber on his bar mitzvah, January 23.
Eitan Halpern on his bar mitzvah, January 30.
Seth Stancroff on his bar mitzvah, January 30.
Annie Rashes on her bat mitzvah, January 23.
Julie Barnett on her bat mitzvah, February 13.
Emily Uhlmann on her bat mitzvah, February 13.
Avital Smotrich-Barr on her bat mitzvah on February 20.
Michael Newman, son of Chuck and Sharon Newman and grandson of Dorothy Newman, on his marriage to Patricia Cavuoto, November 7.
Laura Wallis on the birth of her grandson, Cobin, September 18.
Dorine and Seymour Kroll on the birth of their granddaughter, Sydney, October 8.
Laurence and Marla Biederman on the birth of their son, Andrew, October 15.
Natalie and Roger Palay on the birth of their granddaughter, Sadie, October 20.
Eileen and Herb Pritzker on the birth of their granddaughter, Jori, October 22.
Sofia and Ilan Rosenberg on the birth of their son, Yuval, November 4.
Dan Cutler and Chris Merrill on the birth of their daughter, Sadie Lynn.
Michelle and Arthur Riba on the birth of their grandson, Oscar Roger, son of Alissa and Jim Roger.
Scott and Julie Hershovitz on the birth of their son, Rex Martin Hershovitz.
Rabbi Nathan Martin and Abby Weinberg on the birth of their son, Yehuda Meir Weinmartin.

Condolences

Alice Fishman on the death of her father, Sidney, October 16.
Carole Segall on the death of her father, Donald Flax, October 16.
Richard Greene on the death of his mother, Shirley, October 25.
Sylvia Walker on the death of her step-father, Jack Miller, November 2.
Najda Robinson-Mayer on the death of her grandmother, Clara Whiteside-Dyson, November 11.
Genie Wolfson on the death of her father, Herbert, November 21.
Eileen and Herb Pritzker on the death of their son-in-law, Jerrold Kaplan, November 21.
Marilyn Siegel on the death of her father, Bernard Siegel, November 17.
Selma and Robert Cohen on the death of their husband and father, Sidney, December 15.
Celia Copeland on the death of her husband, Peter, December 20.
Stu Simon on the death of his mother, Eleanor, December 23.
Susan Beckett on the death of her mother, Dorothy Wolff, December 26.
Miriam Weininger on the death of her husband, Steven, December 31.
Myra Fox on the death of her mother, Rachel, December 31.
Larry Adler on the death of his grandmother, Sylvia Abramovitz.
Haran Rashes on the death of his grandfather, David Rashes.
Ronald Sussman on the death of his mother, Claire Sussman.

Correction

Our apologies to our readers for mistakenly repeating the December 2008/January 2009 list of vitals instead of this year’s list in the December 2009/January 2010 issue of the *Washtenaw Jewish News*. The correct listings are included in this month’s “Vitals.”

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Please visit www.CampRaanana.com for brochures, registration forms, pictures, and more!
If you have any questions, contact Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 734-971-0990.