

THE JEWISH STAR

Independent and original reporting from the Orthodox communities of Long Island

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Same great Ohel taste
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IN MY VIEW

Refuse to surrender to normalcy

BY RABBI NATHAN LOPES CARDOZO

According to Israeli media, Gilad Shalit is soon to be released from his long and inhuman captivity in the hands of Hamas. This gang of murderers has managed to terrorize all of us using one young Jewish boy.

The entire population of Israel awaits the moment of his release. Gilad has become the son of each one of us. He is "in our kishkes." His empty bed is found in every Jewish home in Israel. We have embraced his parents, Noam and Aviva, who have made their way into our hearts. We cry and pray with them. We have all become Gilad's parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters.

Religious or secular, Sephardi or Ashkenazi, Chasidic or modern orthodox, and even atheist, we all join hands and wait with inexpressible anticipation for him to fall into the arms of his parents, and so into ours. We will cry from happiness and dance in the streets, because by now the Shalit family consists of five million members living in one Jewish home, Israel.

Even as we discuss and quarrel about what price we are prepared to pay for his release, we all will be jubilant when the moment arrives. There

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See VIEW, Page 9

Rabbi Dr. Nathan Lopes Cardozo hails from Amsterdam, is founder and Dean of the David Cardozo Academy, the Beth Midrash of Avraham Avinu in Jerusalem. Born in Amsterdam, he is the author of many books on Jewish Philosophy and lectures around the world. His bi-weekly column *Thoughts to Ponder* can be seen at www.cardozoschool.org



Why this insane exchange? Because one Jewish boy will be able to come home to his parents and his people. This is the unmatched, mad victory of Jewish compassion. It is what makes us special.

Oh, babies!



Photo by Judah S. Harris

Rabbi Shlomo Bochner, founder of Bonei Olam, with an infant born to Danny and Miriam Kogan – their second b"H, as a result of fertility treatments funded by the organization. A fundraiser was held Sunday at Andy and Bessie Lowinger's home in Lawrence. Bonei Olam has helped bring 1,865 babies into the world, at last count. A photo essay by Judah S. Harris is online at www.thejewishstar.com

Great Neck man takes on race baiter

BY MICHAEL ORBACH

CUNY Trustee and Great Neck resident Jeffrey Wiesenfeld is standing by his decision to interrupt New York City Councilman Charles Barron mid-tirade. The militant black politician, considered by many to be a racist, grabbed the microphone at a building dedication to complain about his seat.

"I don't deserve credit, but there are people like this — Reverend Wright, [former Congresswoman Cynthia] McKinney — people have to stand up to these kinds of radicals," Wiesenfeld said on Monday. "Our kids have to learn how to oppose these people. If we let it go, it'll only get worse."

Barron is a former member of the radical Black Panthers group, now a Democratic city councilman representing Brownsville, Canarsie, East Flatbush and part of East New York, and chairs the council's higher education committee. He took umbrage at his assigned seat at an event at Manhattan Borough Community College and at not being given a speaking role. The newly dedicated building replaces one damaged on 9/11. To express his displeasure Barron grabbed the microphone from the master of ceremonies and delivered a tongue-lashing to Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Manhattan Borough President Scott Lasher.

After the mayor's speech laid into the mayor and Stringer, telling them they were disrespecting him and

See GREAT NECK MAN, Page 8

Child safety seat law change in NY

BY MALKA EISENBERG

New York State's child car restraint law has changed. As of November 24 all children up to age 8 are required to ride in some form of child safety restraint while in a moving

vehicle.

Kulanu is holding free child passenger safety events on the fourth Wednesday morning of each month, by appointment, in the parking lot behind the Kulanu building at 620 Central Avenue. The program began in October; the

next event will be held on December 23.

"We're trying to help spread the word about the new law," explained Mark Hoffacker, the Parent Advocacy Resource Center Coordinator at Kulanu and a certified child

See CHANGE, Page 8



Photo by Penny Frondelli

Mark Hoffacker, P.A.R.C. coordinator for Kulanu, helps Marci Kramer inspect her child safety seat.

REVIEW

He did what?

Circumcise Me – Yisroel Campbell's unlikely off-Broadway hit

BY MICHAEL ORBACH

Perhaps a better title for Yisroel Campbell's one-man off-Broadway show would be "Two weddings, two funerals, and three circumcisions."

But then I'm just kibbitzing.

Circumcise Me is the story of Campbell's journey to Judaism. That, of itself, wouldn't necessarily qualify as the

subject of a substantial play, but Campbell proved so bad at converting that he had to do it three times: first to Reform Judaism, then to Conservative Judaism and then finally to Orthodoxy. Campbell was so dedicated to becoming Jewish that he was circumcised a total of three times.

Or, as he said it so well: "Three times isn't a religious

See HE DID WHAT, Page 14



Yisroel Campbell in a scene from his one-man off-broadway play.

Publicizing the miracle



Some Jewish neighbors of this Brooklyn home put their own lit menorahs in the window for the first time after this display appeared. More on page 12

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Shabbat

Candlelighting: 4:09 p.m. ■ Shabbat ends: 5:14 p.m.
Torah reading: Parshat Vayeshev

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Duck in Water
Lauren Melman, Age 10

That's Life
Edited by Miriam L. Wallach

Dear That's Life,

Numerous yiddishisms have become part of a New Yorker's everyday vernacular regardless of affiliation. You don't have to be a member of the tribe to use the word shmeer in a sentence. This morning, a DJ on the radio exclaimed that the LIE was completely 'fakahked,' and he's no Nachum Segal. No one asks permission from the New York Board of Rabbis before they use the word 'oy' and when Mike Meyers became ferklemt during his coffee talks on SNL, the ADL did not object. Simply put, it is just part of life in New York.

Knowing that you don't go to a mall on a Sunday between Thanksgiving and Xmas has nothing to do with being a New Yorker — it has everything to do with having a brain. A top ten list of places to avoid dur-

ing those weeks has to include midtown Manhattan and the Roosevelt Field Mall. And when you go there anyway and cars are trolling the parking lots, and following shoppers to their car like stalkers, you should just turn around and go home. But of course, we didn't. We headed in.

Roaming around, I headed in to one store where I successfully picked out a Chanukah gift for my mother. I went to the register, dodging hordes of people and attempting to not hit anyone with my double stroller.

I gave my information to the woman behind the counter, including the shipping address for my mother's gift, and explained that I wanted to include a card.

"No problem," she replied and I began to dictate.

"Happy Chanukah," I began, but then stopped when I

realized she was looking at me, needing direction.

"I'm sorry," she said, "but could you tell me how to spell that?" I was a little surprised that she did not know how to spell Chanukah. Didn't she live in New York? And was I the first Jew to buy and ship a present from this store in all of the time she may have worked there? I know how to spell 'Christmas' and 'Kwanzaa' — surely she should know how to spell 'Chanukah.'

I smiled. "Sure," I said, and began to spell it out.

"Thank you," she said. "I think I have been spelling it incorrectly all day."

And then I had an idea. "Would you like me to write it down on a piece of paper so you can refer to it in the future?" I asked.

After looking at me like I was crazy (and, yes, I've seen that look before) she quietly handed me a pad of Post-it Notes and a pen. I smiled, wrote 'Chanukah' down on the paper and handed everything back to her.

"Thanks, this will come in very handy," she said. I told her it was no problem. "But let me just ask you," I added. "You haven't been writing 'Happy Christmas' instead of 'Happy Chanukah' by accident — have you?"

MLW

Dear That's Life,

Last week I stopped at a Waldbaum's in Levittown on my way home from my job at New Island Hospital in Bethpage. After placing my items on the checkout counter, the female cashier asked me what parish I am from. Not sure that I heard her correctly, I asked, "What did you say?" She asked again what parish I was from. I realized then that she must have thought I was a priest because I was wearing a navy blue full zipper fleece sweatshirt with the neck slightly open, showing part of a white tee shirt underneath. On top of the sweatshirt I was wearing a jacket.

I turned slightly so she could see the kippah on my head. She turned red in the face and apologized profusely for the next two minutes. I said that she would have a good laugh about this later, and I told her that she must think I am the rabbi of Levittown because I am probably the only person who ever set foot in this store wearing a kippah. She then inquired, "Are you a rabbi?" I said that I was not, but that I talk frequently to clergy. "What do you do?" she asked. I'm a doctor at New Island Hospital, I explained. "What type of doctor are you?" she wanted to know.

"I am an anesthesiologist," I said, "and I hear confession before people go to sleep and many times when they wake up."

I then paid my bill and was on my way.

LEWIS STEIN M.D.
Lawrence

Dear That's Life,

Late one morning several weeks ago I walked into The Jewish Star newsroom bearing my customary 20-ounce cup of 7-Eleven coffee and a pack of apple-flavored fruit pies that I'd never gotten around to eating in the car between phone calls. Assistant Editor Michael Orbach followed me into my office eyeing the fruit pies very doubtfully.

"You really shouldn't eat that," he informed me.

"What?"

"You shouldn't eat that," he repeated. "They're bad for you."

Michael is prone to bouts of health-foodiness so I politely thanked him for his apparent concern for my well being but proceeded to eat my not-terribly-healthy breakfast while I listened to some voicemail messages.

It wasn't until late that night that I briefly checked into my Facebook account, as Michael knew I eventually would, and noticed his extremely candid update from earlier in the day:

"Michael Orbach is working on a way to steal his boss's (Mayer Fertig) fruit pie."

MAYER FERTIG

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IN THE JEWISH STAR

Births

■ Birth of David Kafel Alves (Sao Paulo, Brazil) — December 5, 2009

■ Birth of Twin Boys to Yitzi & Ayala Leizeron (Woodmere, NY) — December 5, 2009

Engagement

■ Engagement of Aviva Shafner (Providence, RI/ Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel/ Kew Garden Hills, NY) & Benji Kamienny (North Miami, FL/ Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel/ Kew Garden Hills, NY) — December 2, 2009

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THE KOSHER BOOKWORM

The eternal question: "Why are Jews Liberals?"

A few months prior to the recent elections a book appeared titled, "Why Are Jews Liberals?" by essayist and political commentator, Norman Podhoretz. The question posed in its title informs us about the book's content and purpose: namely, a coherent answer to this eternal question that has baffled political thinkers for over the past century.



Alan Jay Gerber

While for the most part Jews have been the most loyal ethnic/religious group to support the liberal Democratic Party and its policies, the quandary has been, what motivates one of the highest income earning groups in the United States to so identify politically with those far less affluent and educated than them? This book sets out to explain this through history, philosophy and political observation.

From the outset let me state that while I am in full sympathy with the author's political views, I do not see it necessary to come to terms with his quandary. Rather, I contend that a more productive stance would be to continue to advocate within our community the ideologically political conservative positions and to recruit Jewish citizens to the conservative cause. In this, Podhoretz's work is a valued additional tool.

What I found most interesting in the research on this book leading up to this review were the numerous other reviews, both pro and con, that give this issue a life beyond the subject of this book's validity.

One particular review by conservative radio personality Michael Medved caught my attention. Medved attributes the Jewish antipathy to the conservative cause to a secular-based rejection of Christianity.

Writing in an on-line symposium reviewing this book, Medved stated, "This political pattern reflects the fact that opposition to Christianity — not love for Judaism, Jews, or Israel — remains the sole unifying element in an increasingly fractious and secularized society."

Medved further elaborates on this theme by citing the overwhelming secular nature of American Jewry today, including a decrease in support for Israel, synagogue affiliation and lack of quality Jewish youth education. This is a major factor in the political predisposition of those Jews who utilize political liberalism as a surrogate faith in place of Judaism itself. In addition, the antipathy to other religious faiths, especially given the onerous history that Christianity had with our people's ancestors only serves to fuel their commitment to liberal causes such as same sex marriage and abortion rights, falsely morphing these issues into "Jewish causes" for all the world to see. This, in turn, further frames the public political debate in the overall Jewish community in liberal rather than conservative terms.

This situation is compounded by these political liberals who actively shun support for legitimately Jewish causes by Christian evangelicals as well as other Christian based organizations and personalities.

This observation is most telling. It reflects a reality that, if sustained in the years to come, will only serve to further erode the political position that Jews inhabit in the American political spectrum; bringing grief to us all.

Ironically, the only grouping within American Jewry that in increasing numbers reflect a conservative stance in the public arena are those affiliated with Orthodox Judaism and, to some extent among the religiously affiliat-

ed Conservative community. This is a truism that no one disputes. The only question is, what motivates this political behavior, and how deep is this sentiment?



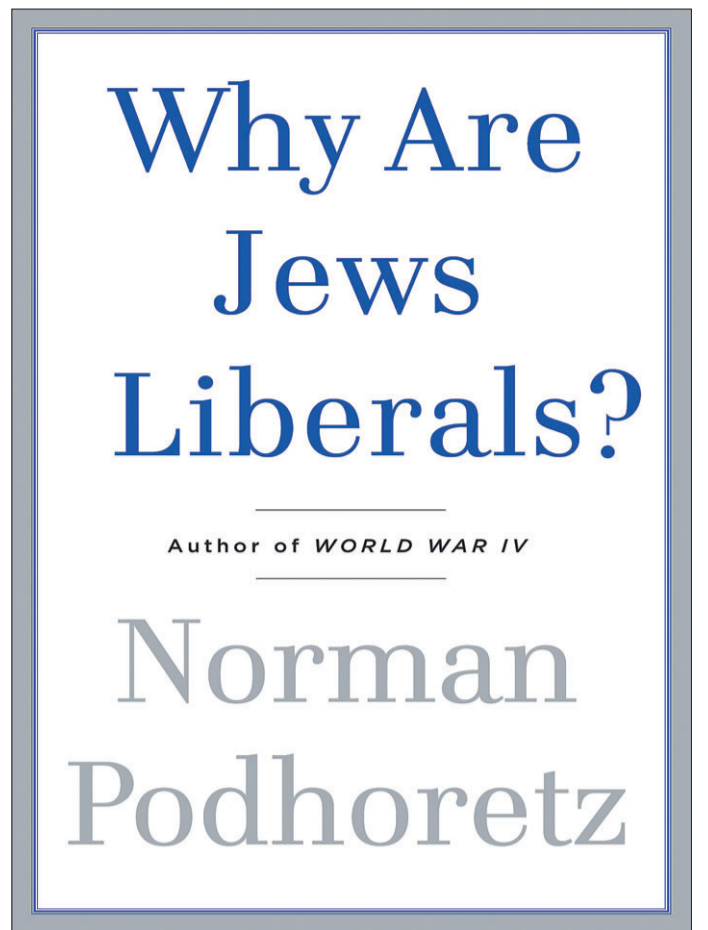
This is at the heart of what constitutes the answer to Podhoretz's query and points to the true value of his work: to open up debate as to where do we go from here. This leads me to the following observations.

The recent election results in our community point to a foreshadowing of things to come. A resurgent GOP win in our community only behooves the local Republican Party to open its doors to Jewish affiliation, something that is currently lacking. The ideological predisposition to a conservative political stance is finding greater favor with a growing South Shore constituency whose political roots are to be found in the Democratic Party bastions of Brooklyn and Queens, where a Jewish Republican was a rare as a ham sandwich at a bar-mitzvah.

This past election both here and in the Orthodox Jewish communities in New Jersey should serve notice to all that next year's congressional elections in these locales might prove to be very chastening to many long time, smug Democratic incumbents. This is where the future is at, and only time will tell whether

the Republican Party will extend itself to welcome these new constituencies into its party structure and its decision making process — and not just to regard Jews as sources for fundraising and money. Podhoretz's book has opened up the debate. Medved's astute observations gives this book further traction. And consider the following, for this we have only ourselves to blame for the poor leadership we have. The sad and pathetic Jewish reaction to the enlightened and humanitarian stance on Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria by Sarah Palin should, in time, be a thing of the past. That reaction, laced with bigoted anti-Christian rhetoric, can only serve to further embarrass those of us who wish to encourage the growing support that the American Christian community is giving to the cause of yishuv Eretz Yisrael.

Palin's open stance in support of our brothers and



sisters in Israel, whatever her religious motivation, should be welcomed by us and by all G-d fearing peoples, regardless of faith and denomination. We live in dangerous times, and we can not afford to play politics with Jewish survival.

One closing observation. This past Sunday the Orthodox Union, at their annual din-

ner honored the owner of a Jewish bookstore, Danny Levine, of The J. Levine Co. To my understanding, this is the first time a book store owner has been so honored. To Danny, mazal tov. To all our dear readers, have a joyous Happy Chanukah.

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OPINION

THE JEWISH STAR

Independent and original reporting from the Orthodox community of Long Island

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Losing the right to be Right

Editorial

Something unheard of happened on the Internet on November 20th.

Defying all historical precedent, someone actually changed his mind.

Charles Johnson, the popular pro-Israel, rightwing blogger of Little Green Footballs, announced he had severed his ties with the political Right. A post entitled "Why I parted ways with the Right" listed his dissatisfaction, which included the right wing's support for fascists like Pat Buchanan and white supremacists like Robert Stacy McCain. Johnson also wrote about the Right's support for anti-government conspiracy theories, anti-science craziness and the hatred reserved for President Obama, which goes, in his words, far "beyond simply criticizing his policies."

"The American right wing has gone off the rails, into the bushes, and off the cliff," Johnson wrote. "I won't be going over the cliff with them."

Despite our generally conservative stance, we can't help agreeing with Johnson on a number of points. The right wing's embrace of Buchanan is disturbing, to say the least, as is their wholehearted denial of climate change without allowing for any sort of compromise or reasoned discussion. Johnson's post made us ask, in turn, where has the sensible rightwing gone?

While the left has always had its share

of crazies (ever met a card-carrying Republican with a PETA membership?) it seems the Right has begun to match them kook for kook, loon for loon.

A recent report by the Anti-Defamation League, "Rage Grows in America: Anti-Government Conspiracies," places blame for the increase of violence, anti-government conspiracy theories and militias at the feet of the political Right. In one example, a large Tea Party rally in Washington D.C. was complete with Nazi imagery, racist imagery, and "imagery that implicitly or explicitly promoted violence."

The media is rightfully blamed for its part in this, with Fox News and Glenn Beck being singled out as leaders. Though they have led the race to devolve politics into a he-said she-said screaming match, the blame is not theirs alone.

If this weren't so scary it would actually be quite funny.

This is certainly not to say the current administration should be immune to criticism — we have recently criticized the President's plans for Afghanistan, his habit of bowing to foreign leaders, his healthcare plans. However, once the subject of "death panels" is introduced into the health care conversation you are no longer engaged in an educated policy dialog but a screaming match.

To be sure, the report stretches quite

a bit. Glenn Beck is no Father Coughlin; Beck is no anti-Semite — he is actually remarkably pro-Israel. Beck, at best, is an opportunist capitalizing on anti-government feelings already present.

So why should this concern us so much? Here's why:

We don't believe in trickle-down economics anymore, but we do believe in trickle down hate. And violence and intimidation that is practiced against our government representatives could soon enough be practiced against us.

Every Shabbos we pray for the government of the United States. As the third chapter of the Pirkei Avot notes: "Pray for the welfare of the government, for without fear of governmental authorities people would swallow each other alive." A Tea Party rally is no place for a Jew. Whether you agree or disagree with his policies, Mr. Obama is the President of the United States and, if nothing else, he deserves to command the respect that we as citizens owe to that office.

All of this truly makes us wonder where the Right wing has gone. Leaders like Sarah Palin, Joe Wilson, and Dick Cheney are more embarrassing than inspiring. The conservative movement, as Sam Tanenhaus writes in The New Republic, and like punk rock before it, is dead. This Chanukah we know what we want: a rebirth.

We want the right to be Right.

Letters

Meaningful newspaper

To the Editor:

I'd like to congratulate you on the very meaningful issue of December 4th. In the opinion section there were two well-reasoned and enlightening columns: "No longer neutral" (Micah D. Halpern) and "Learning lessons

from 'Kick a Jew Day' Rafael Medoff).

The letter by Carrie W. Teitcher ("Exonerating Kasztner") is a gem of equanimity and kudos for publishing it. I agree with your editorial on "Timetable for withdrawal an error".

Not too long ago you published an article by Ari Lieberman "Backyard Bullies on Wikipedia" (October 2, 2009), exposing the behind-the-scenes manipulations of this website. All credit to Mr. Lieberman for his persistent successful

fight for fairness and accuracy in the contents pertaining to Jewish matters. Please continue to keep track of his activity, and let us hear more from, and about, him.

RAYMOND BARI
Woodmere

Gratitude to the police

To the Editor:

Regarding the burglaries in our neigh-

borhoods, I feel that it must be noted and stressed that the police department and the officers who came to my house on the day of the break-in were, first and foremost, very quick to respond and were extremely courteous and sensitive to the situation.

They were very professional and thorough. I cannot say one single negative word pertaining to the police, the officers and detectives, and I commend them for their continuous follow up

investigation, and notification of their progress to me.

An increased awareness of suspicious things or people on our streets must be developed by us, as residents. You know the saying, "If you see something, say something". No one regrets being proactive.

Judith Greenberger
Cedarhurst

Chanukah Celebrated at Woodmere Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center



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FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BENCH

Your inner nature

Let me see if I get this straight. The Salahis are invited by Congress to chat about the White House dinner they attended and they're not showing up, yet they were not invited to that dinner and they did show up. Sounds like typical Washington to me. And you wonder why not much gets done there. People show up where they are not supposed to be and don't show up where they are supposed to be!

I must admit it's disconcerting that the Secret Service and White House can't manage a party of 325 people yet the government wants to manage my health care. All I can say is that I hope they are more successful in keeping unwanted terrorists out of our country than they are at keeping uninvited guests out of a dinner party.

Truth be told, I do not blame the White House party staff or the Secret Service. I don't even blame the Salahis so much. I blame myself. I could've stopped them. I enabled them. Not just me, my entire family knew of this obsession that the Salahis had in showing up where they were not invited, and we did nothing. You see, as soon as this story broke, I knew their names and faces looked familiar. I started rummaging through old photo albums and I saw them, clear as day, at my kindergarten graduation. No, they were not invited, but I remember the phone call (there was no e-mail at that time). My little brother told them that he would try to wrangle an invitation to the graduation for



David Seidemann

them but that he could make no promises. They showed up anyway. We should have alerted the authorities right then and there.

We created a monster that festered and festered. There they were, once again, at my day school graduation, my bar mitzvah, my high school graduation, college and law school graduations and, I think, even at my wedding. Though never invited, their nature, their corrupt nature — the desire to feel important based on whom they are seen with, as opposed to how they see themselves — controlled their every move. I can't help but think that if I had notified the authorities back in 1964 when they crashed my kindergarten graduation, then perhaps, just perhaps, I could have prevented all of this from happening.

When one becomes a slave to their nature, their present and future becomes their past. They become emotionally immobilized, can rarely change bad habits, and often are doomed to repeat the same mistakes. A review of their dossier reveals that this couple has been involved in this type of activity before; that indeed this was their nature.

A few years back I represented a young man who was divorcing his wife. While every divorce is sad, especially when children are involved, this man's liberation was well-deserved. Among other items his soon-to-be ex-wife submitted to the court were documents indicating that she would require \$96,000 a year as a clothing expense. This was

in addition to all of the money she was requesting for rent, food, travel, and entertainment. She testified that she was penniless and unable to work. She further informed the court that she had applied for public assistance and that without the money she was seeking from her husband she would be unable to make ends meet.

Documents submitted to the court indicated that she was attending the ballet at Lincoln Center twice a month. My cross-examination of her unfolded as follows: Mrs. Smith, you testified that you are still purchasing clothes at the rate of \$96,000 per year? Yes, she said. And you testified that you were still attending the ballet twice a month? Once again she answered in the affirmative. And you testified that you applied for welfare? Yes, was the answer. And when you applied for welfare did you have to wait on line? Yes, she said. Was it a long line? Yes it was, sir, was the reply. And during that time online did you have a chance to meet people? Yes I did, she answered. A lot of people, I asked? Once again, she said yes.

Tell me Mrs. Smith, I asked, of all those people that you met on the welfare line, did you ever meet any of them at the ballet?

She did not answer. She could not answer. And with that the judge had heard enough. I had successfully pointed out to the judge that while at one time during their marriage the couple had a great deal of money, the "good times" were over, the money had long disappeared, and there just wasn't any more of it to support her nature and habit. She continued to spend even though there was nothing left to spend. The judge was not going to obligate my

client, the husband, to continue to feed the wife's self-destructive nature. Knowing which parts of our nature and behavior are changeable and which aren't; being cognizant of what parts of our behavior might be a bit bizarre but not dangerous as opposed to quirks that are self-destructive, is one of the most difficult hairs to split in our daily lives. Knowing which of our children's behaviors we should accept and which behavior patterns we should move mountains to change is probably the most difficult aspect of child rearing.

Some people's nature is so inherently bad that for the greater good of society we must give up on them. Some people's nature is so inherently good that for society's betterment we should point it out and emulate them. Let me share with you a story about someone whose nature is so good that it should inspire us to duplicate and replicate this as often as we can.

A young woman from these parts attended the unveiling of the tombstone of a family friend. At the conclusion of the ceremony while everyone else returned to their cars, this young woman stood for a few extra moments to recite some Psalms. Off in the distance, she heard a woman sobbing. It was a mother crying over the grave of a son she had lost many years ago. She approached this woman, looked over her shoulder at the stone and realized that his *yahrzeit*, the anniversary on the Jewish calendar of his

passing, was that day. There were no other family members to console the grieving mother; no family friends. The young woman who had come to pay her respects at the unveiling of her friend's father, now stood alone with a total stranger who was weeping over the grave of her son. She put her arm around the stranger and cried with her. In subsequent conversation it was revealed that there were no other relatives to stand with her and comfort her. And as they had moved to this new community just months before her husband and son had perished, there were no friends to shed a tear with her on her annual pilgrimage. No one really knew them in their new community. The initial meeting at the cemetery between these two women took place not last month and not last year but seven years ago. And every year since, the mother has not had to stand alone; her new friend accompanies her and together they shed tears.

In the great debate as to how we become who we become, some philosophers say nature, others say nurture. This young lady's nature was to nurture. Our nature should be the same.

David Seidemann is a partner with the law firm of Seidemann & Mermelstein. He can be reached at (718) 692-1013 and at ds@lawofficesm.com.



I'M THINKING

Convictions for History

The trial of John Demjanjuk is underway in Germany. The proceeding will not run smoothly if for no other reason than the advanced age and failing health of the man many still believe to be the infamous Ivan the Terrible of Treblinka.



Micah D. Halpern

To look for justice at this point and in this trial is to reach too high. The trial should be viewed as an educational tool, a way to expand our knowledge and increase world awareness about the Holocaust. The masses have an interest in learning about the horrific crimes perpetrated during the Holocaust and trials are more effective tools than books. That's not to say that we should not hope for a conviction — anything less feeds into the mantra of Holocaust deniers and will do a tremendous disservice to the memory of those who perished. The Holocaust does not lend itself well to a courtroom situation. Even the Israelis failed at offering the necessary proof to have Demjanjuk convicted. Testimony is emotionally laden and today, so many years later, eye witness accounts are very problematic and more often based on creative memory than historical memory. Add to that the

excellence of Soviet forgers, notorious for creating archives filled with false documentation, which is what saved Demjanjuk and why his conviction was overturned in Israel. The defense claimed that he could not be Ivan the Terrible of Treblinka because he was not in Treblinka — he was in Sobibor. It was a perfect argument and it was held up by Israel's Supreme Court. He didn't murder Jews in Treblinka because he was a mass murderer in Sobibor. The charge was very specific and when Soviet archives were opened, reasonable doubt emerged. Demjanjuk was returned to Cleveland where he had been quietly living for many years. His own defense was used against him when the United States accused Demjanjuk of lying about his past when he entered the country — and that is how John Demjanjuk found himself deported to Germany and why he is now standing trial.

Today, his argument is that all Ukrainians who were captured by the Nazis either served or were killed. This defense is both obscene and insulting. Demjanjuk is blurring the lines between being a victim and being a mass murderer.

When Demjanjuk's trial opened in Jerusalem, Israelis were shocked by the amount of international coverage and local attendance it generated. The original venue for the trial was Beit Ha'am, the location where Eichmann was tried as the "Man in the Glass Booth." In the end, the much larger Binyanei Ha'uma barely proved large enough to hold the crowd, many of whom were high school students who skipped school to come to Jerusalem.

Germany is experiencing a similar phenomenon. This trial is stimulating great interest in Europe among youth who are curious even though almost totally ignorant about the Holocaust — for them it has always been a word, not a reality.

Israel put Adolph Eichmann on trial not to prove the guilt or innocence of a single person. Israel put Eichmann on trial for the purpose of maintaining a historical and legal record. That explains why testimony was

given for 14 weeks from April through August, why 1,500 documents of evidence were presented and why 100 prosecution witnesses were called. The transcripts were volumes and volumes long. Eyewitness testimony in 1961 from people in their late twenties and early thirties was far more reliable than any testimony that is given today.

When Israel tried Eichmann they knew what we have forgotten — history cannot be proven incontrovertibly in a courtroom.

I hope the Germans learned the lesson of the Eichmann trial, not the earlier Demjanjuk trial. I hope that this time John Demjanjuk is convicted, but even if he is not, let this trial serve as an educational lesson and as a moral message.

Micah D. Halpern is a columnist and a social and political commentator. Read his latest book THUGS. He maintains The Micah Report at www.micah-halpern.com

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ON THE Calendar

For a complete listing of upcoming community events, including items that didn't make it into the print edition, go to www.thejewishstar.com.

Cedarhurst - The Eliezer Project is selling Channukah cards to raise money for our organization. If you are interested in purchasing cards, please contact Esthy Hersch at 284-2942 or esthy@eliezerproject.org.

Eat Meadow - The East Meadow Simcha Chapter of Hadassah will meet on Monday, December 21 at 7:45 at the East Meadow Library. Please join us to hear Dalit Ballen-Horn, assistant director of the American Jewish Committee's Belfer Center for American Pluralism. Her topic is "We were strangers too: Jews and the Immigration Debate in America". The library is located at the intersection of Front Street and East Meadow Avenue.

Merrick - Chabad of Merrick will be opening its Chanukah Wonderland, a project of the Chabad Center for Jewish Life, to the entire community on Sunday, December 13th, from 1:30 - 3:00 pm. At the "Clubhouse at the Merrick Park Golf Course," children and adults will experience Chanukah through intriguing hands-on activities (i.e. latke making, donut decorating, building menorahs etc.) and creative arts & crafts at \$6 per person or \$18 per family. Following the Chanukah Wonderland, all are welcome to join the "Grand Menorah Car Parade!" at 3:10pm. Led by 2 limousines provided by Executive Limousines & Metro Limousine Service, participants will spread the light of Chanukah as they travel caravan style from the Clubhouse at the Merrick Golf Course to the Merrick LIRR gazebo on Sunrise Highway & Merrick Ave. There they will experience for the first time ever, the lighting of The World's Largest Clics Menorah, complete with live music, Chanukah treats and more. For

more information and details on the Chanukah events, contact Chani at the Chabad Center for Jewish Life, (516) 833-3057 or log on to: www.ChabadJewishLife.org.

Cedarhurst - The JCC of the Greater Five Towns is offering "Introduction To Photoshop" scheduled for Monday, December 21, 2009, from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Learn how to use filters, colorize, crop, resize and reduce red eye. Skills are applicable to all photo programs. To register, please call 569-6733, ext. 222.

ONGOING EVENTS

Far Rockaway - Rabbi Eytan Feiner's Machshavah Shiur in Sifrei Maharal on Chumash and Mo'adim for men and women has resumed. Tuesday evenings from 8:15 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. at Congregation Kneseth Israel, 728 Empire Ave., Far Rockaway. For more information call (718) 327-0500 or www.whiteshul.com.

Cedarhurst - The JCC of the Greater Five Towns offers "Kids Corner," a program for special needs children, on Sundays, from 12:15 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. A light lunch is provided. For further information please call 516-569-6733, ext. 205.

Stony Brook - Sexual abuse and abduction prevention educational workshops- Parents for Megan's Law and The Crime Victims Center is now offering age appropriate sexual abuse and abduction prevention educational workshops for children, teens and adults. We'll come to your school or community organization. We've educated over 50,000 Long Island children and parents in public and private schools and in community organization! Call our Helpline for more information or to schedule a workshop today (631)-689-2672

Cedarhurst - The Beis Medrash of Cedarhurst holds a Flexible

Morning Learning Program Mon. to Thurs. from 10:30 a.m. until 12:45 p.m. There are shiurim and chavrusas in Chumash, Gemara, Halacha and Chovos Halevavos. Learners may come and go as they please. The Beis Medrash of Cedarhurst is located at 504 W. Broadway (off the corner of W. Broadway and Cedarhurst Ave.) Contact Rabbi Moshe Kaufman at (718) 471-2780 moshekaufman@gmail.com.

Cedarhurst - The JCC of the Greater Five Towns is offering a social day program called "Remember When." This program is especially designed for memory enhancement and socialization. The cost includes a full range of therapeutic activities, morning beverage, dessert, and a kosher lunch. Round-trip door to door handicapped accessible transportation is available on a limited basis. Registration is limited to first come first serve basis to ensure maximum benefits to each participant. The program runs on a summer schedule and meets at Sons of Israel in Woodmere. For further information call the JCC at 569-6733.

Cedarhurst - The JCC of the Greater Five Towns hosts a Cards and Friendship group from 1-3 PM. Come alone or bring a friend for a fun afternoon at the JCC. Enjoy meeting new people, good conversation and challenging games. Call for fall schedule. For further information, please call Lisa Stern at 569-6733 x209.

Woodmere - The JCC of the Greater Five Towns hosts the Come Alive Program at Sons of Israel in Woodmere. This program provides an opportunity for home bound older adults to participate in social, recreational & intellectual activities. Kosher lunch will be provided and door-to-door transportation is available on a limited basis. Call for fall schedule. For further information, please call Mary Sheffield x219 or Linda Balch x211 at 569-6733.



The next Harry Potter

Future magician Simcha Teich performed card tricks for fathers and sons at Chabad of the Five Towns' Game Night held on Motza'ei Shabbos, November 21st.



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PARSHAT VAYESHEV

Searching for our brothers

Before the infamous sale of Yosef — in which the role of Yosef's brothers is the subject of much debate — Yosef is on a mission.



Rabbi Avi Billet

Walking around near Shechem, looking lost, Yosef encounters a "man" (the rabbis identify him as an angel) who says two words to him, "Mah T'vakesh?" — What do you want? What do you seek?

Yosef's answer is "I am looking for my brothers." (37:15-16)

It seems like such a trivial conversation. Q: What are you looking for? A: I heard my family was around here. Can you direct me to them?

The Kotzker rebbe said, "You need to know what you want. The man/angel was teaching Yosef that he must constantly express his goals to himself."

To take it a step further, what should those goals be? We ought to be seeking and looking out for our brothers.

In lieu of sharing comments on this statement from the commentaries, let us give our own answers this week. What do we want? What do we seek?

I will not presume to speak for you, but here is my wishlist.

I want Jews to be left alone. I want the Jews in Israel and the rest of the world to be given a real chance to honestly live in peace with their neighbors. Let each side live and let live and pursue opportunities to make our lives better — within our communities and collectively — without bothering to make the others' lives worse.

I just read Will Eisner's graphic novel, "The Plot," a telling of the never-ending saga of the proven forgery of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. I wish anti-Semitism and those who

harbor it will cease to play a role in this earth.

"I am looking [out] for my brothers."

I wish that all those who are actively or desperately seeking to find and marry "the right person" will be successful in their search. In the right time. Sooner rather than later.

I wish that all those who are trying to build families will merit the benefits of G-d's blessings, so their child and children can be born, and ultimately live beautiful lives having "found their brothers."

I wish that all those who are looking to find direction in life — how to relate to G-d; how to relate to people; what profession to choose; where to live; what kind of lifestyle to lead; and how to come to peace with choices and decisions, will find all of these and more in their efforts to make their lives the best that G-d will give them.

"I am looking for my brothers."

Let all Jews accept that we may have differences in the ways we observe, worship, and believe. Let us also agree that every Jew was born with a holy soul who yearns to come close to the Divine in some way, and that there is room for each person to find a way that works for the individual.

And that there will never be "one way" that works for everyone. And that intolerance — whether it be of the right for the left, or of the left for the right — will never be a good ingredient in promoting "Ahavat chinam." And that our political beliefs — whether they are in politics themselves or religious politics — should remain hotbeds for debate but should not resort to personal differences, hatred and invective.

The chips on the shoulders would do us all a lot of good if they were cast away into a fireplace to warm our cold hearts which have ceased to care enough about one another.

Chanukah is a widely marked holiday in the American Jewish community. This is most likely due to the commercialization of the "holiday season," which allows many Americans to get in touch with a religious side, no matter how secularly they may observe their respective holidays.

This is an opportunity to open new and positive relationships with our neighbors. All Jews who put a menorah in the window "come out of the closet" over this holiday. Some of us know more and some know less about the national, historical and social significance of the holiday. The laws related to the menorah are essentially the only laws of the holiday — the most important one being "publicizing the miracle." Not everyone knows the significance of the defeat of the "many in the hands of the few."

If we can be like Yosef, however, who, despite knowing full well that his brothers did not like him, actively sought them out, to be in their presence, to make peace, we will only benefit from the experience.

Chanukah falls in the beginning of winter, when the nights are longer and darker than they are all year. Ironically, the lights of the menorah cannot be used to light up the room — they are only to be lit for us to look at, so we might draw inspiration.

Let us all be inspired to seek out our brothers, no matter how far they (or we) may seem to be.

Questions or comments? Contact Rabbi Avi Billet at newsroom@thejewishstar.com

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GREAT NECK MAN TAKES ON RACE BAITER

Continued from Page One

the students who had accompanied him. That was when Wiesenfeld spoke up.

"You're a disgrace!" he exclaimed.

The two exchanged barbs for the next minute and nearly came to blows. Barron told Wiesenfeld to "shut up" and that he was a "sickening racist," before Wiesenfeld left the tent where the ceremony occurred.

"I was about to take him down," said Wiesenfeld, who was held back by a fellow trustee, "I was trained to fight. A bully is brave until you come at him physically."

Wiesenfeld considered it a moral victory, he said.

Barron claimed to be livid that the ceremony did not recognize his role or that of students, in the construction of the building, Fiterman Hall.

"Since I've come into office, I've been fighting for Fiterman Hall," he explained. "I've been fighting for Fiterman hall for eight years."

Barron had nothing to do with the building, Wiesenfeld said. It was completed with a gift from the Fiterman family and grants from the city and state. Furthermore, Wiesenfeld added, by moving his chair Barron had blocked the view of one of the main donors.

"He [Barron] sits on the committee, but it was up to the mayor and the chancellors," Wiesenfeld explained. "He's a figure head and an incompetent figurehead at that."

Another CUNY trustee who asked not to be named confirmed Wiesenfeld's account and confirmed that Barron had little to do with the project.

"It's grandstanding and I can fully understand why Jeff was upset with the manipulative ways of Councilman Barron. Once a Black Panther

always a Black Panther," the trustee said.

Wiesenfeld worked in government for over twenty years before joining the finance industry. He worked for former mayors Koch and Giuliani and former governor Pataki. His past disagreements with Barron occurred during the Giuliani administration.

"He's among the worst black anti-Semites," Wiesenfeld explained. "He gratuitously goes to Gaza. He makes comments about wanting to slap white people. He brought [in] Robert Mugabe [of Zimbabwe] who probably killed more black people than the leader of Sudan. He [Barron] is like a black storm trooper."

Barron laughed off the accusations.

"I don't have an anti-Semitic bone in my body. Nor a racist bone in my body. I speak out against racism, I don't practice it," he said.

Barron claimed to have heard of Wiesenfeld only once before but said he was certain Wiesenfeld was a racist. Barron cited an old New York Post report in which a long-time Satmar community activist, Isaac Abraham, claimed that Wiesenfeld had called blacks "savages" and Chasidic Jews "thieves." The allegations were brought up during Wiesenfeld's confirmation hearings for the CUNY Board in 1999 but remain uncorroborated.

Wiesenfeld was confirmed to the Board of Trustees by a vote of 58-2.

When Wiesenfeld advocated ending remedial instruction in CUNY and instead requiring students to attend high school classes in order to catch up, Barron described the plan as "ethnic cleansing," according to Wiesenfeld.

Barron initially denied ever saying that but then admitted that he wasn't sure.

"I said so much stuff, I'm

not sure. But I know the point I was trying to make, they were trying to make it difficult for people of color to get into institutions. I felt that the standards were racist and would have a disproportionate impact."

The educational standards were raised and since then, Wiesenfeld maintained, the number of black and minority students in the CUNY system has increased.

Barron is no stranger to controversy. The former Black Panther has been a lightning rod in the City Council since his election. In 2002 he hosted Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe who was blamed by the United Nations for starving his country's population. In 2004, he was criticized for suggesting that he felt the need to go up to a "white person" and "slap him, just for my mental health." Barron also sought to have a street named after the late demagogue Sonny Carson and has been criticized by the Anti-Defamation League for supporting a Hamas charity.

Barron said he has sent a letter to Benno Schmidt Jr., chairman of the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York, seeking to have Wiesenfeld removed.

Wiesenfeld is apparently unconcerned.

"Coming from anyone that would be a grievous insult and prompt self-reflection; coming from a person who is a paragon of racism and anti-Semitism and dissimulation and just plain evil like Charles Barron, it's like Alice in Wonderland. It's the opposite, it's a compliment," he said. "Sonny Carson will come back to life before he gets me dismissed."

Wiesenfeld and Barron will be holding dueling rallies to have the other removed from their respective position.

Questions or comments? Contact Michael Orbach at morbach@thejewishstar.com

CHILD SAFETY SEAT LAW CHANGES IN NYS

Continued from Page One

passenger safety technician.

Three families with multiple car seats came to the first car seat check in October; three more came in November, Hoffacker said. Thirty minutes is allocated for each car seat check. Hoffacker assesses the seat, to be sure it's safe and is the correct restraint system for the age, height and weight of the child.

"Sometimes it's the wrong seat," said Hoffacker.

The program is intended to teach parents how to install car seats properly.

"Parents do it hands on," he said. "If they have to move the car seat they have to know how to do it to keep their children safe, so we're teaching parents how to do it. People always appreciate help. It's great that they come. Sometimes they have a major mistake, sometimes a minor mistake, even if they read the manual — it's written to too high a level. Kids are at risk of injury."

The criteria for a restraint system, he said, included the "right seat for the child based on height and weight, the system fits tightly in the car" and "within the family's budget." Hoffacker also said that families can come with or without the children.

"There is a benefit when the child is there, we can see how the straps fit, but they don't have to. I've checked a lot of car seats in my day. The seats should be adjusted depending on what the child wears, summer to winter." He also noted that current car seats absorb more energy in a crash than those six to eight years old and that restraints over six years old should be replaced. He also said that one should not buy car seats second-hand since they can't vouch for their safety and may have been in an accident, have a hairline fracture, and will not be safe.

Hoffacker has worked for the past 20 years with children with special needs at a children's hospital, and saw the effects of accidents, including brain injuries and organ damage, first-hand. "The worst is when a child is not restrained at all," he said. "They sustain very, very serious injuries. When a boost-



Mark Hoffacker with Cheryl Sheinman.

Photo by Penny Frondelli

er seat is not used the lap belt is on the belly and the shoulder belt is on the face. Those children get organ damage from seat belt syndrome when the lap portion is on the stomach and can slice them and do a lot of organ damage. They can get sliced in the neck or a burn" from the shoulder belt on the face. He also recommended that short adults adjust seat belts since these hazards apply to them as well.

"It's a perfect opportunity," said Chaya Sheinman of Cedarhurst, one of the parents who came for the car seat check. "I've done it before in two other places. It's convenient that it's in the neighborhood. It was very helpful and informative. He also fixed something that had to be adjusted."

Hoffacker stressed the importance of the booster seat. "It boosts them so the seat belt is on the hips and shoulder," he explained. "It's surprising that parents don't know how it works. The child is being restrained by the seat belt; they are just boosted into the correct position."

"The law is just about age," he said. Children up to age four must be in a car seat but over 40 pounds may be in a booster seat. A child is now required to be in some form of safety restraint up to age eight, a safety seat, harness, vest or booster seat attached with the vehicle seat belt system. A child over four foot nine inches in height and weighing more than 100 pounds may use the seat belt provided that the child can sit straight up against the seat back with his knees bent properly over the seat edge. The lap belt should fit snugly across the upper thighs and

the shoulder belt snugly across the chest and shoulder but not touch the throat.

"Sometimes people are born with disabilities and sometimes disabilities happen," noted Jonathan Cooper, Kulanu's Director of Inclusion and Community Support Services. He said that this is a "prevention program" and inclusionary, to dispel the notion that Kulanu is only "a special needs program" and that this provides a service to the community at large.

Aside from the safety issue, those who do not comply with existing restraint laws will be fined.

"Mothers including myself take things for granted and you shouldn't," said Marci Kramer of Lawrence, another parent who came for a car seat evaluation. "Just as you don't let a child run across the street, you should take precautions and have a child sit in a booster seat."

Mothers aren't the only ones coming in though.

"Sometimes the dads call," said Hoffacker. "I actually checked one State Assembly person going to pick the baby up from the hospital. He said, 'my wife said if I don't get this car seat checked I'll be in big trouble.'"

To make an appointment contact Mark Hoffacker at (516) 569-3083 ext. 136 or mark@kulanukids.org. For more information on child safety laws go to www.thejewishstar.com

Questions or comments? Contact Malka Eisenberg at newsroom@thejewishstar.com

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IN MY VIEW

We refuse to surrender to normalcy

Continued from Page One

are many who believe the Israeli government is making an enormous blunder by freeing hundreds of arch terrorists with blood on their hands. Yet they, too, will ultimately celebrate with the Shalit family and sincerely wish them mazal tov, while maintaining their belief that it is wrong to pay this price.

We all know the extreme dangers involved in this exchange. It is madness. The chances of renewed terrorist attacks and kidnappings are very high. It is irresponsible.

We are aware of the risks to our children, our soldiers and our own lives in letting wild beasts such as Marwan Barghouti go free. These murderers will no doubt continue to do everything in their power to kill as many of us as possible. We are courting disaster by allowing them to go free.

And still, we will sleep more soundly and our collective mood will improve when this one Jewish soldier is brought home.

Why this madness of ignoring all the risks involved? Why this insane exchange? Because we are Jews, and one Jewish boy will be able to come home to his parents and his people. Nothing more than that. It's what we are all about. Am Yisrael Chai! This is the unmatched, mad victory of Jewish compassion. It is what makes us special. Though we know it is asking for trouble and we're shooting ourselves in the foot, and perhaps it is even forbidden, still, we can't help it. We are overwhelmed by our love for one Jewish soldier, and all logic is suspended. Our moral grandeur, our neshomos compel us to do this. Why? Because all of us are his parents and parental love knows neither boundaries nor reasoning.

The world will not understand. It will label us crazy. Why free hundreds of bloodthirsty terrorists for the release of one soldier? Any civilized, self-respecting



Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit who has been held hostage by Hamas for over three years.

nation would sacrifice this soldier for the sake of national security. So why do the Jews do this? No one can see any justification for this suicidal exchange. There must be a reason why Jews punish themselves in this manner. It can't be just the love for one soldier. So what can it be? Theories abound, but no one will ever comprehend it. No one, that is, besides the Jews. We understand. It is the mysterious Jewishness that makes us do this. It is this madness that has kept us alive for nearly 4000 years. Every Jewish child is all of Israel and more.

Sure, many of us say that we need to enter Gaza, destroy Hamas and bring Gilad out, whatever the price. We judge the Israeli government as weak for not doing so. And we may well

be right. But nobody should argue that we give up on Gilad for the sake of security. It's just not Jewish, and we don't do that. No son will be left behind, not even dead! We are prepared to risk our lives and the lives of our children for him. Why? Because we are Jews and we speak another language.

To be a Jew is utterly inconvenient. We pay a high price to live as Jews. We must be exalted to be normal. We live in spite of peril. Our very existence is the refusal to surrender to normalcy. In that way, we can serve mankind and teach the world what needs to be done to secure the life of one human being. Perhaps one day the world will hear and become mad and eternal, like us.

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'08 IS250 Auto, Black, Nav, CERTIFIED, 24k mi.

'06 LS430 Navigation

23k mi., Stock# U4734P

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'07 LS460 Auto, Black Sapphire, Navigation, CERTIFIED, 33k mi.
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'07 ES350 Auto, Black, Nav, CERTIFIED, 17k mi.
'07 ES350 Auto, Moonshell Mica, Nav, CERTIFIED, 24k mi.
'08 ES350 Auto, Gray, CERTIFIED, 9k mi.
'09 ES350 Auto, Obsidian Black, 5k mi.

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'07 GS350 Auto, Granite, Nav, CERTIFIED, 30k mi.

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Auto, Blizzard Pearl, Nav, DVD, 56k mi., Stock# U4835P

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The Jerusalem Post Crossword Puzzle

"HOWEVER YOU SPELL IT"

BY DAVID BENKOF

Across

- 1 Kind of traffic
- 5 Gad or Dan
- 10 The "M" in Einstein's famous equation
- 14 Down-to-earth
- 15 Actress Hunt ("Twister")
- 16 Ice house (var.)
- 17 Armchair athlete's channel
- 18 Observes the Sabbath
- 19 Largest Mariana Island
- 20 "A Rugrats ___"
- 22 It can be sat
- 23 Half of a ballroom dance
- 24 Superman's symbol
- 25 Butcher's offering
- 26 Get a glimpse of
- 28 One kind of chazer
- 30 JFK info
- 31 Dispense carefully
- 32 Dan Glickman's st.

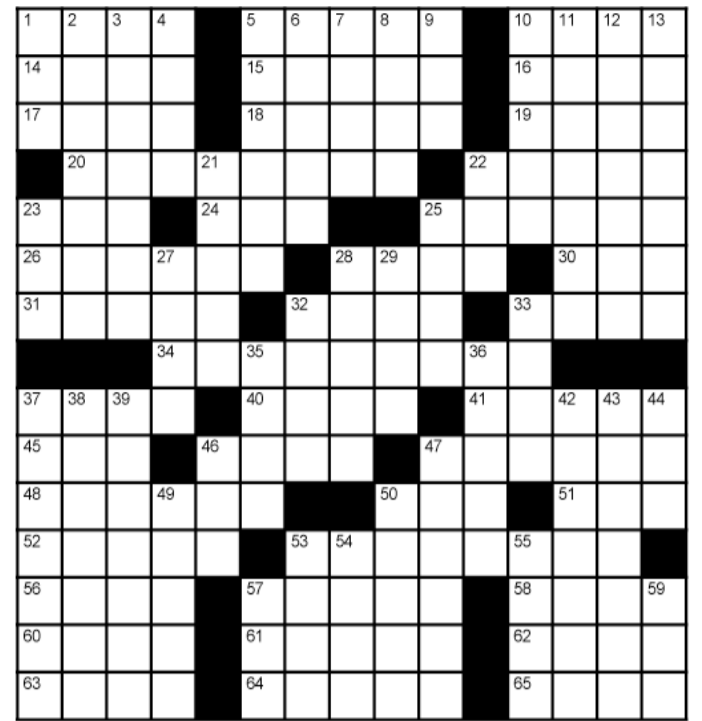
- 33 Glen Campbell's "___ Little Kindness"
- 34 "The ___ Guest" by Eric A. Kimmel
- 37 Eyebrow shape
- 40 Job Joe Lieberman wanted
- 41 Myanmar, formerly
- 45 Prince in the comics, for short
- 46 Author Jonathan Safran ___ ("Everything is Illuminated")
- 47 Creature's home, in film
- 48 ___ d'etre
- 50 Former def. acronym
- 51 Retired speedster
- 52 Secret ___ (Anne Frank hide-away)
- 53 7000-word Wikipedia entry
- 56 Anti-Semitism, e.g. 57 Hermit
- 58 One way from Moscow to Tel Aviv
- 60 "And giving ___ up the chimney ..."
- 61 Lauder born Josephine

- Mentzer
- 62 Prima donna
- 63 Furnishes with workers
- 64 Pre-statehood gang
- 65 Actor Penn ("Milk")

Down

- 1 Three for Sophia
- 2 Rabbinical thinker Abraham Joshua ___
- 3 Rabbi Samson Hirsch's middle name
- 4 Wrist bone
- 5 Fencing move
- 6 Makes a big stink
- 7 "Casablanca" heroine
- 8 It often comes before Shalom
- 9 Halves of ems
- 10 "Not by ___, and not by power"
- 11 Victorian Jewish author Grace
- 12 Hebrews' condition in Egypt

- 13 Island near Singapore
- 21 Not o'er
- 22 Big ___, California
- 23 Apr. 15th advisor
- 25 It might hold some Kedem
- 27 Jewish mayor of New York, 1978-1989
- 28 Holocaust historian Yehuda
- 29 Working in a mess
- 32 Baby bouncer
- 33 Hood
- 35 Bard's home
- 36 One way to be taken?
- 37 Religious Zionist rabbi Shapira (1914-2007)
- 38 Israeli city, literally "fresh"
- 39 He appointed Breyer to the Supreme Court
- 42 Canadian Supreme Court Justice Abella
- 43 Kind of Israeli settlement
- 44 Aardvark entree
- 46 Everett ___ (noted translator of the Hebrew Bible)
- 47 Actress Bacall



- 49 Literal meaning of "zeraim"
- 50 Contemptuous smile
- 53 Monty Hall, e.g.
- 54 Initial stake
- 55 Sneakers brand
- 57 Historic Jewish neighborhood in NYC
- 59 PC linking system

Answers will appear next week

Last Week's Answers



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Design & Photos by Levik T. - Shlager.net

Shalhevet goes to Harvard

Leah Rosenblatt (pictured above with her students), the Hebrew and Arabic teacher at Shalhevet, attended Marhabal, a conference about teaching Arabic held his past November in Harvard. The conference was funded by the US Department of Education and Rosenblatt was the only Jew among 22 Arabic teachers. Rosenblatt described the conference as "an extraordinary cultural experience," and says she is using what she learnt at the conference to supplement the current Israeli curriculum she uses.

SKA to compete on The Challenge

Students from Stella K. Abrahams High School for Girls will be competing against Long Island Lutheran High School students in the first round of The Challenge, an award-winning high school quiz show that has a 10,000 dollar prize.

The first round will air on December 20th, at 6:30 P.M. on Cabelvisions iO channel and The Challenge will also repeat on News 12 Long Island on Saturday and Sunday evenings at 6:30 PM and 9:30 PM.

Representing Stella K. Abraham High School for Girls will be Emily Feldman, Kimberly Hay (team alternate), Leah Khukhashvili (team captain), Zissy Turner and Beth Weinstein. The academic advisor is Michael Fiedler.

184 high schools will be participating with the goal of becoming the Tri-State Challenge Champion; aside from the \$10,000 dollar prize, each team member that competes in the final round wins \$500. More information on The Challenge, including standings, statistics and short contestant bios, is available on www.power-tolearn.com.



New look, same Ohel

Jewish social service agency updates its brand

BY MICHAEL ORBACH

Ohel, at age 40 America's largest Jewish social service agency, has gotten a facelift.

Formerly known as Ohel-Beis Ezra, Ohel has changed its logo and tagline. New ads feature a sleek re-branding of the organization and a new motto: "Elevating lives everyday."

"There's no question that the brand is a well-recognized brand in the community," said Ohel's director of communications, Derek Saker, "but it's actually the association of what we do where there's a disconnect. People know of Ohel but they inevitably associate it with foster care." The new logo was designed by Red Rooster Designs, an Arkansas-based firm, and features a man "uplifting" himself to complete the word "Ohel."

The new branding campaign, according to Saker, is an attempt to truly "articulate" what Ohel does.

"The organization does not treat only those in crisis or those facing a major disability, but also typical people, day-to-day people who are going through any number of challenges, whether marital issues, relationship issues or losing one's job."

The new branding features distinct colors for the different segments of the organization: Ohel Mental Health, Ohel Institute for Training, Ohel Foster Care, Ohel Lifetime Care, and Ohel Bais Ezra.

Aside from the two best-known areas of Ohel's work, Saker described the other aspects of the organization. Ohel Mental Health works with individuals suffering from men-

tal illnesses, both severe and minor. The Institute for Training organizes workshops and seminars throughout the year for educators and families of children with disabilities.

"The Lifetime Care Foundation... basically answers the question for kids with disabilities whose parents are moving on to the next world and [are] concerned what will happen," to the children after the parents are gone, said Saker.

The new motto replaces "Everyone needs a family," a change that reflects Ohel's different areas of service, Saker said.

"Whether a woman is a victim of domestic violence, or an adult with a developmental disability... That's what we do on a daily basis," Saker explained. "We're not an organization that provides one summer camp a year. We're elevating lives every day."

Elie Rosenfeld, CEO of Joseph Jacobs Advertising, praised the new look.

"The rounded Sans-serif type in the logo gives a much more contemporary, modern feel," he said. "Color coding all those different divisions allows Ohel to be the overall umbrella yet gives an identity to each."

Saker admitted that due to the financial climate, Ohel will not be doing much advertising for the new branding, instead combining the effort with Ohel's fortieth anniversary celebration.

"It never was going to be a billboard campaign like a rebranding of Nike."

Perhaps taking a page from the venerable sneaker company, Ohel's new logo does feature its own copyrighted swoosh.

Chanukah in Long Beach

Each year the Warshaw family on Boyd Street in Long Beach celebrates the Festival of Lights by decorating their home in vibrant blue and white lights. Dubbed the Chanukah House, homeowner Mindy Warshaw said the lights bring happiness and joy.



Photo by Andrew Vardakis

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Friendship Circle

Chabad of West Hempstead's Friendship Circle made pizzas at EJ's Too on Hempstead Avenue, and then wrapped Chanukah gifts for children in Israel. Friendship Circle pairs local teens with children who have special needs.



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Where Chanukah stops traffic

When Daniel and Beth Teitelbaum moved to their home on Avenue T and East 63rd in Brooklyn's Mill Basin section six years ago they continued a family tradition begun in their previous home. Now the couple and their children, Ariel, 15, a student at Shulamith High School and Benny, 8, who attends Yeshiva of Belle Harbor, are used to seeing cars stop short outside to take in the unusual sight of a home extensively lit to announce the miracle of Chanukah to the world.

Last year's display was dedicated to Rabbi Gavriel and Rivkah Holtzberg and the other victims of the Mumbai terror attacks.

The mostly handmade decorations include a sign wishing passersby a "Chanukah Sameach," giant dreidels, a five-foot high menorah; even a projector beaming a Chanukah image below the roofline.



Photos by Mayer Fertig

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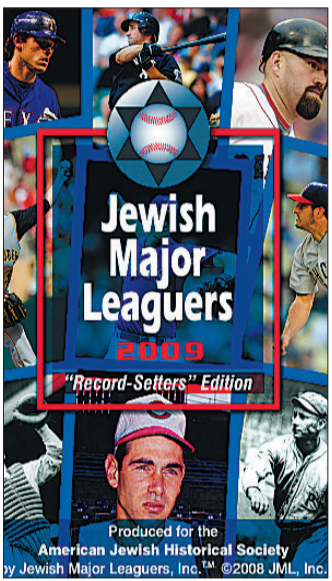
LAST MINUTE GIFT IDEAS



Meet Rebecca, the latest in the American Girl doll company's historical series. In nine-year-old Rebecca Rubin's world the year is 1914 — she's growing up on the Lower East Side in New York City. There are even a number of Jewish holiday-related accessories such as the menorah, dreidel and Chanukah gelt set, and the items in the photo at left. Rebecca doesn't come cheap — \$114 for the doll, a book with her history and back story, and accessories. The entire kit and kaboodle — the Rebecca doll and all the available accessories (matching winter coats for doll and owner, for instance) will set you back some \$580 plus tax.



Tootsie Rolls? Yep, you bet. The famous chocolate candy is finally kosher — newly under the supervision of the Orthodox Union. The kosher packages will begin distribution in the next few weeks bearing a standard OU symbol. Also becoming kosher are other Tootsie Roll-related products: Frooties, Tootsie Fruit Rolls, and DOTS. For those who remember the 1980's, finally Jewish children everywhere will be able to tell you how many licks it takes to get to the center of a Tootsie Roll pop.



Finally, something just for oblivious parents in Jewish families to throw away while cleaning the attic or the basement. From the American Jewish Historical Society comes the Jewish Major Leaguers "Record Setters" edition of their Jewish baseball cards. Featuring Marquis, Youkilis and others — the 50 cards focus on historical record-setters as well as updates on current players, highlights of the '08 season, career leaders, and all-time roster. Kids! Beware of Pesach cleaning.



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HE DID WHAT! A REVIEW OF CIRCUMCISE ME

Continued from Page One

Campbell shambles onstage appearing every bit a Chassid: long beard, black hat and rekel (long, black coat), and carrying what he calls his chassidische briefcase — a plastic bag with Hebrew

lettering on it. “You spend \$3,000 on a fur hat, but you can’t buy a canvas bag?” he laments. Campbell claims he is actually not a Chassid. “I’m not charedi: I’m wearing a blue shirt!” he pointed out. Campbell began life as Christopher Campbell. Born

to a lapsed Catholic family (or in his words during the play: “I’m the first-born son of a manic-depressive Italian woman and a pathologically silent Irishman which makes me wildly emotional in a very quiet way.”) Campbell became an alcoholic as a young teen. After striking a

priest with his car he joined Alcoholics Anonymous. In his twenties, while residing in a recovery house, Campbell read Leon Uris’ Exodus. “Sarah Palin is right,” he quips, “literature is dangerous.” Inspired, Campbell first converted to Reform Judaism, undergoing a conversion process which included a mikvah and the ritual letting of a drop of blood for the already circumcised, hatafat dam bris.

“It sounded like a drink that should come with an umbrella,” he said. He married his then-girlfriend, an Egyptian Muslim whose father demanded he convert to Islam. That prompts the best line of the play, as he recalls telling his future father-in-law: “If I belong to all three major religions in one calendar year, people are going to doubt my sincerity.”

Later, Campbell underwent a Conservative conversion and finally moved to Israel for a full Orthodox conversion. Campbell eventually married the woman who was his Talmud teacher in Israel, where he now lives, and with whom he has three children. By the end of the ninety-minute show, Campbell eventually meets hardship and realizes that conversion isn’t an answer to five questions but a life-time journey. Being Jewish ain’t easy — then again, no one ever said it should be — but Campbell, in his hilarious play, proves again it is worthwhile.

In between the larger questions, he also provides a brilliant critique to his new religion. “Is it me or is it hot in here?” Campbell asks as he enters onstage. As the crowd murmurs in agreement, he answers his own question. “I thought it was because I was dressed for Poland in the 1700’s.”

He even offers a suggestion to get the Chareidi population into the IDF, in light of recent protests: tell them

there’s a gay pride parade in Lebanon.

“They’ll be in Beirut by Mincha.”

And the audience, which included Jews of all stripes, laughed along with him, proving that if there’s one thing we Jews can do, it’s laugh at ourselves. The elderly bubby who sat behind me, and offered a line-by-line commentary on Campbell’s act, nearly guffawed herself to death. Circumcise Me is an unlikely, but forceful, call to unity, or as Campbell says: “It doesn’t

matter what denomination you belong to, so long as you’re ashamed of it.”

It would be falsely superlative to call this the funniest one-man show ever, since I haven’t seen any others, but I feel I can say with certainty that it’s the funniest show about circumcision since the Spanish Inquisition — and any man who’s willing to undergo 3 circumcisions to become Jewish deserves our support.

Circumcise Me is booked at the Bleeker Street Theatre until January 3, 2010. More information is available on the website: www.circumcise.com. In the words of Stephen Colbert, whose praise appears on ads for Circumcise Me, go see Campbell “before he turns Buddhist.”

Questions or comments? Contact Michael Orbach at morbach@thejewishstar.com



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LAST MINUTE GIFT IDEAS

Remember Ferbie? How about Tickle me, Elmo? You may be getting a sick feeling in the pit of your stomach or you may be thinking, "Ferbie ... mmmmm." Either way, the **Zhu Zhu Pets** — a virtual pet in hamster form — is one of the top sellers of the holiday toy season around the country, and locally too, according to Nancy Bloomberg of La Toys Etc in Cedarhurst. It's suitable for children as young as three and, perhaps best of all, they presumably don't smell like real hamsters.



The soulful Chaim Dovid is back with a new album and delivers nicely. He and his band, the Good News Bearers (get it?) perform 10 solid songs including nine of his original compositions and Carlebach's Pitchu Li. One favorite on second or third listen was the country-tinged Likrat Kallah. The most curious may be Aussie Jig — call us crazy but the first few bars evoke the Gilligan's Island theme.



It's an album with roots in the Five Towns — track 6, Brach Dodi, is "inspired by my Rebbe, R' Moshe Weinberger at Aish Kodesh in Woodmere, NY," Chaim Dovid writes in the liner notes. Other locals mentioned therein include Azriel Ganz, producer of the Shirei Shmuel music series "for constant support in making this possible," and Avi Feinberg "for taking care of everything in the US." Feinberg, a drummer, also accompanied Chaim Dovid during a recent appearance for the Ossie Schonfeld Memorial Toy

Fund, playing a rather unusual drum chair that was perfect for a kumzitz — the chair was the drum.

The **Sing-Along Star Mike** is another top selling toy, according to Nancy Bloomberg at La Toys Etc. It's a karioke-type stand up microphone for the budding Yeshiva Boys Choir soloist in your home.

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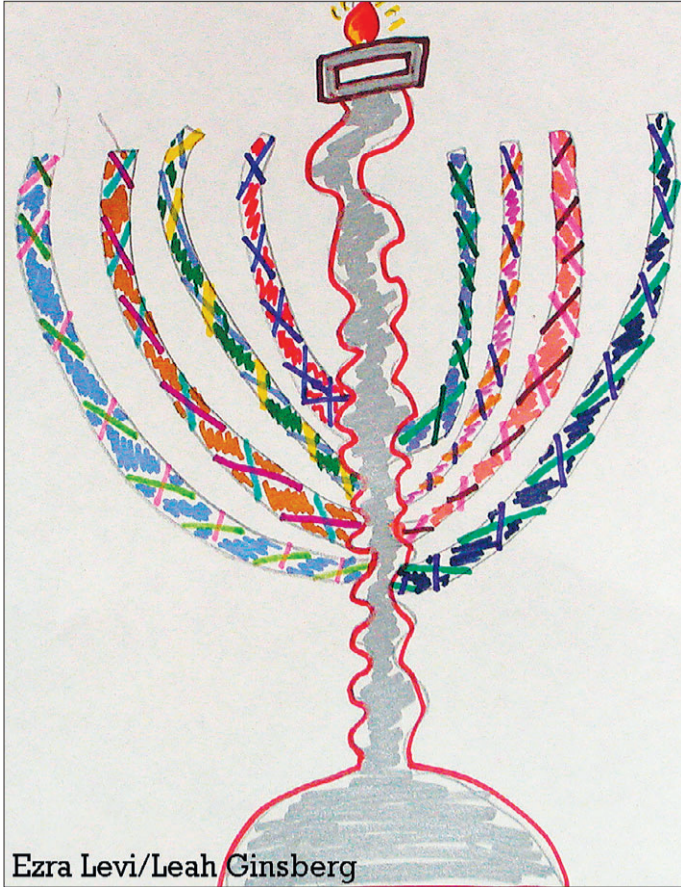
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Ezra Levi/Leah Ginsberg
By Ezra Levi and Leah Ginsberg

HALB 4th, 5th and 6th graders used colored pencils, markers and watercolors to create a variety of Chanukah-themed art under the tutelage of art teacher Max Gottfried.



By Erica Leibowitz & Rachel Weinstein

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OPINION

Spotlight: The Eliezer Project

Beacon of hope and assistance on first anniversary

It is the heart-break of a parent telling a child they can't get the new outfit they are accustomed to buying for the next chag. It is the feeling of guilt that a breadwinner feels because he can no longer provide for his family. It is the feeling of shame and distance that a family feels as they live with extreme financial hardship while the community around them appears to live life and celebrate holidays as if the world is okay. Job loss and its ensuing economic hardship are the uninvited guests that have already taken a great toll on our community.



Gideon Bari

Scholarship committees struggle to satisfy an increase in applications while the size of the scholarship funds dwindle. Rabbis' discretionary funds are stretched to their limit. Recognizing the need to establish a local organization that would focus on issues of job loss, financial mismanagement and economic hardship, The Eliezer Project (TEP) was created to serve The Five Towns, Far Rockaway and West Hempstead. As the organization completes its first year of service to the community, it is important to take notice of the exemplary record of accomplishment.

Job seekers are provided with a host of services. The process begins with a private and individualized meeting in which job opportunities and career paths are discussed. We follow with a thorough review and critique of the applicant's resume. Most importantly, clients are enrolled in our Yahoo group. Membership in that group provides access to a listing of employment opportunities that is updated 2-3 times daily. Group members also receive a steady stream of articles relating to all aspects of conducting an effective and successful job search. Topics often include networking skills, use of social media and upcoming job fairs. TEP also offers numerous seminars that can aid the job seekers in their search and improve their skills.

Those families experiencing financial distress and/or economic hardship are encouraged to meet with our team of professional and skilled counselors. After reviewing a client's existing budget our counselors can provide guidance so that income and expenses are brought into alignment and, in some cases,

help implement cash management programs for families. More severe circumstances might require a consultation to better understand the benefits and consequences of loan modification, debt consolidation including credit card debt, bankruptcy and a variety of other options. Clients are able to avail themselves of the services of a highly qualified group of volunteer attorneys, accountants and financial advisors. Often we are able to develop and implement strategies that will allow for a new beginning without the constant pressure and fear brought on by these serious financial burdens.

The Eliezer Project addresses the social and emotional needs of our clients in a variety of ways. Our Job Clubs bring together clients from specific industry groups. In a comfortable and relaxed setting, clients are able to share common issues, challenges and strategies. This often helps clients to overcome feelings of isolation and loneliness as they leave these meetings reenergized. Our volunteer social workers offer support groups and are available for individualized consultation. Recognizing that some people "just need to talk", these services are a valuable component of our holistic approach.

Holidays and chagim present an additional hurdle for our TEP clients and their families. Celebrating Yom Tov is costly and stressful when you are watching every penny. We have helped out in several different ways. We provide financial assistance for food purchased through our local supermarkets. We recently distributed oil and wicks so that our clients may more fully enjoy the glow of nerot Chanukah. Earlier this year we distributed lulavim and etrogim. Enabling our clients to celebrate these Jewish calendar milestones with dignity is a potent reminder that the community cares and is involved during these most challenging times. With our JCC partner, our Buy One-Bin One food program collects and distributes non-perishables throughout the year as well.

The TEP also provides financial assistance in various ways. We fund re-training costs for qualified individuals, we help with utility bills and provide emergency funds as need-

ed for food and shelter in certain circumstances. We also consider specific financial requests and, in limited situations, and after due consideration that such assistance will alleviate a long term situation, we secure appropriate approval for such disbursement.

There is so much that still needs to be done. Everyone can help and provide assistance in their own way.

Donations are our sole source of support. Your contributions allow us to continue and expand the quality and range of services that we provide.

Advising us about employment opportunities gives our clients a leg up in the application process. Is there any greater feeling than knowing that you enabled someone from the community to get back to work?

We value the volunteer services of our attorneys, graphic artists and plumbers to name just a few. TEP is enriched by the quality and diversity of our volunteers. Please join us!

Our clients also benefit by establishing relationships with a mentor. Won't you consider meeting and providing guidance to someone from your chosen profession or field that might benefit from your contacts and wisdom?

As we celebrate the Festival of Lights, let us join together and rededicate ourselves to fight the challenges of job loss and economic hardship and help our fellow neighbor leave the darkness and enjoy the light of financial freedom!

Gideon Bari is the Executive Director of The Eliezer Project. Questions or comment? E-mail newsroom@thejewishstar.com

Just one hug



Rabbi Ron Yitzchok Eisenman

In my work as a rabbi, I get to meet all types of people and hear a lot of personal experiences.

When I became aware of the problem of molestation of Jewish children by Jewish adults and sometimes by Jewish rabbis and teachers, I did what any other caring and compassionate person does — I tried to help the kids, the victims.

When I realized that the heads of some Jewish schools were attempting to cover up the problem and were even demonizing victims by calling them unstable and mentally sick, I did what every other Torah Jew would do — I tried to help the victims.

However, all of this is beside the point. The point is that for whatever the reason I get to meet all types of people and many of them have suffered much at the hands of their fellow Jews.

The following story is painful to hear, however, hear it we must.

It is particularly painful when I hear about a case where the abuser is none other than a parent.

When I see a victim who is in constant pain; who is no longer functional; who is in a state of constant distrust, anger and bitterness, I can be sure that this person is the product of parents who did not act with

the compassion and love with which a Torah person should act toward their child.

Yesterday, I had the privilege of visiting with such a person. He is currently confined to the psychiatric ward at one of the major hospitals in New York City.

The man with whom I was visiting was in obvious pain and was not at peace with his world.

However, one could still see, beneath the emotional scars and the physical tattoos, a beautiful, warm and precious neshama — one that, given the chance, would shine brightly with warmth and beauty.

However, at present, that neshama has been abused and injured; hurt and defiled.

I spent about an hour with this precious neshama and as we spoke and as I felt the pain and as I heard the anger that was primarily directed towards his parents, I asked the question I felt I had to ask.

"When you were growing up, did your parents ever tell you they loved you?"

"No. Never. Not even once."

"Were you ever hugged?"

At this point my precious friend looked up at me and from the depths of his pained heart he said,

quietly, "No, I was never, ever hugged. Not by mother and not by father."

Tears welled up in my eyes.

I looked at this abused, pained, hurt and injured neshama and right there and right then I knew what I had to do.

I knew what I needed. After we parted and I was released from the locked ward I headed back home.

I came back to shul for Mincha and Maariv and then I headed home.

As I entered my home I made a beeline for my two daughters who were home from school.

I just hugged and hugged.

I hugged them for them.

I hugged them for me.

And I hugged them for the precious neshama who remains locked in the psych ward in Manhattan.

Don't tell me about expressing your love in 'unsaid' ways.

Don't tell me about being from a 'European' background.

Don't tell me about the need for discipline.

Just give a hug — just one hug.

Rabbi Ron Yitzchok Eisenman is the rav of Congregation Ahavas Israel in Passaic, NJ. Questions or comments? E-mail newsroom@thejewishstar.com.



The HALB family would like to wish all of our friends here and in Israel a Happy Chanukah



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SPORTS

Rambam vs. Magen David

Rambam JV is 2-3 for the season so far after a loss to Magen David on Monday, Dec. 7. Magen David took the lead

with goals in the first and second periods; Didi Levy put Rambam on the board with a long slap shot. The Brooklyn boys

scored again, then Rambam. In the end it was Magen David with a final score of 4-2.



Prestige Quarterback Josh Reiss being chased down by Jay Rubin DDS lineman Scott Kaye. Jay Rubin DDS went on to win the game 33-12.

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| (4) The Outta Towners, 19 | (5) Jackson Hotel, 13 in overtime |

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RAMAZ	54	FRISCH	49	
HAFTR	defeated RAMBAM	TAB		
MAGEN DAVID	defeated	SAR	34	
TABC	35	HESCHEL	48	
MTA	50	TAB	65	
OHR HATORAH	75	TABC	Overtime	
RTMA	defeated	MAGEN DAVID	24	
HESCHEL	36			
SAR		49	RAMAZ	27
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FLATBUSH		28	CENTRAL	23
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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that sales lists are being prepared of unpaid School District Taxes for the year 2008/09 and County, Town and Special District Taxes for the year 2009 on real property situated in the Town of Hempstead, North Hempstead and Oyster Bay and the City of Long Beach, New York. Sales lists are also being prepared on unpaid County and Special Assessment Taxes for the year of 2009 on Real Property situated with the territorial limits of the City of Glen Cove, New York. Unless such unpaid taxes, with interest and additional fees be paid on or before the 21st day of

December 2009 the tax lien on the property against which such taxes are levied will be advertised and on the 16th day of February 2010 thereafter sold. Any taxpayer interested may send a brief description of his property to the County Treasurer and a statement of the amount of unpaid tax, if any, will be forwarded to him. The complete lists will be open for examination and copies available in the County Treasurer's Office, 240 Old Country Road, Garden City, New York (P.O. Address, Mineola, N.Y. 11501) or visit our Nassau County Treasurers Office web site www.nassaucountyny.gov on or about January 13, 2010. Nassau County does not discriminate on the basis of dis-

ability in admission to or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodations such as those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will be provided to enable individuals with disabilities to participate in all services, programs, activities and public hearings and events conducted by the Treasurers Office. Upon request, information can be made available in braille, large print, audiotape or other alternative formats. For additional information, please call (516) 571-3723 (VOICE) or (516) 571-3108 (TTY).
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SLICE OF LIFE

Dairy dishes for Chanukah

BY EILEEN GOLTZ

One of the lesser know but no less important Chanukah traditions is to serve dairy products along with the over abundance of fried foods we like to gobble down. Legend has it that a woman named Judith saved her village from the occupying Syrians. Judith fed wine and cheese to the Syrian general who was terrifying the local population, he over-indulged and became so drunk that he fell asleep. Judith killed him (took off his head and put it in her basket) and then walked right out of the camp under the guards' noses. When the general's troops found him the next day they abandoned their position and went home, leaving the Jews to live in their village in peace.

There is no one specific dairy food that I serve on Chanukah EXCEPT for the sour cream on my latkes. That said, there is no real rhyme or reason to the following collection of recipes, other than they're great and contain lots and lots of butter, and cheese, milk and cream.

CHOCOLATE AND STRAWBERRY CREPES (dairy)

- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2/3 cup water
- 2 tablespoon oil
- 1 1/3 cup flour
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1 pinch salt
- 3 tablespoons melted butter
- 1 cup semisweet or milk chocolate chips
- 2 cup sliced fresh strawberries
- 1 to 2 cups sweetened whipped cream or whipped topping
- 3 to 4 tablespoon chopped pistachios or pecans

In a large bowl combine the egg, milk, water and oil, whisk to combine. Add the flour, sugar and salt and continue whisking until the mixture is smooth.

Heat a medium, nonstick skillet or omelet pan over medium heat. Brush the bottom of the pan with a little of the melted butter. Pour about 1/4 to 1/3 cup batter into center of pan, tilting to coat the bottom. Cook until golden brown on one side, turning once. The cooking should take between 3 to 5 minutes depending on how hot your pan is. Place the crepes on a plate and continue until the batter is used up. In a small saucepan over low heat (or in the microwave), melt chocolate chips, stirring constantly. Remove them from the heat.

With a spoon spread some melted chocolate on the lighter side of one crepe. Place a line of sliced strawberries about 1/3 of the way from the bottom of the crepe and then roll it up. You can over fill it if you like; it looks really great with the strawberries falling out of the ends. Place the filled crepe on the serving plate and top with whipped cream or whipped topping. If there is extra melted chocolate left drizzle it over the top (you can always melt more if you want) and sprinkle the chopped nuts over the top. Makes 6 to 8 crepes

CREME CARAMEL (dairy)

You will need 8 4 oz. custard cups for this recipe

- 1 1/2 cups sugar, divided
- 1/2 cup water
- 3 large eggs
- 2 egg yolks
- 2 1/2 cups warm milk
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350. In a sauce pan combine 1 cup sugar and 1/2 cup water. Cook over a low heat for 10 minutes or until sugar caramelizes turning a golden brown. Don't stir, just tip the pan and swirl it a couple of times while it's cooking. BE CAREFUL. This mixture is extremely hot, very sticky and can burn you very quickly. When the color is a deep golden divide the mixture between the 8 custard cups.

In a bowl combine the eggs, egg yolks, remaining 1/2 cup sugar and whisk until blended. Gradually whisk in the

warm milk and vanilla. Divide the milk mixture between the 8 custard cups. Cover each of the cups with aluminum foil and place them on a cookie sheet that has sides. Place the cookie sheet in the oven and then pour warm water on the bottom of the cookie sheet until the water goes about 1/4 of an inch up the outside of the custard cup. Bake for 45 minutes to an hour or until a knife inserted in center comes out clean. Remove custard cups from the oven and place them on a cooling rack. Remove the foil and let cool for about 15 to 20 minutes before you place them in the refrigerator. Let cool for at least 3 to 4 hours. To serve run a knife around the edges of the custard cup and invert each custard on to a dessert plate. Makes 8

RICOTTA STUFFED SHELLS (dairy)

- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, thawed, well-drained
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 8 ounces Feta cheese, crumbled, divided
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/2 tablespoon oregano

- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1/2 cup chopped red pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped green onion
- 12 jumbo macaroni shells, cooked, drained
- 1 1/2 cups marinara sauce (jarred stuff works just great)

Preheat oven to 350. In a bowl combine the drained spinach, red pepper, oregano, basil, onion, garlic, ricotta cheese and about 3/4's of the feta cheese. Mix to combine. Fill shells with the spinach mixture; place in 9X13 baking dish. Pour the sauce over shells and top with remaining feta cheese. Bake stuffed shells for 20 minutes.

PEPPER JACK STUFFED POTATOES (dairy)

- 4 large baking potatoes
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon minced onion
- 3/4 cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1 cup pepper jack cheese, shredded

- 2 tablespoons green onion, chopped
- 1 tomato, chopped (optional)
- salt and pepper, to taste

Heat oven to 400. Bake potatoes for 45 minutes or until tender. When they are cool enough to handle, cut them lengthwise and scoop out the center of the potato and leave a 1/4 inch shell. Set the shell aside to cool. In small pan melt the butter. Add the garlic and onion and cook for about 2 minutes. In a bowl mash the cooled scooped out potatoes. Stir in the onion/garlic/butter mixture, pepper jack cheese, sour cream, parsley, salt and pepper. Mix well. Divide the mixture between the potatoes shells and pack it down slightly. Place the filled shells on a bak-

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The Neta-Mirhsam site under construction.

Starting over

Gush Katif families begin again

BY JUDY LASH BALINT

There are still plenty of people in Israel excited about the prospect of building communities based on traditional Jewish and Zionist ideals — and ironically, they're the very people whose communities were destroyed in Arik Sharon's Gaza withdrawal of 2005.

They are people like Oshrat Assis and her husband, who are anxious to get on with the business of rebuilding the kind of purposeful Zionist enterprise they were forced to leave behind in Gush Katif. Until the Disengagement, the Assis family lived and worked in Tel Katifa, a tiny village that was located a few miles down the beach south of Gaza city.

Today, in the tidy, small living room of her caravilla in Shekef, Oshrat, the mother of five kids under 12, relates how they were the 9th family to settle in Tel Katifa. "It was exactly what we wanted after we got married," says the tall, soft-spoken Oshrat. "We looked for a place that was young like us — we wanted to build something, to make a contribution and the expulsion of 2005 didn't wash that out of us," she asserts. "That's what we want now too," Oshrat explains.

Like hundreds of other former Gush Katif residents, Oshrat and her family are waiting for their permanent homes to be completed at Mirsham-Neta so that they can move on and resume their productive lives.

In August 2005, those 9,000 Israelis displaced from homes and businesses they had proudly built over the preceding 30 years were scattered to "temporary" quarters all over the country where they have spent the past four and a half years shuffling from hotel rooms to high rises to flimsy pre-fab caravilla encampments. Through it all, a significant number of the families have managed to stay together with others from their former communities and all relate that this has been a major source of strength and support that has helped them overcome the difficulties of the past few years.

Today, it's finally possible to see progress on the ground as the infrastructure for several new towns takes shape in the scenic Lachish region. Located some 25 miles south of Jerusalem, to the east of Kiryat Gat and north of Beer Sheva, the Lachish region is a fertile, historic area inside the Green Line that is sparsely populated by Jews.

The new communities of Bnei Dekalim (to be settled mainly by former residents of Neve Dekalim) and Mirsham-Neta (for former Kfar Darom and Tel Katifa families) will significantly change the landscape of the region.

As Ofer Gazit, the energetic building project manager shows visitors around the hilltop that is rapidly taking shape as the new community of Mirsham-Neta, it's hard not to be infected by his enthusiasm. Waving maps and architect's plans, the jovial Gazit points to the bulldozers crawling over the hills that are finally carving out the first phase of 60 homes that will form the nucleus of the new town.

Within a few months the infrastructure will be ready and soon after that work will get underway on the synagogue,



Photos by Judy Lash Balint
Efrat Luzon, mother of 10, Kfar Darom.

schools, recreation and industrial areas that will make up one of Israel's newest small towns. From the hilltop, it's easy to understand the strategic importance of the new community. The security barrier is less than half a mile away, and the southern Hebron Hills rise in the distance.

The few old-established moshavim nearby welcome the influx of industrious and energetic new neighbors who have years of experience of community-building under their belts and who will help strengthen the whole region.

Nissim and Efrat Luzon can hardly wait to get to work on building Neta-Mirsham. The Luzons were among the pioneers of Kfar Darom where they lived for 15 years and raised 10 children. Since the disengagement the family lived for more than 4 months in hotel rooms in Beersheva — "We almost lost our family togetherness there," Efrat laments as she recalls how parents lost control over their kids who lived down the hall with nothing to do and meal-times were no longer family occasions. From the hotel they were moved to a high-rise building in Ashkelon where they stayed for more than two years in miserable conditions for people used to freedom of movement and the intimacy of a small village where going outside didn't involve a 10 minute wait for a dingy elevator. Finally, the Luzons and another 27 Kfar Darom families moved into a site adjacent to the entrance to Shomriya, the last stop in the temporary housing saga.

"It wasn't that we didn't like Ashkelon," explains Efrat, "but we felt like we were just existing there — we weren't doing anything for the community, and we missed that terribly," she adds. Today the Kfar Darom group lives together in a small group of caravillas and has quickly reestablished their former tight-knit community feeling as they prepare for the big move to Mirsham-Neta. They've even attracted a number of young couples from other parts of the country that share their passion for settling the land and have joined them in the less than ideal conditions at the Shomriya interim housing site.

Among these new couples are Efrat Pupkin and Noa Davidi and their husbands. The Pupkins, in their twenties, are newly religious people originally from Kfar Saba and Mazkeret Batya. Along with the Davidis, they

See *STARTING OVER*, Page 21



Oshrat Assis, formerly of Tel Katif.

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STARTING OVER: KATIF FAMILIES BEGIN AGAIN

Continued from Page Twenty

were deeply impressed by the dedication and idealism of the former Kfar Darom residents who are looking to recreate the spirit of Gush Katif in their new home. "It's such an honor to be part of a group like this," says Efrat.

A few hundred meters away from the Kfar Darom groups' temporary home in Shomriya, a brand new school opened its doors to 500 students at the beginning of the school year. On the other side of the village, acres of vineyards have already been planted and contracts signed to send the grapes to the Barkan winery. A new community center recently opened in Shomriya to accommodate youth activities, family simchas and cultural events. Families from Atzmona, another destroyed Gush Katif community, have chosen to make Shomriya their permanent home and their children play happily on the new playground equipment.

The spirit of the people of Gush Katif has not been extin-



Photo by Judy Lash Balint

Ofir Gazit, project manager.

guished. The qualities that made the 22 Jewish communities of the Gaza Strip among the most productive and innovative in Israel were not wiped out when the physical structures were destroyed.

Despite the fact that government compensation and planning for the Gush Katif families has been sorely lacking, private individuals and founda-

tions have seized the opportunity to be partners in the newest phase of the Zionist enterprise and continue to support Jews who want to make a difference and continue to build the state.

Questions or comments? Contact Judy Lash Balint at newsroom@thejewishstar.com

DAIRY DISHES FOR CHANUKAH

Continued from Page 19

ing sheet. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes or until heated through. Sprinkle the top with the chopped tomatoes and green onion. Add more cheese if you want to. Return to oven for 5 more minutes and then serve. Makes 4.

CHOCOLATE RICE PUDDING (dairy)

- 2 1/2 cups milk
- 2 cups cooked rice
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Combine milk, rice, sugar and chocolate chips in 2 to 3-quart saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring often, until pudding is thick and creamy, stirring often. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla. Spoon into serving dishes. Let stand 10 minutes. Serve warm or cold. Makes 6 servings.

Recipe from the USA Rice Federation.

ZESTY LEMON CUSTARD PIE (dairy)

- 1 pre-made frozen pie crust
- 1 tablespoons butter
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon grated lemon zest
- 2/3 cup lemon juice (fresh is best)
- powdered sugar

Preheat oven to 350. In a glass bowl melt the butter in microwave and then set it aside. In another bowl whisk together the eggs and sugar. Add the lemon zest and then slowly stir in the butter and lemon juice until the mixture is combined. Pour the mixture into the crust. Bake for 30 to 40 minutes or until top of custard is lightly browned. Be warned, the pie will not look cooked and a tooth pick will not come out clean. It will set up as it cools. When the pie is cool, refrigerate until cool then refrigerate for several hours. Just before serving sprinkle powdered sugar on top of the pie. Makes 1 pie.

COTTAGE CHEESE AND BLUEBERRY PANCAKES (dairy)

- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 cup cottage cheese
- 1/4 cup milk
- 4 eggs (lightly beaten)
- 2 tablespoons melted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup fresh or frozen blueberries

In a bowl combine the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and sugar. Mix well. In another bowl combine the cottage cheese, milk, eggs, melted butter, and vanilla. Mix to combine. Pour the dry ingredients into the cottage cheese mixture. Mix to combine. GENTLY fold the blueberries into the batter making sure that they don't get crushed. Heat a griddle and use a little butter or margarine to coat it. Using a measuring cup pour approx. 1/4 cup of the mixture into the pan and cook until the surface starts to bubble and the bottom is golden brown, about 2-3

minutes. Flip the pancake and cook the other side until the bottom is

golden brown, about 1-2 minutes. Makes 6 to 8 pancakes

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