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# THE JEWISH \$\STAR\$

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This seat is taken

# Busing vote soon in West Hempstead

By Michael Orbach

It was 1961 when the school board in West Hempstead decided that children who lived three-quarters of a mile or less from school didn't need busing.

school didn't need busing.

"They called them walkers," laughed Ann Koffsky, a mother of three who is spearheading a referendum campaign to update the policy. "Since then a lot of things have changed and the position is anachronistic."

A coalition of private and public school parents support a change, and on May 18, in addition to voting for members of the school board, voters in West Hempstead can weigh in on a referendum on new rules. If it passes, West Hempstead would provide busing to children in grades K-6 who live three-tenths of a mile or more from their school.

Having her kids walk at their age is out of the question, said Shira Goldress, an accountant. She and her husband have two sons, ages 8 and 6, and live just outside the threequarter-mile radius.

"They'd have to cross Nassau Boulevard themselves," she said, referring to a busy street in the neighborhood. "It's just unsafe."

Both Goldress and her husband work in Manhattan. From Monday to Thursday she relies on an assortment of friends and relatives to transport her sons. "It's very difficult to get them to and from school," she said, adding that on Fridays she takes the day off in order to be able to pick up the boys on time.

Koffsky, an illustrator and children's book author, splits carpooling to the Hebrew Acad-

Continued on page 3

# A happy housewarming

After a five-year struggle, Agudath Israel of the Five Towns finally got to parade through the streets to a new shul.

By Sergey Kadinsky

For five long years, the congregation of Agudath Israel of the Five Towns met in a trailer on the busy corner of Cedarhurst Avenue and Peninsula Boulevard. Last Sunday, May 2, traffic came to a standstill as the shul celebrated the completion of its new building.

The shul, which is led by Rabbi Yitz-chok Frankel, was formed 12 years ago in the living room of Judge Andrew Goldsmith. As the congregation grew, community members bought an old home on a large piece of land. The house was be-

yond repair and they set out to demolish it and build a modern shul, but along the way they hit a sizable snag.

"Before we took down the old building, a bank gave us a commitment," said Shalom Parnes, the shul president. "We took it down, and the bank then reneged."

A second bank also promised a mortgage, and then backed out. Finally, Bank of America stepped in, and construction began around Passover of 2009.

"The trailer was supposed to last a couple of months," said Far Rockaway resident Yitzchak Baraff. "I had my au-



Photo by Janette Pellegrini

Members of a marching band helped Agudath Israel of the Five Towns celebrate a new era for the shul.

Shabbat Candlelighting: 7:39 p.m. Shabbat ends 8:44 p.m. 72 minute zman 9:11 p.m. Torah Reading Parashat Behar-Bechukoti Zman Kriat Shma 8:31 (Magen Avrohom) and 9:19 (GRA & Ba'al Tanya)



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# A happy housewarming

Continued from page 1 fruf in the trailer.'

"All my wife and I wanted was a nice place to daven," recalled Goldsmith. "Today is a fresh start for our kehila."

Goldsmith also said that the wait has heightened expectations for the shul. "There were many obstacles to overcome, and we can expect great spiritual dividends," he said. "So many of us worked hard to make it happen.

Among them, Goldsmith singled out Parnes, who provided water to the trailer. "It's February and he's filling buckets of water for the trailer," said Goldsmith. "We need presidents

Goldsmith also thanked Cedarhurst Mayor Andrew Parise for his work in ensuring the approval of the building. "Our congregation owes this mayor a debt of gratitude," said Goldsmith. "He fought in Patton's army and was a liberator of concentration camps.'

Parise ensured that proper variances were granted for the shul, and the new building lines up alongside its neighbors, with a large front lawn, and a sloping roof concealing the third-floor women's section. The main sanctuary is on the second floor and the first floor is to be used for public celebrations. For safety, the main entrance does not face Peninsula Boulevard, but rather a courtyard behind the building.

A new Torah was led in a festive procession from the Goldsmith home, where it was sponsored by his in-laws, Rabbi Dr. Zev Goldberg and his wife Terry, in memory of Rifka bas

Rabbi Frankel said that in a time of fragmentation, his shul continues to attract a crowd of many different hats, while adhering to a tradition of Torah scholarship. "We're proud of our label," said Frankel. "It's no secret that it's built on the shoulders of gedolei Israel, who are committed to an ideal."

Leading rabbonim joined the celebration, dancing alongside the Torah with Rabbi Frankel — they included Rabbi Dovid Feinstein, Rabbi Reuven Feinstein, and Rabbi Malkiel

"In our youth on Lag b'Omer, we came back with red faces sunburned," said Rabbi Frankel. "The sun is out and it's a tremendous simchah."

He quoted the Ponevezh Rav, Rabbi Yosef Shlomo Kahaneman, about the new building.



Rabbi Chaim Dovid Zwiebel (center), executive vice president of Agudath Israel of America, was among those who participated in the shul celebration.

"I had a dream, but I was not asleep," Rabbi Frankel said before continuing in his own words. "The establishment of Agudas Yisroel in the Five Towns is no longer a dream.'

For additional pictures of the Chanukas Habayis celebration, go online to www.thejewishstar.com

# Busing vote soon in West Hempstead

Continued from page 1

emy of Nassau County with another parent. Two years ago, she was stuck ferrying her children back and forth to school.

"I had a baby and [he] would nap exactly when I did carpool," said Koffsky. "I was trying to work part-time. It was a nightmare. Now that the nightmare is over I have time to

run a campaign. She continued: "If you're a stay-atfirst the petition have to home mom then you've got be signed by 75 parents. Koffsky returned with 250 to get a babysitter. If you're a worksignatures from parents of students at Hebrew Acade-

mother you need to have a babysitter who has a car. Do you know how hard it is to find a babysitter with a car? They don't come with

When Koffsky and several other parents began circulating a petition asking that the school board consider changing the bus-

ing policy, the board said that a cost analysis would be required, and that

my of Nassau County, St. Thomas the Apostle and the public schools.

According to Richard Cunningham, the district's deputy superintendent, the cost of changing the rules would be about \$95 per household per year, though Koffsky prefers to describe it as "a quarter a day."

The number of children who receive busing in West Hempstead would nearly double from 639 to 1,095. An additional 10 buses would be required, Cunningham said, at an annual cost of \$608,000, or 1.5 percent of the current tax levy.

"There's a good level of discourse in the community about it," Cunningham said, because the busing proposal carries potentially profound consequences.

The school board is seeking a 3.69 percent increase in the budget, from \$52.2 million to \$54.5 million. The cost of the additional busing is factored into the proposed increase.

However, if the busing proposal passes but the budget does not, the district would be forced to adopt a contingency budget based on the previous year's spending plan, and the \$608,000 expenditure for additional busing would have to be made up with cuts to staff or other services.

If that were to happen, some worry that it could cause a rift between private school parents and public school parents who would have to deal with the cuts.

"We have to be very careful that this does not divide our town," said West Hempstead

resident and school board candidate Cynthia Dimiceli, whose children attend the public school on Cornwell Avenue. "Our co-existing town is made up of different backgrounds, with different needs and requirements... Somebody else's need may not be the same as mine, and my need may not be the same as somebody else's..."

Others argue that the ancillary benefits of added busing would be well worth the extra cost. "This is an issue that is mentioned to me time and again when I show potential houses in the neighborhood," said West Hempstead real estate agent Sharon Lovy. "We should consider the fact that West Hempstead would be a far more attractive town for many families if transportation to school became less of a challenge."

Cunningham said he was unsure of which way the vote will go. "I think part of my inability to comment is that we get to present to people who come and invite us in." he explained. "There is a very big silent majority in all communities that it's difficult to get feedback on.'

Koffsky is well aware of the opposition to the referendum.

"I don't see any signs that say, 'Vote No," she said. "It's human nature to vote in your self-interest. The Jewish community is not monolithic; the Christian community is not monolithic. Some say, 'I don't want to pay a nickel more in taxes.' I understand that. I hope they stay home on Election Day.'

# **Safe summer plans**

# Camps learn to prevent abuse

More than a hundred representatives of 30 Orthodox summer camps attended a two-hour meeting in Flatbush last week to discuss ways to deal with sexual abuse in a camp setting. The event organized by Sacred Lives, an organization that advocates for sexual abuse victims and for greater education inside the Jewish community, was closed to the media. Several Journal ists, including a freelancer for The Jewish Star, were materials used at the meeting were leaked and published online the next day by the news website vosizneias.com.

They included a manual, as well as a form letter and information prepared with the approval of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah, the ruling body of Agudath Israel of America, that the camp administrators were advised to mail to parents of all prospective campers before the

"The purpose and the content was two-fold," explained Beth Kaplan, the founder of Sacred Lives. "To educate about the reality of childhood sexual abuse and the impact and the implications it has on the victim, and to provide a protocol for camp directors to use as a guide if this happens in their camp, if a camper or a staff member discloses that they were sexually abused.' She described participants as "receptive and grateful."

"The ultimate achrayus (responsibility) of dealing with any individual situation of alleged improper conduct rests with us as camp directors," wrote Meir Frischman, director of the Association of Jewish Camp Operators. One section of the manual called, "Listening to the Victim," stressed that a camper or staff member should be believed when they report being sexually abused. "People rarely lie or make up stories about sexual abuse," the manual advised. The manual explicitly stated that camp directors are mandated reporters in the event that abuse is alleged. Kaplan said her organization is in the process of planning a conference for pediatricians who practice in the Orthodox community.

Mark Appel, the president of Voice of Justice, a sexual abuse activist organization and one of the sponsors of the conference, called the event a "breakthrough." "It's the first time that Agudath Israel participated in an event where there was specific training," commented Appel. "It was explicit to the camp directors explaining the process of going to the authorities and I think that the information was very thorough. It really spelled out how counselors and campers and directors should deal with this subject."

Other activists were not as charitable to Agudah. "The Agudah handbook represents progress from an organization who's rabbinic leadership has enforced a policy of cover-up for the past 40 years," said Ben Hirsch, president of Survivors for Justice, an organiztaion that advocates on behalf of abuse victims. "It is heartening to see the very camp that employed and protected Yehudah Kolko addressing this issue in a semi-public manner... The simple message — report all complaints of sexual abuse directly to the police — does not require a handbook."

The posting online drew a variety of responses ranging from praise to questions about the camps that did not attend the meeting. "As a camper who experience and witness horrible things, i (sic) will NEVER send my male children to sleep away camp," one poster wrote.

Other organizations the collaborated to arrange the event included the Association of Jewish Camp Operators, an arm of Agudath Israel of America, FEGS, The Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, and the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty.

manual be can www.thejewishstar.com.

# Lag B'omer celebration in Cedarhurst Park

Chabad of the Five Towns held its annual Lag Ba'omer celebration in Cedarhurst Park last Sunday. Besides a huge bonfire, the event featured a man on stilts, archery and music. More pictures are online at www.thejewishstar.com



Photo by Penny Frondelli



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#### **Still dangerous**

# More Sabo victims revealed

By Michael Orbach

A second child victim has come forward to accuse Michael Sabo, an Orthodox man from Flatbush, of sexual abuse.

Sabo, who had been out on \$50,000 bail while awaiting trial for multiple counts of sexual assault, was re-arrested in February. The second victim, a child who was allegedly molested several years ago, was identified through photos found on Sabo's computer. The photos, as described to a reporter, are inconceivably graphic to the point where they could not described in this newspaper. In the new case, Sabo is charged with predatory sexual acts against a child and could face a maximum sentence of ten years to life.

Sabo's story was initially reported in The Jewish Star in September. At that time, the father of Sabo's first alleged victim, who was identified under the pseudonym of "Joseph," spoke with The Star about his concerns that Sabo was free on bail.

"I'm not doing this to get back at him," Joseph said. "I'm doing this to protect other children. Even my son feels [Sabo] has other [victims] ...I need to know he's away for a long time so he cannot hurt another child again."

Joseph discovered the alleged abuse in April 2009 when a third party brought to his attention a series of nine photographs of his son that were discovered online. The pictures, in which the boy was wearing a yarmulke, were several years old and pornographic in nature. Each photo was accompanied by a caption that included the boy's name and address and a phrase that indicated that the then-six-year-old boy had been molested. The father of the second-victim, personally acquainted with Sabo, was at first angered by The Jewish Star's coverage of the case.

"I was upset about [the initial coverage]," explained the man, whose name is being withheld to shield the identity of his child. "Why did they [Sabo's kids] have to know about it?" The father says his opinion has changed. "I have to erase and reprogram my [child]," he said.

Sabo is currently on Rikers Island while his family attempts to raise the \$2 million bail. \$1 million has reportedly been raised so far; their attempts to have the bail lowered are alarming to some. "I'm afraid he might flee," Joseph said, adding that more victims were in the process of coming forward and that Sabo allegedly preyed on "whatever was accessible." Asked if he believed Sabo poses a danger to other children if he is set free, he replied, "100-percent."

Sabo spoke to The Jewish Star at the time of the first article. "This will pass," Sabo said back in September of 2009. "It might not be tomorrow. For all I know they could dismiss everything. You never know."

He hoped to move past the allegations. "I have four beautiful children, who need a father," Sabo said.

Sabo attended Yeshiva Torah Temimah in Brooklyn, the school made infamous when its owner, Lipa Margulies, deflected investigations of a longtime teacher, Yehuda Kolko. Kolko pleaded guilty to multiple counts of child endangerment. He is suspected of committing widespread sexual abuse. Sabo said he could not recall if he had been a victim of sexual abuse by Kolko.

"My therapist says it's repressed, right now, but I don't remember," said Sabo in the 2009 interview.

Joseph credited Ben Hirsch, president of Survivors for Justice, an organization that advocates on behalf of sexual abuse victims, for helping him bring the case forward.



hoto by Michael Orbach

#### Sabo's family members standing in the court hallway.

"This case puts to lie the Agudah's rabbinical leaderships' position that it is 'helpful' to discuss these issues with a rabbi," said Hirsch. "Nothing is further from the truth. A rabbi was consulted in the Sabo case — four years ago — at which time the rabbi insisted the matter remain unreported to the police. It remained unreported until last year when a courageous parent reported the crime to the authorities. The sooner our community learns to report abuse directly to the police the sooner the level of sexual abuse within our community will drop down to societal norms."

During his bail hearing on Friday, April 30, Sabo wore a beige sweater over a pair of dark pants. He stood while his lawyers and the assistant district attorney discussed his case in a sidebar with the Judge John Walsh. Sabo locked his fingers beneath his hand-cuffed wrists. "This is the first time he's wearing a yarmulke,' said Josef, the father of the first alleged victim. "It's already such a chilul Hashem," said one of the boy's supporters, who sat in the row behind the father.

The father of the second accuser held a plastic bag that contained t'shuva (halachik responsa) written by Rabbi Yosef Sholom Elyashiv authorizing the reporting of child molesters to secular authorities.

"He's responsible to pay me for all damages," the father intoned about Sabo. He said that Chaim Sabo, Michael's father, had been publicizing his child's name around the Jewish community in an attempt to intimidate the family and deter them from testifying against the younger Sabo.

After the bail hearing was adjourned until June, Sabo's family members stood in an uneasy cluster around the courtroom. When a reporter approached them, Chaim Sabo, a jeweler who lives in Borough Park, grabbed the reporter's hand and squeezed it hard.

"What do you want? Have a nice day," Sabo's father said.

Once a picture was taken, Sabo's father attempted to follow the reporter and a child abuse activist into an elevator, before a male member of Sabo's family, dressed in a white shirt and black pants, called him away.

Sabo's attorney is Jeffrey Schwartz, who successfully defended Cesar Rodriguez, the man who molested and beat to death his stepdaughter, Nixzmary Brown. That case achieved national attention.

"Everyone seems to fail to remember that child molesters are the most abused forgotten victims," Schwartz explained. "99 percent of the time they were viciously abused and they never got care. They're child abuse victims who have languished their whole lives... There's no *rachmones* (pity) for these people who are the ultimate victims. People forget to remember that."

# "Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem"

### THE BATTLE FOR JERUSALEM NEVER ENDS

But today's battle is not being waged, as so many before, with catapults or cannon. Those who now seek to tear Jerusalem apart do so in editorials and op-eds, in lobbying meetings, and in White House conversations. They urge President Obama to impose a peace plan that includes the redivision of the Holy City, asserting that "everyone knows" that this is what must be done. That assertion is false.

### THE JEWISH BOND WITH JERUSALEM IS DEEP

- ► A recent poll found that 84% of Israelis opposed the redivision of Jerusalem because, they said, doing so would lead to further conflict.¹
- ► Another poll found that 61% of American Jews opposed the redivision

of Jerusalem, even in the context of a final peace deal with the Palestinians.<sup>2</sup>

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operate freely under Muslim religious oversight. This status quo is surely more desirable than any speculative new "international regime."

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**WE PRAY** that God will spread His canopy of peace over all His people Israel, and over Jerusalem.

### On Wednesday, May 12, as we celebrate Yom Yerushalayim—

the 43<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of Jerusalem's reunification—the Orthodox Union calls on the community to

dedicate our thoughts to Israel's security and welfare, intensify our prayers

to the Almighty, and increase our study of His Torah.

We also ask you to be an advocate for Jerusalem.

Visit www.ou.org/jerusalem to sign an online petition to President Obama.



# May 6 & May 12

#### Pre-Shavuot lectures

DAVIS RENOV STAHLER YESHIVA HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS, located at 700 lbsen Ave. in Woodmere, will be hosting its annual Pre-Shavuot Lecture Series for men and women. Thursday, May 6th, Rabbi Mordechai Willig, Rosh Yeshiva and Rosh Kollel at Yeshiva University, and Rav of the Young Israel of Riverdale, will give a shiur on the topic of "The Mitzvah of Chinuch." Wednesday, May 12th, Rabbi Eli Mansour will speak about "Kabalat Hatorah: The Blueprint of Creation." Lectures take place at 9 p.m., followed by Ma'ariv.

# History with singles THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF YOUNG ISRAEL (NCYI)

will present a program for singles 35-and-older in New York City at 7:30 PM. "Remember the Past... Connect to the Future" will take place at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, at 36 Battery Place in Manhattan. Attendees will enjoy a private tour of the museum followed by the program and a reception. Space is limited. The cost is \$54 per person; advance paid registration is required. Register online at https://www.youngisrael. org/secureContent/signup.cfm/63/Singles\_JMuseum or mail check payable to "Young Israel Programs" to National Council of Young Israel at 111 John Street, Suite 450, New York, New York 10038. For more information, call Rebbetzin Judi Steinig at (212) 929-1525 x100 or email at jsteinig@youngisrael.org.

# May 6 & May 13 Shalom Aleichem

THE FIVE TOWNS JCC, located at 207 Grove Avenue in Cedarhurst, presents Dr. Annette Labovitz giving two classes about the stories of Shalom Aleichem: "Tevya the Milkman" (May 6) and "The Railroad Stories" (May 13) at 10 a.m. There is a \$30 fee for the two classes. To register please call Sheryl at (516) 569-6733 x 222 or email sheryl.wyszkowski@fivetownsjcc.org

# Calendar

Submit your shul or organization's events or shiurim to jscalendar@thejewishstar.com.

Deadline is Wednesday of the week prior to publication.



Photos by Elizabeth Kirshenbaum

The gi the ba Israel of Ara and R tom r Spieg

The girls of the annual Navah bakesale. To date, the bake sale has raised over \$35,000 for the Israel-based organization that helps victims of Arab terrorism. Top row: Esti Zacharowicz and Rivkah Dienstag who ran the event. Bottom row: Tami Muchnik, Miri Spiegel, Avigail Spiegel, Shayna Goldstein, and Tzipora Zions.

May 9
Singles night

POP LOUNGE, at 14 East 58th St. in Manhattan, will hold a Jewish Singles Night for singles between the ages of 21-31. The event will be hosted by Aaron Ellnor, "The Dating Wingman." Cost is \$35 pre-order and \$40 at the door. For more information contact TheDatingWingman@gmail.com

#### May 10 Yom Yerushalayim

#### lecture

THE STELLA K. ABRAHAM HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, at 291 Meadowview Ave. in Hewlett, will hold the final installment of its community-wide lecture series. Rabbi Meir Goldwicht, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva University, will deliver a pre-Yom Yerushalayim lecture on the topic of "V'hanetzach Zoh Yerushalayim: Jerusalem Present and Future

- Chazal's Perspective." The lecture begins at 8:15 and is open to the public.

#### May 11 OU wine & cheese

THE ORTHODOX UNION will host a wine and cheese tasting event for Orthodox singles between the ages of 22-28 at 7:30 p.m. at Congregation Edmund J. Safra, located at 11 East 63rd Street in New York. Fee is \$10. Call 212 613 8300 for registration and more information.

#### Making marriage work

CHABAD OF THE FIVE TOWNS, at 74 Maple Ave. in Cedarhurst, will host Rabbi Daniel Schonbuch, noted lecturer and author of "First Aid For Jewish Marriages." Schonbuch, a marriage counselor who specializes in helping families and couples revitalize their relationships, will discuss "The Art of Communication" at 8 p.m. Go to www. chabadfivetowns.com for more information or call (516) 295-2478.

**May 12** 

Sisterhood Supperette

THE SISTERHOOD OF CONGREGATION BETH SHOLOM, located at 390 Broadway in Lawrence, will host its annual supperette at 6:45 p.m. This year's honorees are past presidents Susan Alon, Iris Maidenbaum, Faye Klausner, Tracie Shore, Flora Bienstock and Danielle Gill, being recognized for their dedication to the Sisterhood and Congregation. The program features dinner, an awards ceremony and and exciting fashion show presented by Danielle M and Uccelli. Couvert \$54.00. Music by Shelly Lang. For further information please call the synagogue office at (516) 569-3600.

# JCC Fundraising Dinner THE JCC OF THE GREATER FIVE TOWNS WIll Hold

THE JCC OF THE GREATER FIVE TOWNS will hold its annual fundraising dinner at 6:30 p.m. at the Sephardic Temple, 775 Branch Boulevard in Cedarhurst. For further information call (516) 569-6733.

# **May 16**

# Holocaust memorial concert

The Lawrence Public Schools Academy of Fine and Performing Arts will present a Holocaust Memorial concert beginning at 6:00 p.m. The free concert will take place at Lawrence High School, at 2 Reilly Road in Cedarhurst. For more information call (516) 295-7084.

#### Conversos

THE SEPHARDIC TEMPLE, at 775 Branch Boulevard in Cedarhurst will host Professor Francesca Bregoli who will speak on the topic of "Blurred Identities: Conversos in The Early Modern Period." The talk will focus on forced conversions in the Iberian Peninsula and the challenges posed by the process of reversion to Judaism in the Sephardi community of Amsterdam. The program begins at 7 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

# May 19 The Ten Commandments

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#### and ice cream

CHABAD OF THE FIVE TOWNS, at 74 Maple Avenue in Cedarhurst, will hold a dairy luncheon and ice cream party. Shacharit begins at 10:00 a.m.; Ten Commandments read at 11:15 a.m., followed by the luncheon and ice cream.

# **May 23**

# Free Concert in Central

THE FREYER FAMILY 17TH ANNUAL ISRAEL DAY CONCERT IN CENTRAL PARK will take place Sunday, May 23, 2010, the 10th of Sivan 5770, at the Summer Stage in Central Park at 72nd St., rain or shine, following the Annual Salute to Israel parade. Admission is free. Talented performers from Israel and America will appear including Eitan Katz, Gershon Veroba, Dr. Meyer and Baruch Abittan, Pey Dalid, and Michael Ian Elias. The concert is presented in association with Young Israel Chovevei Zion, with special thanks to the National Council of Young Israel. The concert organizer is Dr. Joseph Frager; Chairpersons are Dr. Paul and Drora Brody; co-organizers are Meyer and Esther Chetrit and Jacqui and Tamar Ekstein. Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Steele will be the guest speaker; Deputy Speaker of the Knesset Danny Dannon will also appear, as will David Ha'lvri, executive director of the Shomron Liaison Office. To help defray

# Calendar

Submit your shul or organization's events or shiurim to jscalendar@thejewishstar.com. Deadline is Wednesday of the week prior to publication.

the huge costs, contributors of \$500 or more will be listed on the widely distributed concert poster, with a dedication to a loved one. For more information, call (917) 650-5623.

#### Blood Drive

THE BACH JEWISH CENTER, located at 210 Edwards Blvd. in Long Beach, will hold its first annual TMD blood drive. Afternoon time.

# Shalhevet dinner

SHALHEVET HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS holds its first annual dinner, honoring Judy & Scott Wagman and Stacy & Robbie Zeitz. The dinner will be held at Temple Hillel, 1000 Rosedale Road

in North Woodmere. For information call (516) 224-0242

### **June 13**

#### **Bone Marrow Drive**

BEIS HAKNESSES OF NORTH WOODMERE will hold a bone marrow drive in the shul at 649 Hungry Harbor Road in North Woodmere from 9:30a to 6p. For information please call Ian Boczko at (917) 705-6224 or email bknwbonemarrow@gmail.com

# June 14

#### Introduction to Photoshop

THE JCC OF THE GREATER FIVE TOWNS, located at 207 Grove Ave. in Cedarhurst, will offer an

"Introduction to Photoshop" class from 7-9 p.m. The fee for the course is \$25.00. For information or to register call 516-569-6733 ext. 22.

HALACHA SHIUR followed by a Parsha shiur by Rabbi Yaakov Feitman beginning at 9:00 PM at Kehillas Bais Yehuda Tzvi, 395 Oakland Ave., Cedarhurst.

#### Tuesday

SHIUR IN MAHARAL ON THE CHUMASH by Rabbi Eytan Feiner from 8:15 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. at Congregation Kneseth Israel, 728 Empire Ave., Far Rockaway.

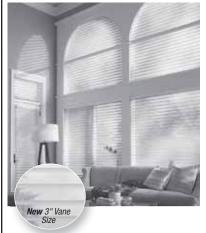
PARSHA SHIUR by Rabbi Mordechai Sitorsky at Kehillas Bais Yehuda Tzvi, 395 Oakland Ave., Cedarhurst.

#### Thursday

VIDEO SIMULCASTS of weekly shiurim by Rabbi Eli Mansour and Rabbi Yissocher Frand at Kehillas Bais Yehuda Tzvi, 395 Oakland Ave., Cedarhurst. Rabbi Mansour at 7:45 p.m., Rabbi Frand at 9:00 p.m. Weekly chaburot: 10:15 p.m., Ta'amei HaMitzvos: 11:00 p.m., Ma'ariv: 11:15. Chulent served.



Kulanu honored its founding families Sunday at a breakfast at its Central Ave. headquarters, the Kulanu Center for Special Services in Cedarhurst. 10 years ago 160 families donated \$10,000 each to create an organization for local families of children with special needs. Full caption with names online at thejewishstar.com.



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Photo by Christina Daly

#### **Proud day for Touro** College

On April 25, Touro's Lander College for Men celebrated its 10th year with the ordination of 52 new rabbis. The celebration took place at The White Shul in Far Rockaway.



Photos by Claudio Papapietro

#### Torah dedicated at Y.I. of Woodmere

Allen Rosenzweig, center, fills in a letter on the new Torah at Young Israel of Woodmere on Sunday, April 18. The Torah was written in honor of Rosenzweig's mother, Grace. Also pictured are Yerachmiel Rosenfeld, right, who came from Jerusalem to deliver the Torah, and Avrohom Schmidt. Bottom, Eric Lustig fills in a letter on the new Torah.



# REINVENT THE MEAL

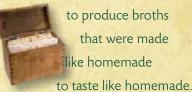
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# **Best Persian food in NYC**

By Zecharia Mehler

When I was first given the go ahead to begin work as the Jewish Star's restaurant critic I found myself struggling to pick a restaurant for my inaugural review. Sure, there are dozens of truly amazing restaurants in the New York area to choose from but that was exactly my problem. I needed something more than just another place to get a great steak filet. I needed a restaurant that stands out amongst its peers as the kind of place that provides a dining experience rather than just serve as a place to grab a bite to eat. It was this search for individuality that brought me to Colbeh.

An Iranian friend who wanted me to sample some of her culture's cuisine introduced me to Colbeh years ago. Back then Colbeh's Manhattan restaurant was a small intimate location with no more than twelve tables. It was lit softly with candles and purple lights that emanated a gentle glow from runners along the ceiling. At the time Colbeh's relative anonymity made for a quiet, almost private meal. Since then Colbeh's popularity has grown and so has the restaurant itself. Having moved from its original location Colbeh has traded small and intimate for spacious and trendy. Walking into the new space at 32 W. 39th Street, I immediately noticed the difference in ambiance. The décor is described by Colbeh's interior decorator as a "romantic rustic style." An illuminated bar runs almost the length of the lower level. Thick wooden doors bring a warm natural feel to the restaurant and a backlit glass wall, filled with high-end wines, provides a modern flair.

Now with over triple the capacity of the old restaurant, Colbeh has a full bar, private party room, second floor dining area, and even its own hookah lounge.

As soon as we sat down our waiter, Khalid and restaurant manager Simon approached us. "Would you like to order off menu or would you like us to bring you a selection tonight," Simon asked?

"Bring me whatever you think I should try," I told him. This was a challenge that Simon and Khalid responded to with enthusiasm, by creating each course as a meal unto itself. To start we were given a plethora of Middle Eastern appetizers. More traditional Persian dishes were also served like ghormeh-sabzi, an herbed stew that is often referred to as the national dish of Iran. Served over tahdig (crispy rice), ghormeh-sabzi is an elegantly flavored amalgam of beans, herbs and beef. I personally love the dish, but my fellow diners all thought it was a more acquired taste. Should you go to Colbeh I urge you to try it but, just in case you are looking for something a little simpler for the Ashkenazi palate, Colbeh also serves a stew called Gheimeh. It is made from lentils and braised beef and could be referred to as a gourmet Mediterranean cholent.

One thing to keep in mind as you eat is that though much of the food seems exotic, many of the dishes are Iranian versions of food that is very recognizable. For instance one of our appetizers, Gondi, described by the menu as chickpea and chicken balls, is essentially a Persian meatball. Gondi has a



Moroccan cigars, Gondi and Ghormen Sabzi.

fantastic flavor that is mildly reminiscent of hummus and pairs well when actually dipped in hummus.

Our main course was a number of kebabs that Colbeh specializes in. The Joujeh kebab, a lemon and saffron marinated chicken, stands out. It was moist, tender and delicious and paired beautifully with the dilled basmati rice it came with. The Kebab Barg or cubed beef is a bit of a tougher cut of meat but it is so deftly seasoned that a little extra chewing is worth it. Especially note worthy is Colbeh's Chilean sea bass kebab, which is simply one of the finest things I have ever eaten.

Along with the move to the new location Colbeh, like many kosher restaurants, broadened its menu to include sushi. While I know Persian cuisine and sushi are not necessarily a natural pairing, the sushi is of such a high quality as to justify the addition. Particularly good was the yellowtail and jalapeño and the spicy salmon, though they are not for those with a faint heart and delicate palate. After dinner we retired to the hookah lounge with its large leather couches and dim lighting to eat baklava, drink a jasmine black tea and smoke a refreshing mixture of lemon and 57 mint hookah all of which were top notch.

What makes Colbeh a great restaurant is not just the food, but that they create a congenial atmosphere for their customers. The waiters are polite, knowledgeable and very service-oriented — an attitude that is not a given at kosher restaurants today. As we dined I closely watched the tables around me to see what kind of service they were getting; each was doted on by its waiter.

I will admit there is a piece of me that misses the intimate setting that Colbeh once occupied, but life is about growth and Colbeh has clearly grown, maturing in a way that makes it stand out in a city that is filled with high end kosher restaurants. In my opinion Colbeh is one of the finest kosher restaurant in New York and I would encourage anyone to experience it for him or herself.

Colbeh has locations in Manhattan. Queens, and Great Neck.

Zechariah Mehler specializes in marketing of kosher foods and is a staff writer for Kosher Today. Follow him on twitter @TheKosher-

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#### **Ask Aviva**

All questions are real. Identifying details have been changed to preserve anonymity.

Dear Aviva,

I am 42 years old and am trying to get back together with my ex-girlfriend. She says that I have to straighten out my life first. She's referring to my financial life.

Why does she have to wait until I am successful again in order to get back together with me? I know she is nervous because I am twice divorced with kids and am having a very hard time with finances now. But I have a lot of potential that was once actualized. I went to the best schools and worked at top firms.

I was laid off once the economy went sour, and have been struggling ever since. My savings were depleted within the first year. Lately, I am not able to keep up with my mortgage payments. I will probably move

Despite this, I don't think she has a valid reason to break-up a great relationship. We were so good together. She saw what an awesome father I am and how well I treated her. I was ready to marry her. How can I persuade her to get back together?

-Heartbroken

#### Dear Heartbroken,

Whew! There is a lot going on in your letter! There is even more that is (conveniently?) not going on in your letter.

I am limited in my advice to you because

# Heartbroken and broke

you've limited your words. There are many holes in your letter. Let's try to fill them.

What were your first two marriages like? It is possible that you married a woman who hurt you emotionally, physically or psychologically? If so, it is even more likely that you married this sort of specimen a second time.

If this resonates with you, you must take a big break from dating and, with guided help, learn to identify the warning signs of an abuser. If this is not the case, keep reading:

How did two marriages deteriorate under your watch? What have you done to ensure a lasting union in the future?

It is possible that the third time's the charm (I have seen some decent third marriages). However, it would behoove both you and Miss Right III to first go over your previous marriages with a fine-toothed comb. Where were you directly responsible for negativity? Did you show appreciation? Did you pull your own weight by actively contributing to household chores and childcare? Did you accept your wives' influence? Were you positive and did you try to have fun with your

When something bothered you, did you bring it up directly, or did you let it fester and brew? When you argued, did you lay blame or accuse? Were you sarcastic or, worse, did you stonewall? (Stonewalling is when one spouse "drops out" of a discussion or argument by not responding or even gesturing to the other for a lengthened period of time.)

Correct your old bad habits by practicing the better habits on those around you. If your friend upsets you, address it promptly and properly. If you notice that your sister is sad, ask her what's going on and see if you can help with anything.

It sounds like you are eager to have companionship again. Keep in mind that you must be a full half in order to be part of a

Look at your life today. What are you lacking as an individual? How can you close those gaps? The most glaring gap that I see in your letter is your financial situation. It's time to put your love life on the back burner and instead, salvage your credit score. You are unemployed with a stellar resume. Are you actively seeking work? Are you trying to land a job? You don't mention that at all. You are just trying to get a girlfriend. This is not the time to pursue anything other than a paid position in an honest setting. This is not time for self-pity, nor is it time for flowers and romance. You need to be able to support yourself before you bring anyone else into the picture. It is highly selfish to be focused on a wife-hunt if you are not doing your best to be a stable future-husband.

Granted, many people are never financially stable yet still deserve a stable love life. Are they any more deserving than you? Those who are perpetually attempting to stabilize their income and finances are more worthy of companionship. One must be responsible enough to be a spouse.

If my words are compelling you to scribble all over my column, allow me to redirect you: Your kids have witnessed two divorces from their father. One divorce is extremely traumatic. It's best not to expose children to trauma unless it is necessary. You may be setting yourself up for disaster (a.k.a. a third major trauma) by pursuing an unrequited interest. She may do a complete 180° once you are on your feet again. Even if not, you will be in a strong position again and, more likely, to be able to be part of a healthy relationship.

David Weinberg, co-founder of "Parnassafest," recommends milking social media for all it's worth. Meaning, join Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Brand yourself like crazy and spread the word that you are available for hire to anyone and everyone. Also, don't be ashamed to interview at places that you may think are beneath you. In this economy, many workers are overqualified for their tasks. Use every muscle that you have to bring in some dollars. Tutor, do per diem work, consult, lecture, coach a high-school sport, etc. Squeeze every penny that you have. Leave the car keys home when you could walk. There is no shame in redeeming your bottles at five cents a pop.

Work on your resume, find the resources available out there (the OU, Yeshiva Darchei Torah offers vocational courses, Parnassafest has networking events for free), and go get 'em, tiger!

Aviva Rizel has received her Master's in marriage and family therapy from Hofstra University and sees couples, families and individuals. She can be reached at avivarizel.mft@ gmail.com.



# **Opinion**

### Not crazy, dangerous

hmadinejad is not a lunatic. He is not crazy. He is not insane. He is not a madman driven by hatred.

Ahmadinejad is a cunning, calculating, very precise and gifted leader. And it would behoove us all to see him as he is and not throw up our hands or shake our heads and mutter about what a nut he is. To discount Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and consider him to be merely a madman, a crazed lunatic, is

I'M THINKING



Micah D. Halpern

to misunderstand his enormous power. To consider his behavior impulsive and erratic is to miscalculate his far reaching influence.

An insane person, certainly an insane leader, is a danger primarily because the actions of that person are unpredictable. A calculating tyrant is even more dangerous.

The president of Iran makes no move without first evaluating its impact and ascertaining that that move,

small or large, fits in with his larger objective. In many ways there is a striking, bone chilling similarity between the leadership styles of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Adolf Hitler. Both men chose to use a calculated populist message as the vehicle through which they achieved their larger objective. For Hitler it was mass extermination of Jews, for Ahmadinejad it is attacking Jews, attacking Israel and terrorizing the world.

Ahmadinejad came to the United Nations to plead his case. He wants free, unhampered, access to nuclear energy. His public stance, the device he uses to make his point cogent is to stand on principle and take a stand against nuclear weapons.

Attacking Israel is one of the ways in which he makes his point. The Ahmadinejad argument is two pronged. It goes like this:

Part I: Iran does not have nuclear weapons and the West is trying to prevent Iran from acquiring too much nuclear independence.

And yet Iran signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Israel both has nuclear weapons and has not signed the treaty. He concludes with the question: How fair is that?

Part II: Iran wants access to nuclear energy and, like every other country, they have the right to pursue that access - and who is the United States to challenge that argument.

Ahmadinejad recently hosted a conference in Tehran entitled "Nuclear Energy For All, Nuclear Weapons for None." Sixty nations attended, ten of them sent their foreign ministers as representatives. In comparison, Obama hosted a Nuclear Conference where forty-seven nations were in attendance. The Iranian conference was a set-up for Ahmadinejad's appearance at the United Nations, it set the stage for his claim and gave him round the world access.

The Iranian leader was not in attendance at the United Nation to appease. He was there to attack. The goal is not to convince the United States and Germany, the goal is to convince the masses, the unaligned masses.

"We should not offer ways to obtain their trust as Iran abides by the international law and acts within its framework," Ahmadineiad said. "Iran is committed to international regulations" while the West and Israel "have stockpiled nuclear weapons, have used them and are monopolizing them, are not seeking to build trust.

Ahmadinejad's proposal includes two items, "disarmament and peaceful use of nuclear energy." His stated objective is to sponsor nuclear technology around the world and to break the US stronghold.

Once again, the Iranian leader has entered the lion's den and left unscathed. Once again, he delivered his message loud and clear and in so doing, empowered his supporters.

The West has no idea how strong the message of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad resonates throughout the world. He is by no means a madman. He is a very dangerous tyrant.

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



#### Island Shul dinner goes to the videotape

Cong. Bais Ephraim Yitzchok in Woodmere helds its ninth annual dinner Sunday at Lawrence Country Club. As is the shul's tradition, guests were entertained by a comedic video written and produced by David Galler and Mendy Ackerman. (from I-r) Shul President Menachem Kagan, honorees Zvi & Naomi Nachman, and Tova & Michael Fruchter, Rabbi Zvi Ralbag.



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# Opposing po

# An incumbent and a challenger speak out before

Row A

By Dr. David Sussman

There is a perfect storm about to hit the Lawrence School District. This time you have the chance to divert its damages. Three seats are up for grabs as incumbents Blisko, Marcus, and Sussman (ROW "A"), are preparing to hunker down for another three-year term. At the same time, the Lawrence teachers' contract is up for renegotiating. As some of you may remember, the last time the teachers' contract was up for renegotiating, the existing school board awarded a sweetheart contract with not even as much as one minute of extra teaching time for the children of the Lawrence School District. A repeat of this scenario, coupled with the fact that over 50% of the public school population is on free-orreduced lunch, which places these youngsters in an at "risk situation" and in need of extra programs and extra teacher contact time, will create a devastating financial blow to the Lawrence School District. You, my friends, will be responsible for cleaning up the mess, by incurring huge tax increases and decreased services from the school district. Remember, even if budgets fail, labor

in Diversity" are part of and are backed by the same folks who sued the district in federal courts saying," the Orthodox were turning the public school system into a Yeshiva." They argued that Nachum Marcus should not be permitted to sit on the Board of Education because he is a rabbi. They further argued that the Orthodox Jewish community is a cabal of anti-American values. That is their definition of community. Agree with them or leave.

Today the incumbents, Blisko, Marcus, and Sussman are part of an historic school board. We have followed a path that is educationally and financially sound and, in many ways, innovative. We discovered that only approximately 40% of the minority children entering the first grade could read. As a result our Board instituted the ONLY full day Pre-K program on Long Island. Today, four years later, 96% of our kindergarten children read. We tackled the question of increasing student contact time, within the limitations of contractual obligations with our teachers. With thoughtful and creative scheduling, students have 30 days of additional teaching



Dr. David Sussman

language and home and careers courses. With additional changes we will now be able to fully integrate Academic Intervention Services (AIS) with no loss of classroom instructional time.

Every aspect of the Lawrence School District physical plant is being improved: every gym is being updated; every field is being refurbished; every building is being made handicap accessible; ev-

ery lab is being redone; every locker is being replaced; auditoriums are being air conditioned; heating systems are being replaced; roofs are being repaired; and, much, much more, is being done, to the tune of \$17 million. And, what's more, the taxpaying public did not have to sustain even the first dollar to pay for these improvements! The proper and timely consolidation of under-utilized school buildings provided the revenue for these maintenance projects that were previously deferred for more than 30 years.

How can our opponents argue that they are prepared to negotiate a teachers' contract when they admit to never even reading the existing contract? Look at their friends and supporters. They talk of "community." What

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the federal judge called their lawsuit frivolous and those who brought it "nefarious." Focus on that word "nefarious." Asked to distance themselves from the lawsuit and its supporters, the opponents not only refused, but admitted they did not even care to read the lawsuit because they aligned themselves with those that initiated it. With all that has been accomplished by this Board, the opponents continue to support those who pervert the truth and embrace the concept that Orthodox Jewish voters do not even have the right to participate in community school board decisions

My friends, this year there is much at stake. With three seats up for grabs and the negotiation of the \$200 million teachers' contract on the agenda, every vote counts. So, do you vote for those who talk the talk but do not walk the walk? Or, do you vote for three dedicated individuals, Blisko, Marcus, and Sussman who are homeowners, parents, and proven incumbents who have demonstrated concern for an entire community by improving the educational opportunities of all community children, and the taxpaying public that supports the schools? I urge you to consider that the devastation that could follow this perfect storm could cripple our community for years to come. Vote Row "A," Blisko, Marcus, Sussman. Every vote is needed.



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# ints of view

# the Lawrence School District election on May 11.

#### Row B

By Dr. Jay Silverstein

It is a great privilege to be welcomed by this publication and share my thoughts with its distinguished readership. I value that readers of The Jewish Star

The public

embodies

many of the

finest ideals

school sytem

are highly engaged and conscientious stakeholders in the welfare of our community. I am also honored to speak on behalf of my two running mates, Nicole Di Iorio and Annie Reyes, who share in equal measure your readers' dedication to this place we all call home. I am excited for the benefit that will flow from the open dialogue as we tackle the challenges that affect us all.

I am the fortunate ben-

eficiary of a Lawrence School District education, the quality of which has allowed me to pursue my dream of a career in education, first at Duke University then ultimately at Hofstra, where I earned my Ph.D. in School/ Clinical Psychology. The realm of education is not merely how I make a living; serving the needs of our children and ensuring the effective operation of our schools is where my devotion lies and my skills have been honed. Through experiences as psychologist, teacher, building administrator, and central office director of special education and guidance, I have acquired a wealth of insight and knowledge regarding students, schools, and

districts: how they succeed, why they sometimes don't, and the means by which they become dynamic learning organizations.

I champion two guiding principles from which I will not waver. Foremost, I commit to balance fiscal responsibility with the educational imperatives of our students. This Board is to be lauded for

its discipline in the practice of fiscal management. Lawrence has seen its way clear of contingency budgets and our school taxes have remained flat. However, I am convinced that we must exercise the same impassioned commitment in preparing our children for the increasingly complex demands of the future. Vital educational initiatives, such as state of the art technological preparedness, remediation and support services for at-



Dr. Jay Silverstein

risk students, gifted and talented enrichment programs, and 21st Century research training have withered in the absence of an overarching vision. For example, technology is an indispensable component of virtually every field to which our children may wish to enter. Yet, the district has settled upon the elimination of the Director of Technology, a position that provides invaluable leadership to students and faculty alike, the hir-

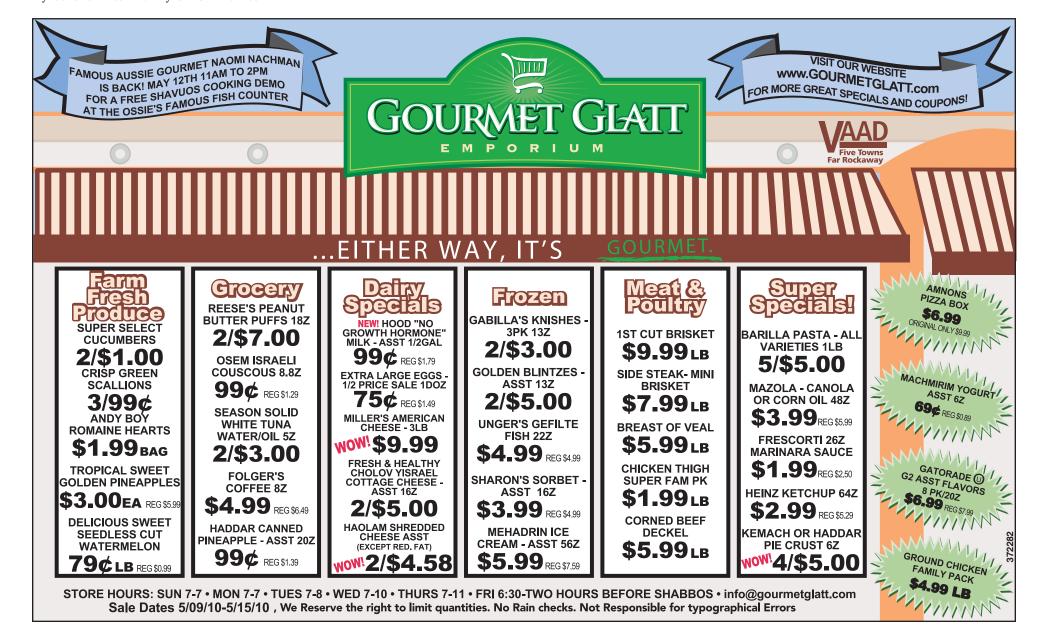
ing of which was the first "Key Recommendation" offered by the taxpayer funded "Educa-

tional Technology Report.'

My second principle is guided by the recognition that our community comprises a rich tapestry of people, traditions, and points of view, and that we may have inadvertently lapsed into an under utilization of this valuable asset. Our nation and our Constitution, so brilliant and durable, is so because it was forged by many voices, each tempering and enhancing one another. As an educator I can attest there is no greater enrichment to a student body than the bustle of ideas and perspectives that invariably accompany cultural exchange. When this resource is nurtured by an enlightened corps of educators and a dedicated community, possibilities become May 11.

boundless. To ensure this outcome, I propose that the Board host town hall style meetings that the Board host town hall style meetings and panel discussions, practices used to great advantage in other districts. These public forums, separate from formal Board of Education meetings, not only further the principle of community ownership, they expand the 3 Board's access to the insights and ingenuities of the people whose stake in the process is paramount.

The public school system embodies many of the finest ideals of our remarkable nation and has long served as the bedrock upon which a healthy community is founded, and upon which it is certain to thrive. The Lawrence school system remains one of the most vibrant educational establishments I have ever known, with every potentiality to rise even higher. With so much that we cherish riding on the wisdom of our collective judgment, we are fortunate to be able to draw from such a deep well of histories, traditions, and accomplishments. Therefore, let us join as responsible stewards and pool our many voices, along with our insights, our imaginations, our talents and, perhaps most important, our good will. My name is Jay Silverstein and I, along with Nicole Di Iorio and Annie Reyes, wish to be your representatives on the Lawrence School Board, whom you can rest assured will always uphold these values.



OHEL, JCC of the Greater Five Towns, SKA High School for Girls & DRS Yeshiva High School For Boys

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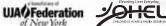
■ BEFORE ■ DURING ■ AFTER AND PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR ADULTHOOD

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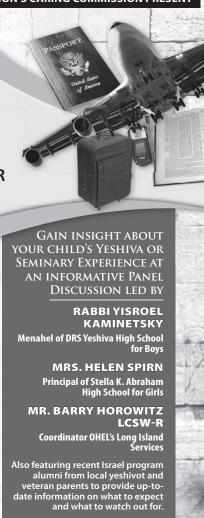
**SKA High School for Girls** 291 Meadowview Avenue, Hewlett Bay Park

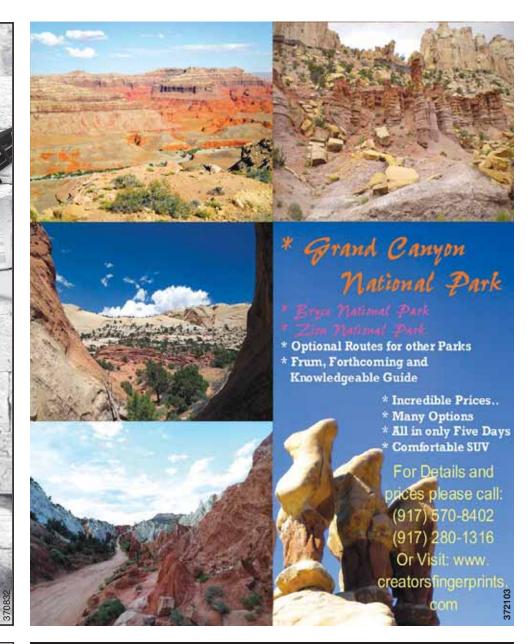
- How can I SUPPORT MY CHILD'S GROWTH and personal development?
- How can I maintain COMMUNICATION with my child's yeshiva/seminary abroad?
- How can I effectively parent via a LONG-DISTANCE RELATIONSHIP?
- ■When is HOMESICKNESS normal and when should I be concerned?













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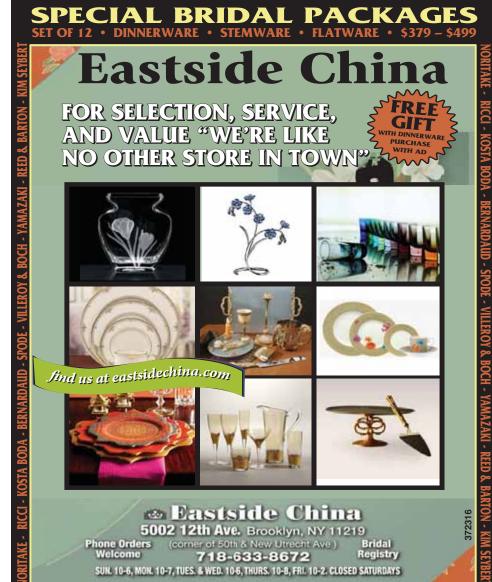
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# **Opinion**

# The New Hamster Primary

hold no affinity for the feline or canine species. Accordingly, incessant requests from my kids that I purchase a dog or cat quieted over the years. This is not to say that the pestering has totally disappeared, but only the request for a dog or cat has for the

most part been muted.

ROM THE OTHER



**David Seidemann** 

Instead the children have turned their focus on a somewhat smaller and more contained animal, the hamster. Every year at about this time, the begging and yes, the tears, reand requests to add a hamster to our family are renewed. The politicking is so intense that my wife and I call this time of year and the ensuing cajol-ing "the New Hamster Primary.'

For the past several years, I have been able to withstand the pres-

sures to purchase the rodent, but this year I folded. I drove down to the pet store, children in tow, and selected what I was assured would be the cleanest, easiest to care for, and most docile hamster. The hamster had a price tag of only \$16, but by the time I left the store with all of the contraptions including the plastic cage, complete with the spinning wheel, and enough hamster food to last a lifetime, I was in for 100 bucks.

The salesperson, who I is the only human being who knows less about hamsters than I do, convinced me that female hamsters are calmer than male hamsters. That is the reason, she explained, why I should purchase a female hamster, and the reason why the store only sells female hamsters. After spending a week with the hamster we named Molly, I am convinced that the reason they sell no male hamsters is that Molly ate all of them.

Molly bit every thing and person that came her way. At night, we would hear her trying to bite her way out of her cage; every time my children tried to feed Molly, their fingers became her chomping grounds. I called the pet store to inquire as to whether all of this biting was normal. I was told that we needed to "establish a relationship" with Molly, to get to know her better, to warm up to her and she, in turn, would warm up to us. I will not claim that I'm the busiest man in the world. But spending quality time with the hamster in an effort to develop a deeper cosmic relationship with said hamster, is not on my list of priorities. Heck, I'm trying to develop a deeper relationship with my wife, children, and friends.

Nevertheless I found myself talking to Molly as one would speak to a newborn infant. There was no response. I fed her lettuce, carrots and celery and her response was to bite more. A week later, with full endorsement of the very children that wished this demon into our home, I returned Molly to the pet store. I placed Molly's cage on the store counter, looked the cashier straight in the eye and said: "She is possessed."

They took Molly back and actually wanted me to place her back with all the other hamsters. I declined but sufficiently scared the employees into believing that Molly was feral. Three employees fought amongst themselves as to who would have to place Molly back in the pen. Finally, one fellow put on thick construction gloves, hoisted Molly out of the plastic cage I purchased and placed her back in her original unnatural habitat. The first thing she did was bite the other hamsters in the cage.

To my chagrin, I still see Molly's face almost two weeks after she was returned. A little, biting, annoying face somehow still flashes before me as I walk into our living room where she once resided. I fear I am now prejudiced against all hamsters since it is Molly's face I always see.

We tend to judge others by the face they present to us. And it is based on the face that we display that we will be known.

I walked into shul last Shabbos and saw a friend of mine. En route to say good Shabbos to him I passed an elderly gentleman whom N to him I passed an elderly gentleman whom to him I passed an elderly gentleman whom was to him I passed an elderly gentleman whom the him I passed an elderly gentleman who him I passed an elderly gentleman whom the him I passed an elderly gentleman whom I had never seen before. He had sunken eyes and barely a hair on his head. On the way back to my seat. I extended my hand and back to my seat, I extended my hand and wished the stranger a good Shabbos. I asked him if he was new to our neighborhood. He 3 shook my hand and said "David, I guess you don't recognize me.

He was a friend of mine who had been away for six months for cancer treatments. When I looked at him I did not recognize him. It was only when he smiled that I realized that this was the man I davened for, for the last six months. His smile was unmistakable; as effervescent as ever. It was his signature smile which immediately identified him to me. It was a smile that had not changed despite his illness which, I understand, thank G-d, bli ayin horah, is being managed. It was a smile that defined who he is.

So we all have a choice as to how we will be known and how we will be perceived. We all have a choice as to which face will define us. Smiling seems to be the wisest choice even if it might not be the easiest.

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



Look next week to learn yet another way UJA-Federation is making a difference.

# Amazing, isn't it, how a place you've never been before can still feel like home.

Every year, 18,000 Jews from around the world immigrate to Israel. But what they have in common is the desire to live openly as Jews, find economic opportunity, and return to the homeland of their people.

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#### Editorial

### If it ain't broke, don't fix it

ith the contract of the powerful and belligerent teacher's union up for renewal this year, we could merely be experiencing calm before a storm, but at this moment in the annals of the Lawrence School District, it feels like we've turned a corner.

The virulent, hateful tone that marred several District 15 school board election campaigns in the past did not re-emerge. When the polls open on Tuesday, May 11, the two slates of candidates who face off will have conducted a largely uneventful and respectful campaign.

This is emphatically not to say that this election is unimportant — it is very important. In fact, it demands the attention of all voters in the district.

We urge everyone eligible to vote, to do so, and to grant incumbents Solomon Blisko, David Sussman and Nahum Marcus another term.

We are not averse to throwing out incumbents (see: Albany, almost everybody), but the current board is doing a fine job. Particularly with the teachers' contract coming up, we want them to continue, and cement their accomplishments in the responsible raising and spending of tax dollars, running a solid educational program and making physical improvements to the schools.

In addition, we offer specific thoughts about the challengers.

First, we sincerely commend and appreciate the overall tenor of the campaign conducted by Jay Silverstein, Annie Reyes and Nicole Di Lorio. True disagreements remain over how the school system is run, but the challenge was conducted in a spirit of community cooperation.

Dr. Silverstein is well suited to be a board member. He is a professional educator with experience in District 15. However, he recently parted ways with the district under unpleasant circumstances and is currently suing. It seems to us that this was just the wrong time for him to be a candidate.

Nicole Di Lorio seemed a nice person and

we respect her wish to serve. But she brings no real experience, and no reason to turn aside a current trustee in her favor.

Annie Reyes, former head of the Five Towns Community Center, has experience that would facilitate board service. Black and African American students make up a large percentage of the student body and arguably deserve a representative of their own. But our original point stands. The current board is doing a fine job, has done nothing, in our view, which warrants their replacement, and with the teachers' contract coming up, it is in the community's best interest to have fiscal conservatives at the bargaining table. The last contract, absurdly rich, was handed to the union on a silver platter. We are still paying for it.

The current board has proposed a budget with a tax levy increase of 4.9 percent for the 2010-11 school year, citing expected declines in state aid. We recommend voters adopt their plan.

ew Yorkers had a close call this week when a terrorist placed a car bomb in Times Square. Through siyata d'shmaya a disaster was averted, and thanks to quick work by the NYPD and the FBI, a suspect, Faisal Shahzad, was swiftly apprehended. Other arrests have been made overseas as

We were glad to learn that Shahzad, an American of Pakistani descent, is cooperatively admitting all, reportedly providing valuable information.

We feel overwhelming relief that his evil plan failed, but also feel great anger that he would have undertaken it at all.

He is a terrorist, clearly an enemy combatant, and we urge the Obama administration to restrain itself from its misguided tendency to treat him as a common criminal, with all rights accorded thereof. Instead, when all the information he holds has been obtained by investigators, we urge that Shahzad be returned to Pakistan expeditiously. For burial.

#### Letters to the editor

#### Caterer weighs in on 'Booze brawl'

To the Editor:

Mezza on the Green would like to set the record straight concerning an article in the April 30, 2010 issue of The Jewish Star, 'Liquor lockdown: booze brawl at Lawrence Country Club kosher events.' Mezza has the only liquor license at Lawrence Country Club. There has been an ongoing dispute with one kosher caterer, Chap a Nosh, over payment to Mezza for the catered affairs Chap a Nosh conducts and for charges for liquor. Despite the impression given in your article, Mezza never had issues with Mauzone regarding the cost or use of liquor. Your article incorrectly states Mauzone reportedly left Lawrence Country Club with respect to liquor issues with Mezza. We were never advised by Mauzone regarding any issues they had with us. We suggest the Jewish Star confirm with the Village of Lawrence and with Mauzone the true reason why Mauzone left before hastily publishing that in-

It is only recently that Mezza was compelled to hire security guards to protect Mezza's liquor license for monies Mezza alleges Chap a Nosh owes, and continues to owe, for affairs conducted. Additionally, Chap a Nosh has allowed its customers to bring liquor onto the premises without legal authority or permission of Mezza. Chap a Nosh is well aware of the legal requirements. The Jewish Star is welcome to view a security tape of Chap a Nosh's customers sneaking liquor into the premises for a recent affair after Mezza's employees left the premises.

This underhanded and illegal activity jeopardizes Mezza's liquor license by exposing Mezza to potential liability in the event of injury caused by anyone being served liquor on the premises. Mezza is the only entity responsible for violations of the state liquor law, regardless of which caterer is running an affair at the Country Club. Therefore, Mezza must be in control of and supervise the consumption of alcohol at the Country Club at all times.

Unfortunately, the Village authorities have been slow to deal with these issues. Bringing liquor illegally into the premises by Chap a Nosh's guests left Mezza with no choice but to hire security at a great expense to Mezza to insure that the law is not broken. In accordance with the state liquor law, any customer of Chap a Nosh that desires to have liquor at their event at the Country Club must make separate contractual arrangements with Mezza. In the meantime. Mezza will continue to monitor affairs until the issues are satisfactorily resolved.

Finally, we would like to advise you that Frank and Robin Cristo, owners of Mezza on the Green, are highly respected in the Jewish community. The Cristo's were recent honorees by Kulanu at its annual dinner dance. Furthermore, Frank Cristo was named an Angel of Ohr Torah for his dedicated services when Rabbi Jungreis was alive. Frank Cristo continues to provide services on a regular basis to the Rebbetzin Jungreis.

> Frank Cristo President, Mezza on the Green, Inc.

#### Communities of the heart

To the Editor:

A special thank you to my fellow Columbusite, David Seidemann, for his thought-provoking and heartwarming piece about my father, Rabbi David Stavsky, z"l. (What you build yourself lasts forever; April 23, 2010)

While living in and enjoying all the convenience and comforts the Five Towns has to offer, Mr. Seidemann has given your readers an eye-opening perspective of the true mesiras nefesh of the pioneers in the American rabbinate and their congregants who followed their lead in establishing wonderful smaller Orthodox communities "in the heartland."

As aptly stated in the article, rabbis such as my father had little choice but to build what did not exist despite overwhelming odds (i.e. beautiful synagogues, modern mikvahs, day and yeshiva schools, reliable Vaads, eruvs, NCSY and Kollel) and defend and nurture Orthodoxy in their spare time.

If anything, my father's mission for almost 50 years was to build Torah institutions that would always allow the Columbus Jewish community to stand on its own and, at the same time, personalize yiddishkeit through a warm relationship with his kehilah and a young yeshiva boy like David Seidemann.

Kol Hakavod.

Averim Stavsky Woodmere

#### THE JEWISH **\***STAR

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#### Correction

In 'An almost civil disagreement' (April 30, 2010; front page) The Jewish Star incorrectly stated that District 15 school board candidate Jay Silverstein lives in Long Beach. Silverstein lives in Atlantic Beach. The Jewish Star regrets the error.

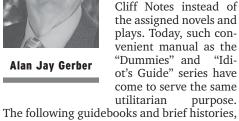
#### The Kosher Bookworm

# A Yom Yerushalayim tribute and review

With the annual observance of Yom Yerushalayim this Wednesday, May 12, this week's essay will be a brief review of several works dealing with the history and legacy of Jerusalem. Ever the center of world attention and envy, the spiritual and political capital of our people has yet to see true peace. Whether it be a terrorist blast or a presidential screed, or a local member of Congress's studied in-

difference. Jerusalem has seen the ire of most of the world since time immemorial.

When we were kids, both to save time and nurture our laziness, we would resort to reading Cliff Notes instead of the assigned novels and plays. Today, such convenient manual as the "Dummies" and "Idiot's Guide" series have come to serve the same



whatever their faults, do not fall into this category. Each in their own way comes with a full-fledged history of a troubled city and a geographical destination that would be the envy of any other city in the world today.

We start with my favorite, "Jerusalem: Footsteps Through Time" (Feldheim 2009), a book that consists of 10 Torah-based study tours of the Old City.

Truth be told from the outset, this volume is not just a guidebook with details. It is a first-class history and geography lesson of Jerusalem formatted into a guidebook for your learning pleasure. Even if you were never to visit Jerusalem, this book can serve as a surrogate guide to all of the important historical and religious holy sites made famous by the events of our Biblical and post-Biblical past.

Within these 10 tours are the whole panorama of the events and personalities of antiquity through the middle ages and our own times. Events such as the churban to the Six-Day War and the bravery of our troops, the shofar blasts at the newly liberated Kotel by Rabbi Shlomo

Goren, zt"l, are all brought together for us to read and appreciate the sacredness of this city of the faith that has preserved its memory through these past 2,000 years of exile.

This book is published in a handy, pocketsized format that can easily serve as a companion on your trips around Jerusalem. It is both attractive and user-friendly.

Florida native Ahron Horovitz is to be commended for his meticulous and skilled work in the presentation of this work. I trust that at some point during my upcoming visit to Israel I will have the opportunity to meet him and to visit his City of David Institute to learn first-hand of his excellent work at pre-

serving our national heritage.

The next book is titled, "Jerusalem: Portrait of the City in the Second Temple Period" (Jewish Publications Society, 2002). The author of the book is the distinguished Hebrew University scholar, historian and essayist, Dr. Lee Levine.

In this book, Levine details in text, pictures and clear prose the entire gamut of one of the most tumultuous periods of Jerusalem's

As our ancient capital, a fact recognized by all the civilized world of that time, Levine goes into great detail in describing the political dynamics, both religious and political, that influenced the events of that era which eventually led to the destruction of the Temple and the Jewish presence in Jerusalem for the next 2,000 years.

Starting from the Persian era, leading through the rule of the Hellenic era, and ultimately the rule by Rome, Levine describes the various nuances that made for the motivations of individuals and nations during this long span of six centuries of our people's

All strata of society are given their descriptive due, each demonstrating how the

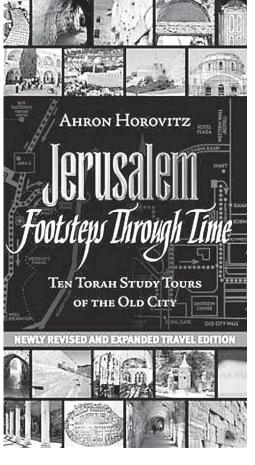
human fault line of ego and religious fanaticism came to play a crucial role in the ruin of both a city and a civilization.

With the onset of the Three Weeks due to start early this year on June 29, this volume would make for some timely early summer reading. Given the ongoing centrality of Jerusalem in international debate, fueled in no small measure by our own government, a good reading of this book would serves us by giving some great historical background material to serve as talking points on this most important of issues facing us today.
I would like to con-

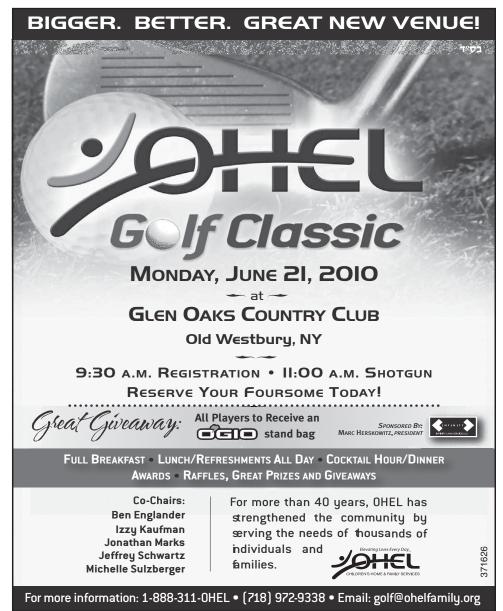
clude by just briefly noting two works by Cambridge professor Simon Goldhill. His first book is titled "The Temple of Jerusalem" and the second is "Jerusalem: City of Longing". Both are published by Harvard

University Press and feature detailed and scholarly histories of the holy city from a very dispassionate point of view.

While space doesn't permit here a full critical treatment, if you want to learn the mentality behind the utter indifference of many to our claims to Jerusalem, a good reading of these two books will surely help you along.





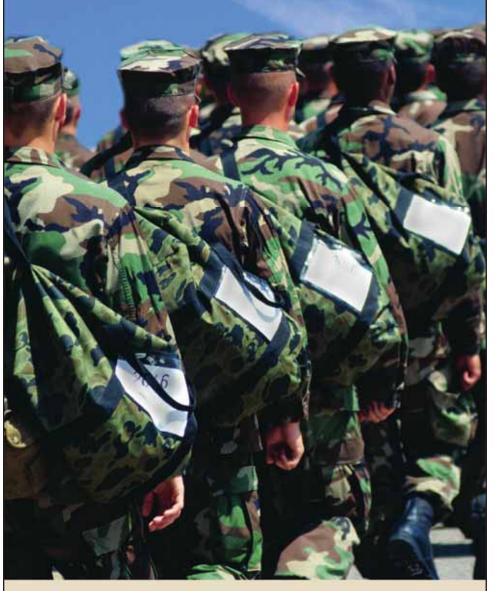


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# day 7, 2010 23 IYAR 5770 THE JEWISH STAR

# Local boys make good.



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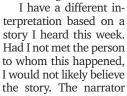
#### **Parashot Behar-Bechukotai**

# Helping others to survive

'The Living Torah" is the late Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan's translation of the Chumash. In addition to the standard divisions by chapter and parsha, Rabbi Kaplan z"l gave subtitles to the sections he divided by topics.

For the verses in 25:35-38, he entitled the section "Helping others." In the context of helping the poor, giving loans, the phrase "v'chai imakh" appears, as does "v'chay achikha imakh." He translates the former phrase "Help him survive," and the latter as and let your brother live alongside you."

Many interpretations for these two phrases often focus on civil harmony and congeniality, and perhaps learning how to treat a spouse, or a date, or simply how to be a mentsch towards others in the game of life.



the story. The narrator who this story happened to said he could not believe how the story unfolded either.

Rabbi Avi Billet

"Last Sunday I was at a fishing pier with my wife, along the boardwalk. I was feeling nauseous, but it was also hot, so I figured I'd go get a drink of water. I gave my wife my fishing rod and went to get a drink, and I stopped on a bench just to collect myself.

"A stranger who was jogging came over to me and said, 'You look terrible. I think you need to call an ambulance.' I thought the guy was crazy. I said to him, 'I'm feeling a little queasy, but I definitely don't need an ambu-

"He said to me, 'Look man. I'm an EMT and you have a cardiac condition. You're sweating in a way that isn't normal, and you need an ambulance to take you to the emer-

"I argued with him for a couple of minutes until I let him convince me. I called the ambulance saying, 'I'm on the boardwalk. This guy stopped to tell me I should call an ambulance. I feel fine. But he's an EMT. Can you please pick me up?"

"They got there within a couple of minutes. My wife and I went to the ER together. I was totally fine filling out the papers. Then I said something to the nurse as she left the room. And that was the last thing I remember until Tuesday morning."

"I got the feeling that there were many people around me, but I flat-lined. I was on a ventilator for 24 hours. I woke up on Tuesday, and was in the hospital for three more days came home on Friday, in time for Shabbos."

And now he's walking around telling the tale. At all of 35-years-old. Turns out he had a clogged artery, a condition doctors sometimes call "the widow maker." Had he not been in the ER when he went into cardiac arrest he would be dead now.

I asked him, "So what does Eliyahu Hanavi look like?"

"He's a good-looking black man who jogs on a board walk," he answered.

This man, the jogger, lives the phrase "Vchai imakh," - "help him survive." He was jogging, he could have minded his own business, but he saw something, recognized something, and in a simple debate that last three minutes, he saved a man's life. Did he have to? Was anything in it for him? No. The one who lives to tell the tale does not even know the name of his benefactor, nor any way in which to find him and thank him.

Not all of us are EMTs or medical professionals. We might not be so lucky to be in the life-saving business. But we can also fulfill "v'chai achikah imakh" - "and let your brother live alongside you."

It's not just about "letting" as much as it is about "teaching" or "helping" a person learn "how" to live.

Some people who go through experiences like this turn around and say "I was given a second chance. I am now going to take steps to do the things in my life I was meant to do but pushed off for another day. Life is too short for us to have regrets about the things we never got around to doing.'

With encouragement and the right kinds of inclusiveness, we can help others have experiences they might not otherwise have. Some of them follow the teaching that says we are to enjoy life. Others follow the school of thought that has us dedicating and devoting ourselves to spiritual pursuits.

Whatever paths we take with our newfound second chances, may they be experiences of brotherhood as we truly learn how to live in the company of dear family and



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Liquor and Wine Warehouse owners Gerry Aromin & Fernanda Graca prepare wines for recent sampling. Tastings are Thursdays from 4-8 p.m. on Rockaway Tpke.



May 7, 2010 23 IYAR 5770

# **Daniel Levin**

Daniel Levin is the author of "The Last Ember" (Riverhead) out this month in paperback. It tells the story of Jonathan Marcus, a former archaeologist, who discovers a vast world-wide conspiracy to erase every remnant of Jewish and Christian presence from Jerusalem's Temple Mount. He lives in Manhattan and is currently working on his second book.

#### Michael Orbach: What has been the reaction inside the Jewish community?

Daniel Levin: Just after publication, Elie Wiesel's review called the book "a muchneeded protest against historical revisionism." A quote like that certainly brings out the community to book stores. It also gives my mother something to brag about. As an international thriller, "The Last Ember" is, of course, fiction. But its topic — the dangers of archaeological destruction beneath the Temple Mount — is quite real to the Jewish Community. My first talk was at Congregation Beth Sholom in Lawrence. Two hundred people came. My wife turned to me and said, "Your book must be good after all." She only said that one other time, when the novel hit the New York Times bestseller list.

#### MO: What was the process of writing the book like?

DL: I first thought of the idea for "The Last Ember" while clerking on The Supreme Court of Israel. We discovered that the Waqf Authority, an Islamic land trust that currently controls the Temple Mount, had dumped 20,000 tons of archaeologically rich rubble into the valley of Kidron. We learned they were trying to erase any evidence of a Ju-

deo-Christian past. I thought that would be a great thriller: "What if someone was trying to control not just the future, but the past." I started writing once back in the states at the law firm, and eventually, the research brought me to the rare books room of American Academy in Rome, the labyrinth beneath the Colosseum, and ultimately beneath the Temple Mount itself.

# MO: Who would win in a fight, your lead, Jonathan Marcus, or what's-his-name from "The Da Vinci Code"?

DL: C'mon. Jonathan Marcus hands down. Robert Langdon would be out cold. True, Langdon's a swimmer, but Marcus is fifteen years younger, more passionate, and knows how to throw a punch. Marcus may be a Rhodes Scholar, but he went to City College. Doesn't get tougher than that. Marcus gets in a fist-fight on the scaffolding of the Colosseum, and he holds up pretty darn well.

# MO: Your bio says you received a JD from Harvard Law. Why leave the law field for the life of a novelist?

DL: Law's a great preparation for fiction. Writing a novel is a lot like writing a law brief. At its heart, "The Last Ember" is an argument, which is this: history is fragile as fire, and whether it's the Islamic excavations beneath the Temple Mount, or Achmanedinijad's denial of the Shoah — there are people who are trying to snuff its last ember out. All the great thriller writers — Ludlum, Forsyth, Clancy — were driving at a single point in their novels. The Bourne series is about not letting the government tell you who you are. Le Carre was all about the heartlessness of spying. I wanted my readers to feel the flickering nature of historical continuity -especially with regard to the richness of the Temple Mount's legacy.

#### MO: If you're not using your JD, can I have it?

DL: Sure. The price tag is 100k.

MO: Done.





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# That's life Edited by Miriam L. Wallach

#### Dear That's Life,

The worldwide statistics regarding damage caused by the eruption of a volcano in Iceland are mind-boggling. The number of air travelers whose plans were disrupted by airlines coming to a sudden halt looms in the shadow of the even greater loss taken by the airline industry itself - a number said to exceed over \$1.7 billion and counting. Consider all of the heads of state who were unable to attend the funeral of the president of Poland and his wife because their planes could not take off. And all along, the number of people who tempted fate and tried to pronounce the actual name of that volcano - a seemingly random string of letters — remains at one: kudos to Al Roker.

While many readers may be wondering why I would bring up an event that occurred weeks ago and is "so yesterday," especially in light of the growing oil catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico that could end up being President Obama's Katrina, I promise that I do have a point.

They say that G-d works in mysterious ways. Strange events occur and we may not appreciate them at first, nor might we ever understand their impact at all, but one must always believe there is a method to the madness. And while thousands of people were inconvenienced by the plumes of ash and some even shouted "I hate Iceland!" in front of rolling cameras at various airports (which happened to be very funny, but not the point), I think I understand what it was all about.

Last week I went to Boston to see my uncle. He's a lovely man who unfortunately has suffered from Parkinson's for many years. He underwent major surgery last week and thank G-d, the prognosis was good with improvement already being seen. The week before the surgery, however, my aunt, his wife, was scheduled to be in Geneva at a conference.

A week-long conference, as a matter of fact. from which she was to return only 24 hours before the surgery was to begin. She could not get out of it and it weighed heavily on her mind, as if she was not stressed enough. It was a big deal for her to leave my uncle for any length of time — how much more so for a week right before brain surgery. (Think "Grey's Anatomy" sans McDreamy.)

But then, of course, the clouds parted and the sun shone through.

Suddenly, the entire conference was cancelled. At first there was talk of shortening it, but then the organizers cancelled it off altogether. Why? Well, I don't know if you heard, but a volcano erupted in Iceland, spewing ash all over Europe and grounding flights for days — including my aunt's.

The sigh of relief that could be heard

around the world came from Boston, but you would not have heard it as it was drowned out by the "argh"s of frustration coming from stranded air passengers hunkered down in foreign airports. Amid all of the angry travelers worldwide who made the news, there was one family in New England that was secretly jumping for joy over a volcano with a crazy name that chose the exactly perfect week to wreak havoc over Europe. Thank G-d.

I do believe that we often stare at the trees and miss the forest but it's not our fault - the forest is not always ours to see. It is actually none of our business. We do not get to know everything — we get to know what G-d wants us to know, a quiet reminder that we really are not in charge. And while that may sometimes be unfair, hey, that's life. What we do get, however, is a comfort like no other the comfort of knowing with certainty that while we may not be entitled to see the big picture, a big picture always exists.

MIW



#### B'bye sushi, hello falafel

70 kids whose families plan to make aliyah this summer with Nefesh B'Nefesh attended a workshop in New Jersey last weekend to help them prepare for the move. They learned Israeli slang and discussed ways to keep in touch with friends, among other activities.

Photo by Shahar Azran

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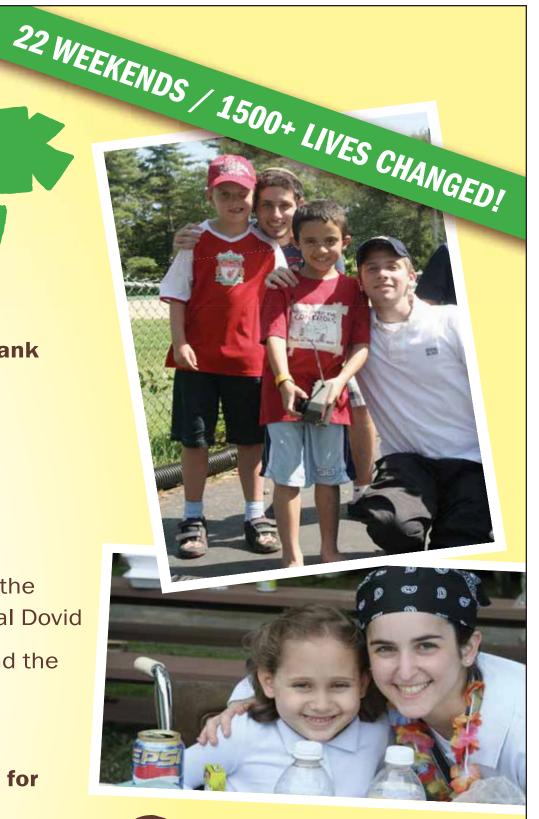
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