

THE JEWISH STAR

Independent and original reporting from the Orthodox communities of Long Island

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IN MY VIEW

'Hafganos' begin at home

Time to stand up for true Torah Judaism

Editor's note: Hafganah is a common Israeli term for protest; the plural is Hafganos. The headline refers to the violent protests that have dominated news from Israel in the past several weeks, in which anger over plans to open a Jerusalem municipal garage on Shabbos morphed into pitched battles between police and Orthodox Jews.

BY RABBI YAKOV HOROWITZ

Let's start with a simple multiple-choice question:

What is a greater desecration of G-d's name?



"You and I know with certainty that our gedolim do not sanction nor support any expression of violence. But the public at large does not know that, and paints all of us - Charedim, Modern Orthodox, all observant Jews - with one broad brush."

A) Non-observant Jews who never had the benefit of a Torah education driving cars on Shabbos?

B) Identifiably Orthodox people throwing rocks at police officers on Shabbos in full view of the media.

I cannot for the life of me understand how any decent human being, let alone an ehrliche Yid (upstanding Jew) who was raised learning Torah and hearing stories of the Chofetz Chaim can answer anything but "B."

And I'll take it a step further and say that anyone who chooses "A" did not learn the same Torah and the same mesorah that my generation was taught by Reb Moshe

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Rabbi Yakov Horowitz is the founder and dean of Yeshiva Darchei Noam of Monsey, and founder and director of Agudath Israel's Project Y.E.S.

Summer's first aliyah charter from JFK

Nefesh B'Nefesh flies families from Five Towns, others from 18 states, to new lives in Israel

BY LAURA TURETSKY

By the end of the week Aliza and Yossi Battat expect to be living in a Petach Tivka apartment next door to Yossi's brother.

The Battat's, now former Cedarhurst residents, are among a number of local families that are moving to Israel — making aliyah — this summer with the assistance of the Nefesh B'Nefesh organization.

They and their four children and 226 other olim (immigrants) flew from JFK Monday afternoon on an El Al charter — the first of the summer for Nefesh B'Nefesh. In all, 139 adults and 93 children were on board, hailing from 18 of the United States, plus Canada's Quebec province. The youngest was just seven weeks old, the oldest 83 years old. Seven dogs and a cat accompanied the olim. This summer 4,000 people from North America and the United Kingdom (plus assorted pets) expect to arrive in Israel on 15 aliyah group flights and charters organized by Nefesh B'Nefesh and the Jewish Agency.

For the Battat's, the decision for aliyah came four years ago. "We realized the quality of life is better there for raising children," said Aliza, referring to the freedom the children will have and the environment they will grow up in, living in the Jewish State.

Ayton, the oldest, turns five at the end of July, Elon and Tzvi are three-and-a-half and Rina is 15 months. All attended pre-school at the JCC of the Greater Five Towns.

"I don't think they understand [what it means to be making aliyah], but they're very excited for it!" said their mother.

Aliza and Yossi's friends are excited for the family, as well. "We're making the trip of a lifetime!" said Aliza.

Ellie and Donny Fein, also from Cedarhurst, plan to fly with Nefesh B'Nefesh on August 18. They're moving to Ramat Beit Shemesh Aleph with their 4 children: Sammy, 9, Azi, 7, Shraga, 4, and Akiva, 3 months. The older ones attended Yeshiva of South Shore. "All their cousins are in Israel... so they are very excited," said Ellie.

Ellie recently left her position as an administrative assistant at Yeshiva of South Shore. Donny is a life insurance broker and plans to continue his business from Israel, with occasional travel.

Donny decided eight years ago to make aliyah but Ellie wasn't sure. She promised if he could sell their house in this market she would take it as a sign. Donny sold the house. "I had to keep my end of



Photos by Sasson Tiram

Natan Sharansky (third from left) and Nefesh B'Nefesh co-founder Tony Gelbart (second from left) at Ben Gurion airport Tuesday greeting new olim Yudi and Aviva Zuller and children Navah (right), Binyamin (behind Sharansky), Kaylah and Gilad (in mom's arms). Zuller (left) has raised more than \$1 million for victims of terrorism in Israel.



Aliza and Yossi Battat, formerly of Cedarhurst, on the tarmac with Ayton, Elon, Tzvi and Rina, Nefesh B'Nefesh co-founders Tony Gelbart (left) and Rabbi Yehoshua Fass (right) and members of the Berrie family, which sponsored the July 6th charter flight from JFK.

the deal," said Ellie.

"The hardest part was making the decision. Now that I made it, I'm excited! It's the best choice for our kids and for us," Ellie said, adding, "Everyone we know there [in Israel] is so happy!"

Ellie said she was glad to have the support that comes with making aliyah on a Nefesh B'Nefesh flight. Many of the traditional bureaucratic hurdles

See SUMMER'S FIRST, Page 9



After a long flight to their new home in Israel, Ronan and Leah Hillel, formerly of North Woodmere, deplaned with their six children.

Shoppers have no beef with kosher meat at Costco

BY MALKA EISENBERG

You won't find the cheapest kosher meat in the Five Towns at a kosher supermarket. It's actually at Costco on Rockaway Turnpike, believe it or not, vacuum-packed by a new sister brand of Empire Kosher Poultry, and jointly supervised by the OU and Star-K.

"Costco has taken a variety of cuts as tests into their Brooklyn and Five Towns stores to see how well they do," said Elie Rosenfeld, a spokesman for EKB

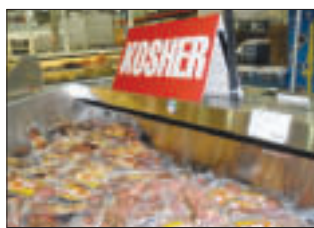


Photo by Malka Eisenberg

Costco in Lawrence now stocks kosher meat from Empire.

Kosher Beef, LLC of Mifflintown, PA.

First-cut brisket, rib steaks, ground beef and chuck roast are

See KOSHER, Page 3

Shalhevet HS funding ended by HAFTR trustees

BY MAYER FERTIG

Parents of close to 50 girls who expected to attend Shalhevet High School for Girls in September, as incoming freshmen or returning 10th graders, were stunned on Tuesday to hear that the HAFTR board of trustees, which has been funding Shalhevet, voted overwhelmingly on Monday night to stop doing so. In all likelihood the decision will shut the school down after just one year of operation, though some parents expressed hope that it

could be saved.

"Shalhevet is a victim of the tumultuous economic times that many not-for-profits, as well as yeshivot, are experiencing," said Mark Honigsfeld, the incoming co-president of the Hebrew Academy of The Five Towns and Rockaway.

Shalhevet has been operating at a deficit, "like any start-up school," Honigsfeld said. Shalhevet was created to complement the all-boys Rambam

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Shabbat

Candlelighting: 8:09 p.m. ■ Shabbat ends: 9:16 p.m.
Torah reading: Parshat Pinchas

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Dear That's Life,

Overheard at Fifth of July barbecue:

I went to high school to learn how to type; I went to college to learn my social security number. Everything else was useless.

EDDIE LOWENTHAL
Manhattan

Dear That's Life,

One of two things happens every time I go to the movies: either I fall asleep or I go to the bathroom. Often, both happen. Rarely, however, do I get through a movie without one occurring and therefore, watching an entire movie is a thing of the past. That is something I associate with my younger years.

As a result, no one likes to go to the movies with me - understandably so. It's also a bit of a waste of money for me to buy a ticket to a theatre so I can simply take a nap. Cut me

some slack - an air-conditioned room, comfy seats and a darkened theatre. That spells nap-time to me.

On a bright and sunny day (remember that ONE day?), I took some of my children to a movie about two weeks ago and after making sure they were settled, I nestled into my chair and once the lights were out, so was I. Someone recently asked me if I had enjoyed the film and I honestly could not tell him, for I had no clue what the movie was about. The only thing that woke me from my slumber was my vibrating cell phone, which made me jump out of my skin.

Walking out of the theatre to take the call, I decided I needed to get a soda to wake me up a little. Still in a bit of a daze, I went to the bathroom first to wash my face and then I'd order my Pepsi. Coming out of the bathroom, I noticed a commotion in the lobby. Crowded and huddled around each other, the staff at the theatre were cheering and carrying on around what seemed to be a couple of people in the middle. I could not imagine what was going on and, still a little tired, I wasn't sure I wasn't imagining things.

The only customer in the lobby, no one noticed me until I inched forward, trying to get a better glimpse into what was happening. And then I noticed two, large, burly African American men in the middle of the crowd engaged in, what seemed like, a serious and energetic thumb wrestle match.

Smiling, I approached the snack counter to buy my soda.

"Slow day?" I asked the gentleman behind the counter, who had been busy watching the match before I rudely approached. "It's finally a nice day so no one is here," he responded. "And I guess you guys have already watched all of the movies here, right?" I asked. "Yes," he nodded. He handed me my drink and my change and said, "Have a nice day and enjoy your movie."

"Movie? What movie?" I asked. "I am going back to sleep...this has been one heck of a dream."

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Wedding of Jackie Fiedler (Lawrence, NY) & Shlomo Weiss (Staten Island, NY) — July 5, 2009

Engagements

- Engagement of Lisa Golombeck (Lawrence, NY) & Ben Lowy (Teaneck, NJ) — July 2, 2009
- Engagement of Binyamin Bauman (Passaic, NJ) & Rivka Naiditch (Jerusalem, Israel) — July 2, 2009



Lisa Golombeck & Ben Lowy

Upsherin

- Upsherin of Dovid Koenigsberg (West Hempstead, NY) — July 5, 2009



Birth

- Birth of Baby Koenigsberg Boy to Tami (Bomzer) and Dov Goldblatt (Woodmere, NY) — July 5, 2009

To view entire galleries, please visit
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KOSHER MEAT AT COSTCO

Continued from Page One

available in "vacuum-packed packaging, so the quality is just as fresh as if they went into the butcher and the butcher cut it that day," Rosenfeld claimed.

Shoppers at the Lawrence Costco offered exclamations like, "Wow!" and "It's amazing!" earlier this week as they clustered around refrigerator cases marked "Kosher" that were filled with factory-packed kosher meat and fresh poultry. The chicken is standard Empire fare, under the supervision of the Orthodox Union and KAJ.

A two-pack of chuck steak weighing 2.13 lbs., with each steak individually wrapped, was for sale at \$5.99 a pound. A whole chicken, cut in eighths, weighing 2.58 lbs., cost \$2.29 a pound.

"The members educated me, they told me what items to get," said Adam Self, general manager of the Costco on Rockaway Turnpike for the past three years, and a veteran of half a dozen other Costco stores in New York and New Jersey.

Kosher consumers have made "a lot of requests," he said. "Before, we were so out of tune with the guidelines. We had kosher products all along next to the non-kosher, even pork. Members pulled me aside, saying that we need to do this together. They told me, 'don't put the meat with the dairy items.' They let me know in a big way. It's exciting. The members are very excited. They expressed a lot of appreciation, there's lots of communication and member feedback on everything. There are lots of requests asking for more kosher offerings."

Self estimates that he talks to thirty to forty Costco members who keep kosher on a weekly basis. Among the things he's learned, he said, "There are a great number of certifications; some mean very little and some mean a lot."

As his education about the kosher marketplace has progressed, the Lawrence Costco has brought in various kosher baked goods and holiday items, including a line of kosher-for-Passover products. Shavuot caught him unawares, Self admitted with exasperation, noting that he needs a Jewish calendar. "The shelves were picked clean," and he couldn't replenish in time.

Last November, Tnuva, a brand of Israel cheese, became the first kosher product line he brought in at the request of Costco members. "It did so well as a category that the president of Tnuva had to come by to see for himself," Self said. He is looking into adding Cholov Yisrael milk, frozen gefilte fish and Amnon's frozen pizza to his store but as with everything at Costco, price is all-important.

"We can't do any of this without the right pricing," Self stressed. "There's a 20-30% savings for members against the market. They see what it's selling for and have to bring it in at lower than that."

"We don't certify the stores," stressed Rabbi Seth Mandel of the Orthodox Union. Kosher beef at Costco is "always packaged at the plant. If it's opened or the package is destroyed then it is no longer certified by us."

"Costco won't take it unless it has a certain quality level," said Israella Perlith of Woodmere, and a store member. "It's convenient, a great price and if something is wrong with the product you can return it. I'm impressed; it makes good business sense and shows that they are very attuned to the customer; that they are going so out of the way for the Jewish community. I still want to give the frum stores business; always give business to the frum community."

"It's a nice addition to our kosher shopping in this wonderful neighborhood," said Mrs. Bal Frankel, a Five Towns resident. She hasn't yet seen it for herself but is hoping the idea of kosher beef and poultry catches on at the Costco she frequents during her annual stay in Florida.

"I think it's a great idea," said Norma Tishberg, a resident of Belle Harbor, and a frequent Costco and Brach's shopper. "They should look for more kosher things, more parve kosher baked goods. People who are shopping there will buy meat occasionally."



Photo by Nachshon Philipson

Ties that bind

Members of Great Neck's Mashadi Jewish community attended a meeting in Jerusalem this week with over 200 Jews who share roots in Mashad, a northeast Iranian city where their 19th century ancestors faced persecution and forced conversions. Those ties have bound their descendants together in the modern day. At a time when political violence is unsettling their native Iran, Bahman Kamali, incoming president of the Global Mashadi Jewish Federation, and the organizer of the meeting, called on Mashadi Jews to reaffirm their commitment to their "distinct traditions and way of life that has always sustained us," in the face of increasing Jewish assimilation worldwide.

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MAYER FERTIG
 Publisher, Editor-in-Chief
 YAFFI SPODEK
 Assistant Editor

MALKA EISENBERG, MICHAEL ORBACH
 Reporters

HELENE PARSONS
 Account Executive

RABBI AVI BILLET, AZRIEL GANZ, ALAN JAY GERBER,
 RABBI YAKOV HOROWITZ, ADAM NEUSTADTER, LISA
 SCHIFFMAN, BARUCH SPIER, DAVID SEIDEMANN, LAURA
 TURETSKY, MIRIAM L. WALLACH, CHANANYA WEISSMAN

Contributors
 ALYSON GOODMAN
 Editorial Designer

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2 Endo Blvd., Garden City, NY 11530
 (516) 569-4000 E-mail: letters@thejewishstar.com
 fax: (516) 569-4942

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Zigzagging on foreign policy

Editorial

Things are not always as they seem, as anyone skilled in the art of sleight of hand can tell you — well, show you, actually.

When soldiers bundled Honduran President Manuel Zedaya onto a plane and expelled him from his country on June 28, it seemed like it was back to business as usual in Central America (yawn). Military coups are a longstanding tradition in that part of the world.

But something wasn't quite right about this particular coup. The military immediately turned power back over to civilians, and the stated reason for the takeover was Zedaya's ongoing effort to change a constitutional single term limit. Dictators are another longstanding Central American tradition. The Honduran courts called his actions unconstitutional, and the military apparently decided to nip in the bud the possibility of a new dictator, and hit the eject button on Zedaya a half year or so before his single four-year term was scheduled to end.

On Tuesday it was announced that Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, a past winner of the Nobel Peace Prize for mediating an end to Latin American civil wars, had agreed to mediate

between Zedaya and the interim government of Honduras.

The Obama administration has come down firmly on Zedaya's side — Secretary of State Clinton met with him in exile this week — notwithstanding the fact that Zedaya is a frequent critic of the United States. No matter, President Obama said. Zedaya was removed from office in an undemocratic manner and that's all there is to it.

While that is not a completely unreasonable position to take, several other factors also come into play.

First, from the politics-makes-strange-bedfellows file, is the fact that the Obama Administration's position puts it right into bed, sharing a blanket, with Argentina's dictator-in-the-making Hugo Chavez. He is an ally of Zedaya's but not previously known as a impassioned defender of democracy. Anything that puts Chavez and the United States on the same side of an issue, needs a careful second, third and fourth look. Odds are, something's wrong.

Also, the United States has an unfor-

tunate history in Central America, of propping up dictators when that realpolitik approach works to our advantage. Given that the United States will face a certain amount of international criticism almost no matter what we do, its better all around when we voice and demonstrate the same concern for democracy in other countries as we do in our own.

Honduras may have removed its president in less than perfect fashion, but given the recent history of that country and region, the position of its current leaders is also not altogether unreasonable.

Taking a big picture look at some of the positions President Obama recently has staked out on foreign policy we see him mostly declining to become too involved in the unrest in Iran — a wise decision overall, we believe — jumping in feet first in Honduras, and all but commandeering the offices of the local zoning boards in Yehuda and Shomron, where he demands a complete end to any and all building, including "natural growth."

We much prefer the 'I'll mind my own business' posture he took on Iran.

Letters

Father-son bond or tie?

To the Editor:

After a rained out Fathers' Day (and every other day), I want to comment on the fascinating article about Joe Klein's school project (Surviving surviving; June 19, 2009). The article really broke ground on a heart-breaking anomaly of poverty-stricken Holocaust survivors. (When I spoke with Joe's mom she told me that a film crew was just arriving at their home to cover the story for television news).

Though much can be learned from every powerful line of the story, there is a sublime lesson one can learn while reading between the lines: How beautiful it is when a father shares his talent and time with his son to work together on a meaningful project. The *bond* between a father and child is far more important than the *tie*.

Happy belated Fathers' Day.

MATIS FRIEDMAN
 Woodmere

Increasing need for foster care

To the Editor:

I just want to acknowledge and thank you for the article in The Jewish Star about foster parenting (Wanted: A loving home; July 3, 2009). It really captured all of the essential issues that were important to bring out and Yaffi Spodek did a great job of putting OHEL's message to paper.

We appreciate the sensitivity and responsiveness of The Jewish Star to the needs of the Foster Care Program.

SHELLEY BERGER
 Director, OHEL Foster Care Program

Heavenly article

To the Editor:

David Seidemann's column about Ilan Ramon moved me deeply (Ilan Ramon's birthday gift; From the other side of the bench; July 3, 2009). I'm sure that I am among many people who were touched by his brief but massively accomplished life. Thank you for putting a kind of orbital closure on his kiddush Hashem existence. Kudos to you.

ELISSA GARREL
 Cedarhurst

ABOUT LETTERS

The Jewish Star welcomes Letters to the Editor of no more than 250 words. We reserve the right to edit letters for style, content and space. Deadline is Monday at noon; we cannot guarantee placement. Letters must include the name of the writer, current address and daytime telephone number and may be mailed to The Jewish Star, 2 Endo Blvd., Garden City, NY 11530; faxed to (516) 569-4942; or e-mailed to letters@thejewishstar.com.

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OPINION

Chummus maleh

BY AZRIEL GANZ

I wasn't planning on speaking at my grandson's shalom zachor. There were other people more qualified to speak and, in any event, with all the craziness of the preceding three days, I really hadn't had time to prepare.

The baby was born on Tuesday afternoon in Yerushalayim. By the time we worked out all the arrangements that would enable us to leave for a few days it was late Tuesday night. We booked our flight on Wednesday morning, packed Wednesday night and hopped on the plane Thursday evening.

After a smooth, uneventful flight, we arrived in Nachlat after 3:00 p.m. After

setting down our bags, I asked whether there were any last minute items our kids needed for Shabbos or the shalom zachor. Their wonderful friends from the community had provided all the meals for Shabbos as well as a bunch of delicious cakes, so almost everything was already done.

All we needed was a bottle of wine and, of course, that staple of shalom zachors, chickpeas (even though, as is well known, no one really eats chickpeas). Zev asked whether I would mind running to the shuk (Machine Yehuda), which is a three minute walk from their apartment, to pick up those last minute items.

I realized as I was about to leave that neither of us knew exactly what chickpeas are called in Hebrew. Arbis? Zev thought

they might be called "garinei chummus" or chummus seeds, but wasn't sure. He called a friend who wasn't sure either. I decided that as a lawyer with 30 years experience at solving problems, I would somehow figure out how to buy arbis in the shuk and went on my way.

Sure enough, at the first makolet, I was able to get the chickpeas in a can. What struck me was that it was called "Chummus Maleh" or "whole Chummus." I found this deeply intriguing and thought about it for a while. I then asked Zev if it would be OK for me to say a few words at the shalom zachor, an idea was percolating.

Later that evening, I noted how curious it was that chickpeas, which, after all, are the source, the "makor" for chummus, are named after that which is its derivative. It is like calling sesame seeds "Tehinah Maleh," whole tehinah. I wondered

how the chickpeas would feel if they knew that they were named in such a strange, seemingly backwards manner.

Then I suggested that if the chickpeas were like Jewish parents, they would be very happy. While generally people prefer to be known for their own accomplishments and skills, there is no greater joy for Jewish parents than to be referred to in relation to their successful children.

Throughout the years, we've experienced this in relation to our children's various talents. "That's Zev's or Max's (the sick hockey players) dad." "That's Rebecca's (of the amazing voice) mom." "That's Shira's (the amazing dancer) mom." While it is sweet and nice to hear these things, that's not really what I'm talking about.

What we, as parents, really yearn for is to be described as the parents of a mentch; a ba'al or ba'alas midos and

chesed, an erliche Yid (upstanding Jew) who treats people with respect and honor. We daven that the lives our children lead will cause us to be known as the parents of children who give back to the community through their vocations or avocations, children who, simply put, make a difference.

My bracha to Zev and Aliza was that they be so successful in raising their little son (and all their children) that they will come to be known not just as "chickpeas" for the things they've accomplished personally, but as "Chummus Maleh," in relation to the wonderful accomplishments of their children.

Azriel Ganz is general counsel of a trade organization though, for simplicity's sake, he tells people that he eats for a living. He lives in Woodmere and daven's at Aish Kodesh where, on most Shabbat mornings, he can be found pacing.

I'M THINKING

Fresh start on controlling nukes

BY MICAH D. HALPERN

The IAEA, The International Atomic Energy Agency, is the organization charged with the responsibility of monitoring and policing nuclear programs around the world. It is an arm of the United Nations. The future of the world as we know it is dependent on how the IAEA carries out its mandate. If the IAEA does its job well, the world will be a safer place.

Inspecting Iran falls to the IAEA. So does keeping a watch on North Korea and making certain that neither nuclear weapons nor materials fall into the hands of unsavory characters, thuggish leaders or terrorists.

It surprised me that when the thirty five members of the council that oversees the International Atomic Energy Agency sat down for only the second time in their history to vote for a

new head of the organization, the world was not monitoring the proceeding more closely.

The previous head of the IAEA was Mohamed el Baradei, an Egyptian. El Baradei held the position for three terms and was expected to have entree and status in the developing world. Unfortunately, he did not and he was blocked out - the head of the IAEA was never permitted the unfettered access that had been hoped for.

As a result, this election was infused with internal conflict. Council members were divided over choosing a candidate more pro-West than their previous head or a candidate who would truly have the support of the developing world.

Pro-West won out. Yukiya



Micah D. Halpern

Amano of Japan, the new head of the IAEA, squeaked through with exactly the number of votes required for declaring a winner - 23 out of 35 votes - two thirds of the vote. This had been the second attempt to elect a new director; the group failed to choose a winner in a March election.

The bad news is that two thirds is hardly a ringing endorsement.

The good news is that, by Western standards, the election went to the better candidate.

Had Yukiya Amano's opponent, a South African named Abdul Samaad Minty who was backed by developing nations, won out, the direction of the IAEA would have been radically altered and the safety of Israel and the West would be in real

jeopardy. The world is at such a critical juncture in the development of nuclear technology that an IAEA director who does not push hard against those regimes eager to attain, develop and, possibly, even use nuclear technology, is an enabler of dangerous nuclear technology.

Amano does not yet have the credibility he will need, but he carries the clout. He has the opportunity to shape the direction in which the world is taken vis a vis nuclear power and technology.

Immediately after the election results were declared, Israel, which has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty but does cooperate with the West in trying to responsibly manage nuclear development, issued a statement saying that they will fully cooperate with Amano.

Israel will be a friend to Amana and we hope that Amano will be a friend to Israel. And when it comes to nuclear activity, Israel needs a friend.

Micah D. Halpern is a columnist, a social and political commentator, and the author, most recently, of "THUGS." He maintains The Micah Report at www.micahhalpern.com.

David Seidemann is taking a week off. "From the other side of the bench" will be back next week.

CORRECTION

Important follow-up to 'Purging Jewish History'

BY ELIZABETH BERNEY

My Op-Ed last week, "Purging Jewish History," (In my view; July 3, 2009) discussed how PLO, Fatah and Hamas governing documents, President Obama's speeches, and the U.S. State Department's public website's country descriptions each eliminate thousands of years of Jewish history in Israel, and glorify thousands of years of Muslim history. My column also mentioned my efforts to confirm which administration wrote the State Department country descriptions, including my Freedom of Information Act request to the State Department. Based on President Obama's speeches, the State Department's failure to respond to my request, and a separate 2008 State Department report describing Israel as the historic land of the Jewish people, I mistakenly concluded that the likely author of the distorted current State Department country descriptions was the Obama administration.

After publication of my Op-Ed, two computer-savvy Jewish Star readers alerted me to "archive.org" which contains web snapshots of approximately seven years of prior versions of the State Department website. The problems with current State Department country descriptions also existed at the time of the earliest web snapshot, in November 2001. I am

still trying to locate pre-November 2001 State Department country descriptions to learn exactly how far back the State Department's history problem goes.

Interestingly, the web snapshots indicate that the State Department increased the supposed numbers of 1948 "Palestinian refugees" from the 2002-2004 versions of the website until now. All available versions of the website grossly overstate the real number of Palestinian refugees, while continuing to ignore the Jewish refugees who had to flee for their lives from Arab lands.

I apologize for my mistake last week, and am very grateful to the Jewish Star's knowledgeable readers for their information and for taking the time to write.

President Obama can be blamed only for that which he is responsible for - namely, his speeches that adopt Palestinian revisionist history (including the President's statement in Cairo that Jewish aspirations to Israel were "rooted" in the European Holocaust and displaced Palestinians); his regrettable policies (including putting more pressure on Israel to stop building nursery schools than on Ahmadinejad to stop building nuclear bombs), and the U.S. State Department's continuing publication of distortions and elimination of Jewish history.

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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 - Chabad of the Five Towns will host a Sushi & Salad demonstration and tasting workshop with Chanie Lebovic on Monday, July 13, 2009 at 8:00 p.m. Learn just how easy it is to turn out world-class cuisine without compromising anything, with delicious kosher cooking. You will be able to prepare your very own sushi & salads to take home with you. Suggested donation \$30 per person. 74 Maple Avenue, Cedarhurst. R.S.V.P. required, please call 516-295-2478

Cedarhurst - The JCC of the Greater

Five Towns Long Island Friends' Experience (LIFE) group is hosting a "Movie and Sing Along" evening on Monday, July 13 from 7-9:00 p.m. at the JCC, 207 Grove Ave. The fee is \$5. For more information, please call (516) 569-6733.

East Hills - The Sid Jacobson JCC is hosting an event, "The History of Islam and Jewish Life in Arab countries" on Tuesday July 14 from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon. There will be a presentation by Saul Silas Fathi, author of "Full Circle: Escape from Baghdad and the Return." The cost is \$10 for non-members and free for SJJCC members and Passport Holders. For more information, please call Donna Bernstein at (516) 484-1545 ext. 134

Cedarhurst - The Young Israel of Woodmere is hosting a lecture on Thursday, July 16 at 8:30 p.m. as part of their Dilemma, Discussion and Dessert series. Rabbi Aaron Glatt will speak on the topic of "Could a Churban Happen in our Lifetime?" at the home of Judy and Steven Stulberger, 559 Harbor Drive in Cedarhurst. For more information, call the shul at (516) 295-0950.

East Hills - The Sid Jacobson JCC is presenting a seminar entitled "Survivor's Survival Kit" on Tuesday, July 21 from 10:30 a.m. until 12 noon. Presented by Martha Kolodkin, this seminar shows you how to minimize the stress on your surviving family members after you're gone through the development of a Survivor's

Survival Kit. The cost is \$10 for non-members and free for SJJCC members and Passport Holders. For more information, please contact Donna Bernstein at (516) 484-1545 ext. 134.

Lido Beach - AMIT presents its Annual Yom Iyun - Day of Learning Seminar - "For Women by Women" at the Lido Beach Synagogue at Fairway Road and Lido Boulevard in Lido Beach, on Wednesday, July 22, Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, from 9:30-1:30. The Seminar is titled, "Family Redeemed, Exploring Biblical and Present Day Paradigms of Family Relationships." The presenters will be noted lecturers Ann Leifer, MA and Rebbetzin Dina Rabhan, LCSW. Call the AMIT office at 212-477-4720 or the synagogue office at 516-889-9650 for more information.

Oceanside - The Friedberg JCC is hosting a lecture on "The Baseball Talmud" on Thursday, July 23 at 7:30 p.m. Join author and radio personality Howard Megdal as he discusses his new book, a historical narration

Two-day fundraising retreat

Fleischmanns, NY - Executive directors, fundraisers, development professionals, and organization lay leaders: take advantage of two days of seminars, lectures and networking opportunities with peers to help make your fundraising program more productive. Wednesday, July 22, Thursday July 23, at Oppenheimer's Regis Hotel in Fleischmanns, NY. Topics to be addressed include: What's for Dinner? An Insider's View on Running an Effective and Successful Dinner Campaign; The Check is in the Mail! Is Direct Mail Right for You? Proven Time Management and

Donor Retention Techniques; and Tough Decisions for Tough Times: Running Your Fundraising Machine at 25% Below Budget. Presenters include Herschel Leiner, president of H. Leiner & Co.; Yitzchok Saftlas, president of Bottom Line Marketing Group; Rabbi Tzvi Bider, executive director of Chicago Center for Torah & Chessed; Rabbi Yonah Weinrib, Judaica Illuminations; Rabbi Tzvi Chaim Pincus of Tiferes Stam, and others. For reservations or more information, contact Mrs. Esther Saftlas at 718-412-3520 or NYseminar2009@gmail.com.

of Major League Jewish Baseball in America. Cost is \$6. For more information, please call (516) 634-4154 or e-mail mlevi@friedbergjcc.org.

Oceanside - The Friedberg JCC is hosting a day trip to Northport on Sunday, July 26. The day will begin with a Living History Tour at the Vanderbilt Mansion where actors play the roles of the Vanderbilt family and their famous guest. Then, we stop for a three-course luncheon. After lunch, we head over to the new John W. Engeman Theater for the Gershwin musical "Crazy for You" Cost is \$132 for the day, with luxury coach bus transportation included. Register by June 20. The trip will be leaving at 9 a.m. from the JCC, 15 Neil Court in Oceanside. For more information, please call (516) 766-4341 or go to www.friedbergjcc.org.

Rockville Centre - Mercy Medical Center will present a free one-hour lecture on "My Parents Are Aging. What Do I Need To Know?" on Wednesday, July 29 at 7:30 p.m. in the Mercy League Lounge on the hospital campus. Mercy's Director of Geriatric Medicine Dr. Muhammad Ramzan, and Adult Health Nurse Practitioner Margaret Amodemo, will discuss signs of aging that should be of concern, care and assistance that is available, and issues of importance that people might not even consider. The presentation will include information about Mercy Medical Center's Geriatric Assessment Program, nutrition, prevention of falls, and the broad affects that an aging parent has on all members of a family. Registration is not required. The Mercy League Lounge is located in the building opposite the hospital's Emergency Department. For parking, follow the signs to the lecture. For more information, call (516) 62MERCY or visit www.mercymedicalcenter.info.

Lawrence - EndTheMadness is holding its 5th annual Lawrence Shabbaton on the weekend of August 7-8 at Cong. Beth Shalom. The age range is for singles between 25 and 35. The cost is \$35 per person, to be paid in advance. Space is limited to 48 participants. Meals will be held at homes of local families, with other programming and a kumitz after Shabbos. For more information and to make a reservation, please contact Batya at salk1111@aol.com.

Oceanside - The Friedberg JCC is hosting a parenting workshop, "Is it time to go back to school already?"

on Wednesday, August 5 from 10-11 a.m. Come hear tips about helping your children make the transition from summer back to school. The event is free, and childcare is available for a small fee. Advance reservations required. The JCC is located t 15 Neil Court in Oceanside. For more information, please call (516) 634-4192 or e-mail khowitz@friedbergjcc.org.

ONGOING EVENTS

Cedarhurst - The Beis Medrash of Cedarhurst holds a Flexible Morning Learning Program every Monday through Thursday 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.) For information, please contact Rabbi Moshe Kaufman at (718) 471-2780 or moshekaufman@gmail.com.

Cedarhurst - The "Sunday Night Torah Lecture Series" in memory of Shari Siman-Tov z"l is held weekly at 8:00 p.m. at Congregation Shaare Emunah, the Sephardic Congregation of the Five Towns, 539 Oakland Avenue (Corner Oakland Ave. & Peninsula Blvd). Men and women are invited. Ner Sarah is a network of Torah and chesed projects in memory of Shari Siman-Tov z"l. For more information, please e-mail nersarah@nersarahproject.com or visit www.nersarahproject.com.

Long Beach - Long Beach Medical Center has a newly formed Gamblers Anonymous group. Meetings are held each Monday at 7:30 p.m. in Conference Room D at Long Beach Medical Center, 455 E. Bay Drive. For more information, please call (516) 897-1250.

Long Beach - Long Beach Medical Center's Counseling Center has free weekly Anxiety & Depression walk-in screenings every Wednesday from 2-3 p.m. Screenings will include an interview with a mental health professional. For more information, please call (516) 897-1270.

Plainview - The Friedberg JCC hosts a free spousal support group which meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. at Temple Chaverim, 1050 Washington Ave. For more information, please call Roberta at (516) 742-2050.



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SHTEEBL	10	RED	1
CHABAD	16	B.T.	12

STANDINGS

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B.S.	2	0
YINW	2	0
ISLAND	1	1
B.T.	1	1
SHTEEBL	1	1
CHABAD	1	1
YIH	0	2
RED	0	2

SCHEDULE FOR WEEK 3 - JULY 12

FIELD 1	FIELD 2
9:00 AM ISLAND V B.T.	YINW V CHABAD
10:30 RED V YIH	SHTEEBL V B.S.

PARSHAT PINCHAS

Tying Together Loose Ends

A movie truism says that if you're introduced to a character in the beginning of a film, even if the storyline does not seem to involve that person, the character will have played an important role by the time the final credits roll.

Loaded with seemingly innocuous information such as the census numbers of the new generation of each tribe and all the offerings related to the holidays, Parshat Pinchas also introduces a number of seemingly irrelevant characters, and concludes old tales starring familiar faces.

We begin with the end of the tale of Zimri, when Pinchas is informed that his zealotry has awarded him the opportunity to join the priesthood. We now know who will replace Elazar as High Priest upon his death.

In the context of Moabite women causing the nation to sin, we are introduced to the presence of Midianite women (25:14). This culminates three verses later in the command to fight the Midianites - a fight we will see actualized in next week's Torah



Rabbi Avi Billet

portion.

Chapter 26 recounts the families of the tribes, beginning with Reuven. While the families listed here generally follow the names of the children of Yaakov who descended to Egypt, there are a few exceptions, missing names and changed names, which are a topic for a different day.

When the children of Eliav are mentioned in 26:9, Datan and Aviram are recorded as the ringleaders who challenged Moshe and Aharon along with Korach. Their fate is repeated, and their book is closed. The fate of their brother Nemuel is not mentioned, and the sons of Korach are reported as having survived the two-pronged punishment of the ground opening and fire consuming 250 men.

While it would seem irrelevant to mention the sons of Yehuda who died before the family even came to Egypt, they are nevertheless remembered. Perhaps it is because Peretz and Zerach, the twins Tamar (the widow of both

Er and Onan) bore to Yehuda replaced their brothers in a retroactive levirate-type of arrangement. (Normally a brother will perform Yibum, marry his childless deceased brother's widow in order for the children from the union to be considered the deceased's child. In this case, unknowingly, their father played a similar role, causing Peretz and Zerach to be both brothers to the deceased as well as levirate sons.)

In a glaring retreat from the normal accounting of families, 26:33 mentions one man, Tzafchad, who died leaving five daughters and no sons. Like the seemingly superfluous character in a

film, the daughters have their fifteen minutes of fame in chapter 27:1-11 when the issue of their inheritance plays out. (They appear again in chapter 36 as objects of discussion, not as the subjects of the storyline.)

The mention of Serach, daughter of Asher, in 26:46, is also suggestive, but her existence is never again raised in the Torah. Her tale unfolds in the Midrash and commentaries.

26:63-66 closes the episode of the countings. Nadav and Avihu join the ranks of Er, Onan, Datan and Aviram in that each died leaving no heir. No one else from the original countings

of Moshe and Aharon, save Kalev and Yehoshua, were slated to enter the Land - all had died. Aharon's son, Elazar, the current High Priest, had been too young at the time of the spies to be counted among those who would die with the generation of the desert.

In the second half of chapter 27 we are told that, in an easy transfer of power, Yehoshua would take over for Moshe. It seems, in a sense, that Moshe has been included in the generation of the spies who will not enter the land on account of their deeds. (Perhaps he confirms this reason for his death in Devarim 1:36-38)

Chapters 28 and 29 are the order of the sacrificial offerings for the holidays.

Is there significance to an idea that the parsha named for a person who is identified in rabbinic literature as Eliyahu, and thus the Messiah, is the parsha in which so many loose ends are tied together? Maybe. Maybe not.

When the Messiah comes, however, we hope and pray he will be able to tie up our loose ends, answer our questions and bring clarity, so we can herald his arrival and see the world and G-d's vision for it with the greatest clarity known to man.

IN MY VIEW

Continued from Page One

and Reb Yakov, Reb Ahron and Rav Hutner, Rav Pam and Rav Ruderman, of blessed memories.

And if you feel that the images of a crowd of angry and violent people who dress like me and, maybe, you, hurling curses at police officers broadcast around the world is a colossal Chilul Hashem (desecration of G-d's name) and a true physical danger to the safety and security of frum Jews worldwide, I pose the following question: What are we, as Torah Jews, obligated to protest first?

A) Non-observant Jews who never had the benefit of a Torah education driving cars on Shabbos?

B) Identifiably Orthodox people throwing rocks at police officers on Shabbos in full view of the media?

So let the next protest be called to peacefully and civilly proclaim, loudly and clearly, first to our own impressionable children, and then to all decent citizens of the world that this tiny minority of violent radicals does not represent us.

You and I know with certainty that our gedolim shlit'a, our greatest Torah leaders, do not sanction nor support any expression of violence. But the public at large does not know that, and paints all of us — Charedim, Modern Orthodox, all observant Jews — with one broad brush. A week ago, tens of thousands gathered for a beautiful and moving Kabbolas Shabbos in Yerushalayim to protest Chilul Shabbos in a responsible and peaceful way, while some others irresponsibly rioted and burned garbage cans all week long.

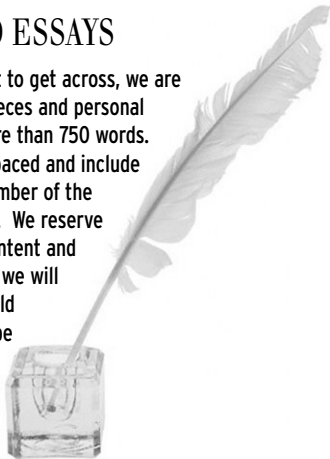
We, who know what true Yiddishkeit is all about, have a positive role to play. I feel with every fiber of my body that each and every decent Yid worldwide has a responsibility to write letters and emails to every media outlet informing them that these hooligans do not speak for us. For we have no right preaching to others until we have removed this horrible stain from our own communities. And it will remain that way until we change things.

I respectfully ask readers to take a moment to e-mail letters containing the following text to the Jerusalem Post (letters@jpost.com) and Haaretz (feedback@haaretz.co.il), two Israeli newspapers with worldwide readership that are covering this story, and to pass this on to people on your email lists and ask them to do the same. It is my goal that each newspaper receive a minimum of 1,000 emails. Hopefully, then there will be a news story about how Torah Jews stood up for the values we hold so dear.

"As a Torah Jew, I am deeply distressed by the desecration of Shabbos in our holy land — all the more so when it is government sanctioned. However, nothing can ever excuse the type of violence and wanton destruction of public property that has been reported recently such as the throwing of rocks at police officers and the burning of garbage dumpsters — all of which is diametrically opposed to the teachings of our Holy Torah. Lest our silence be misconstrued as passive acceptance of the violence, we condemn it in the strongest terms, as do the vast, overwhelming, majority of Torah Jews worldwide."

OPINIONS AND ESSAYS

If you have something to say or a thought to get across, we are interested in hearing about it. Opinion pieces and personal essays are welcome but should be no more than 750 words. Submissions must be typed and double-spaced and include the name, address and daytime phone number of the writer. Photographs are also encouraged. We reserve the right to edit submissions for style, content and space. Placement cannot be guaranteed; we will notify you in advance of publication, should your piece be chosen. Submissions may be mailed to The Jewish Star, 2 Endo Blvd., Garden City, NY 11530; faxed to (516) 569-4942; or e-mailed to letters@thejewishstar.com



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OPINION

Diffusing responsibility

On May 13, 1964, Catherine Genovese was murdered in Kew Gardens, Queens as she came home from work late at night. Forty-five years ago, "Kitty," as she was known, was stabbed multiple times by an attacker who assaulted her three separate times over a 35-minute period. She screamed for help but, as we all know, few of her neighbors who heard the scream got involved until it was too late for her.

The Kitty Genovese murder has developed into a well known and widely studied social psychological event with major impact on our understanding of certain types of human behavior, and her story has become the symbol for what psychologists call the "Bystander Effect" or "Diffusion of Responsibility" theory.



Michael J. Salamon, Ph.D.

It is the symbol for how people do not get involved in helping others when they should.

Over the years some debate has developed as to the accuracy of all the information known to be related to the Kitty Genovese story — some say only 12 neighbors, not 38 as originally thought, heard Kitty's cries for help. In the original

report it was inferred that some of the neighbors actually saw her being stabbed in addition to hearing her repeated screams for help. That has called into question with some former neighbors now saying they did not have a clear line of vision. It is also clear that the New York City Police Department changed their phone response system following events of that particular night long ago despite dispatching a patrol car that arrived at the scene within

"I believe that if a professional is confronted with a situation that may require reporting, it is best to err on the side of doing so."

to diffuse responsibility. If you are unsure or afraid to report an abuser, this interpretation of the law allows you to not report it.

There are, however, other guidelines that health care professionals must take into account when deciding whether or not to report a suspected abuser. The Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct states that psychologists disclose confidential information in certain limited cases including "protect the client/patient, psychologists, or others from harm." Similarly, the American Psychiatric Association, in its Code of Medical Ethics, states: "When in the clinical judgment of the treating psychiatrist, the risk of danger is deemed to be significant; the psychiatrist may reveal confidential information disclosed by the patient." In these guidelines there is no need to have to identify a person who is being abused.

I have taken a firm stand when it comes to protecting our children. And, it is not simply a professional issue. I believe that if a professional is confronted with a situation that may require reporting, it is best to err on the side of doing so. If the professional is unsure whether or not to report, it is possible to gain legal guidance from state workers who know and understand the law, as well as legal advisors to the professional organizations we belong. They can help us make a clear and balanced decision as to when and how to report a suspected pedophile.

This, however, is an issue that goes well beyond just what professionals should do. Are we, as neighbors, hearing the screams and not responding because we know others will also hear them? And if the others hear and do not respond, why should we? Do we need to have only a clear line of vision to see our neighbor's children being hurt before we do anything? Perhaps the most relevant question is: are we like the neighbors of Kitty Genovese? Can we live with ourselves knowing that an abuser is in the public, abusing someone, while we do nothing?

Dr. Salamon, a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, is the founder and director of the Adult Developmental Center in Hewlett, NY. He is the author of numerous articles and several psychological tests. His recent books include, *The Shidduch Crisis: Causes and Cures*, published by Urim Publications and *Every Pot Has a Cover: A Proven Guide to Finding, Keeping and Enhancing the Ideal Relationship*, published by Rowman & Littlefield

two minutes of the call.

While historians and social scientists will likely debate these issues for many years, the fact that people do not get involved to assist others when they should remains a part of human nature and we see it clearly today in our own community.

As we slowly begin to acknowledge that sexual abuse of children exists in the Jewish world, there has been considerable debate recently as to what constitutes our responsibility to report those who abuse. Some hide behind the halachic view that mesirah, or reporting to secular authorities, is not allowed despite the fact that virtually all halachic decisors disagree with that perspective. Others, especially health care professionals who choose not to report pedophiles, use aspects of state and federal law interpreted narrowly to justify the non-reporting of abusers.

The law that mandates certain professionals to report abuse uses the phrase "reasonable cause to suspect" that there will be abuse or neglect. The Federal guidelines for disclosure as stated in the HIPAA rules states the "Covered entities [health care providers, that is] may disclose protected health information that they believe is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat to a person or the public, when such disclosure is made to someone they believe can prevent or lessen the threat." The law further states: "In certain circumstances covered entities may disclose protected health information to appropriate government authorities regarding victims of abuse, neglect or domestic violence."

New York State Mental Hygiene Law is somewhat more circumspect, referring to "limited situations when therapist-client relationship can be broken as when there is an imminent risk to specifically identified person." This is often interpreted as meaning that unless a health care professional (or teacher) has specific information as to whom a pedophile might abuse, despite the fact that they are aware that the pedophile is abusing someone, they are not required to report it. This is an obvious legal question but should not be a pragmatic one. This interpretation allows people

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Building freeze, politics affect young couples in Yehuda and Shomron

BY BARUCH SPIER

Former Far Rockaway resident Ari Singer and his wife, Rivka, can't find a suitable improvement to their small basement apartment in Beit El, in the Benjamin region in the West Bank. They have been struggling over the last five months in search of an apartment near other young couples.

"If there is a place that's available we call up the next day and they say, 'not available anymore,'" said Rivka about searching for apartments listed in local newspapers and on email list-serves.

The head of the Beit El council, Moshe Rosenbaum, told the Jewish Star this week that he hopes more people come to live in the communities of the West Bank. However, due to building restrictions enacted in 2005, construction of new residences has been severely impeded.

The lack of housing has not discouraged idealistic young couples from trying to move into the West Bank, said Etzion bloc real estate agent Michael Lourie. Lourie added that the influx of would-be residents has only intensified since President Barack Obama called for a freeze on settlement growth.

According to Lourie, the housing situation is unlikely to improve in Israel's current political environment. Although Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has so far ignored pressures from President Obama to freeze natural growth in the settlements, he also neither favors unnatural expansion nor establishing new communities.

Council head Rosenbaum explained that all new construction in Beit El was frozen in 2005 and new construction is only allowed under permits pre-dating 2005. Beit El's new residents can only find housing in a spare floor or basement that is turned into an apartment, or in the caravans found on the outskirts of many towns.

A caravan trailer is usually the size of a two-bedroom apartment, and permission is unnecessary to build the housing units now common for new couples in the community. However, Rosenbaum said that Beit El has more than enough caravans and isn't allowing construction of new trailers.

Besides for Beit El, the Singers have also searched the Etzion block for housing. They hope to find a place close to Rivka's parents who live in Efrat.

"I grew up in the settlements, it's the quality of life that I am used to," said Rivka about her and her husband's refusal to move to Jerusalem or another nearby city. The Singers have tried to find a caravan for rent in a suitable community. Costing its tenants only 1300 NIS per month in a city like Efrat, the caravan is a cheaper option than neighborhood housing. Unfortunately, the Singers have been left disgruntled by the process to obtain a caravan.

"You have to be on a waiting list," Ari Singer said of the requirements to move into a municipality-owned caravan, "you have to pay, you have to come for Shabbat." A few communities even asked for a handwriting analysis, he said.

SUMMER'S FIRST ALIYAH

Continued from Page One

that confounded or deterred olim or would-be olim of the past have been smoothed away by the relationships the seven year-old organization has forged with Israeli government agencies.

Ellie and Donny have watched Nefesh B'Nefesh videos, they said, finding it "so hard not to be emotional." Ellie said they are "very excited to experience it ourselves!"

Yudi and Aviva Zuller and their children flew on the Monday flight for their move to Ma'aleh Adumim. Six years ago the couple bought a house on Staten Island. "Our plan was to be in the house for 10 years. Most people move back their plans. We made it out 4 years ahead," said Yudi.

In addition to running Graphic Dimensions Press, his printing business in Brooklyn, Yudi has devoted himself to raising money for terror victims in Israel, and has collected over \$1 million to date.

Their 14-year-old daughter, Navah, is particularly excited to make aliyah, and 10-year-old Binyamin said, "It's my destiny." The two younger children, Kayla, 7, and Gilad, 3, are also happy.

"Aliyah was always a plan, but it was an 'eventually, one of these days' kind of thing." What made it a reality? Yudi's fundraising and Aviva's position as director of public relations at Yeshivat Reishit Yerushalayim have sent the two commuting back and forth over the past few years. This, Yudi said, strengthened their connection to Israel. So has Gilad Shalit.

Aviva and Yudi named their youngest child "Gilad" in honor of the Israeli MIA, to be "a big zechus [merit] towards his release and good health and keeping him out of harm's way." Yudi has forged a close friendship with Gilad Shalit's father, Noam.

"My wife and I think of Gilad [Shalit] every hour of every day," said Yudi. In part, it has inspired their aliyah. "To see the selflessness and sacrifice a 19-year-old is willing to make for his country, that's something my wife and I want our kids to

experience," he said.

Aliyah won't be easy for the Zuller family. Yudi will travel back and forth from Israel to the U.S. almost weekly in order to continue running his business. But, he says, "We want a better life for our kids... the life we feel they should have.

Zuller looks forward to living in a "neighborhood surrounded by fellow Jews... The environment and aura of being surrounded by house after house, [where] whether religious or not, they're still Jews."

Taking a walk on a recent Shabbat, Zuller's son, Binyamin, said, "In a few more weeks we won't see any cars on Shabbat." Reflecting on this, Yudi said, "It tells you what Shabbat is and what being in the Jewish State is all about."

When Zuller hears that it's a sacrifice to leave his large Staten Island home and moving into a small apartment in Israel, he points to a picture of Gilad Shalit and says, "You want to see a huge sacrifice? Look at Gilad Shalit. That's a sacrifice."

None of his friends are surprised about the move. Some are even asking what took him so long.

Yudi and Aviva are proud that their son is starting to make a connection between himself and Gilad Shalit. Pointing to a picture on the wall he said, "That's big Gilad; I'm little Gilad."

The economy is playing a part in an aliyah uptick. "We are finding many people accelerating their aliyah plans as a result of the economic recession," said Yael Katsman, a spokesperson for Nefesh B'Nefesh. In the past many people considering a move to Israel might have had longer-term plans, or thoughts of first paying off student loans, but now Katsman says Nefesh B'Nefesh has observed a considerable shift in planning.

"There are currently over 10,000 people in our active pipeline who have reached out and expressed serious interest in moving to Israel in the very near future," said Katsman.

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THE KOSHER BOOKWORM

What to read for the Three Weeks (part one)

A time of year that helps teach us why Jerusalem is so important

Jerusalem. Just the sound of the word should set off tremors of deep passion in the heart of every observant and concerned Jew. For us, it is not just another city, or a geographic location; Jerusalem represents the very center of the Jewish faith since time immemorial.



Alan Jay Gerber

No other earthly abode has as much resonance in the Jewish faith's historical experience as does this sacred city. Be it the glory of a Temple, a royal palace, the regal presence of a priesthood, the solemn proceedings of a Sanhedrin or the sight and wound of mass destruction and desecration, Jerusalem was and still is at the center of our liturgy, our conversation with G-d, the expression of G-d's rule in this world.

It is this time of year, beginning with the Fast of the 17th of Tammuz, on Thursday, and lasting for the next three weeks to the Fast of Tisha B'Av, that we experience the most somber observance on the Jewish calendar. Much has been written about the customs for these three weeks. I shall briefly detail below and in the next few weeks to come, several works that, in my opinion, best set the tone and purpose for our serious and somber demeanor at this time on the Jewish calendar.

Perhaps one of the most beloved of all Jewish writers of the previous generation was Rabbi Eliyahu Kitov zt"l. His writings and books have served as classics for Jewish law and lore in our yeshivas and Beis Yaakovs for the better part of the last century, continuing into our own time. Among his works is the classic, "The Book of Our Heritage" [Feldheim, 1968, 1999]. Within the third volume you will find all the salient basic information on what constitutes the proper observances as well as the relevant historical information to offer a better understanding of the importance of past events that affect our lives to this day, including the integrity of our concerns for Jerusalem as the center of our people's faith. Indeed, even the learning and careful study of the behavior of our ancient adversaries should and do help explain the behavior of those contemporary adversaries, both foreign and domestic, who ominously resemble their ancient counterparts. Thus is the value of the study of Jewish history.

Each chapter of this book is organized by the Jewish month of the year and subdivided by the various topics that define the liturgical and halachic mandates for these solemn days.

The language is easy to comprehend. No detail is explained in a complicated manner. This is the strength of this writer that helps explain the deserved longevity of his work.

Another, more intellectually challenging, volume is an anthology of writings by Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik zt"l, titled, "The Lord Is Righteous In All His Ways: Reflections on the Tisha B'Av Kinot" [Ktav, 2006].

There is much to be gleaned from this most informative sefer that will help enhance the average, and non-average worshiper to better understand the underlying meanings of the various elegies that make up the Kinot/Kinos.

It is organized into two basic units. They are, first, "Themes of Tisha B'Av," which includes a philosophical take on the day's liturgical works and their religious importance.

The second unit deals with "Themes of the Kinot," that goes into greater detail concerning the historical background of the Kinot compositions, biographical data of some of the major players down through the ages who, by example and experience, are emblematic of the persecutions that our people witnessed and died for.

In reviewing this sefer I would be remiss if I did not share with you one aspect of Tisha B'Av observance that had escaped my attention until now.

This will demonstrate the regard that the Rav had for the min-hagim (customs) of "amcha," and how he links it to the chain of tradition and Halacha.

In the chapter dealing with the status of Tisha B'Av in messianic times, Rabbi Soloveitchik teaches us the following:

"There is an old Jewish custom not to collect and put away the Kinot book for next year. I remember this as a child. They did not save the Kinot books for next year but read through them and put them in the shaimos collection to be buried later in the cemetery."

"Every Tisha B'Av they would buy new ones. (Of course, the Kinot books were not as expensive as they are now, particularly those with commentaries and translations.)

But the old custom was to buy new Kinot booklets every year. After all, after this year we will no longer need them."

According to the Rav this stemmed from the Rambam's ruling in Hilchos Ta'aniyos that Tisha B'Av would be obsolete after the Messiah's arrival. Inasmuch as we believe that the Messiah will arrive at any time, such a custom has practical validity, and that is what defines the fate of our little Kinot booklets.

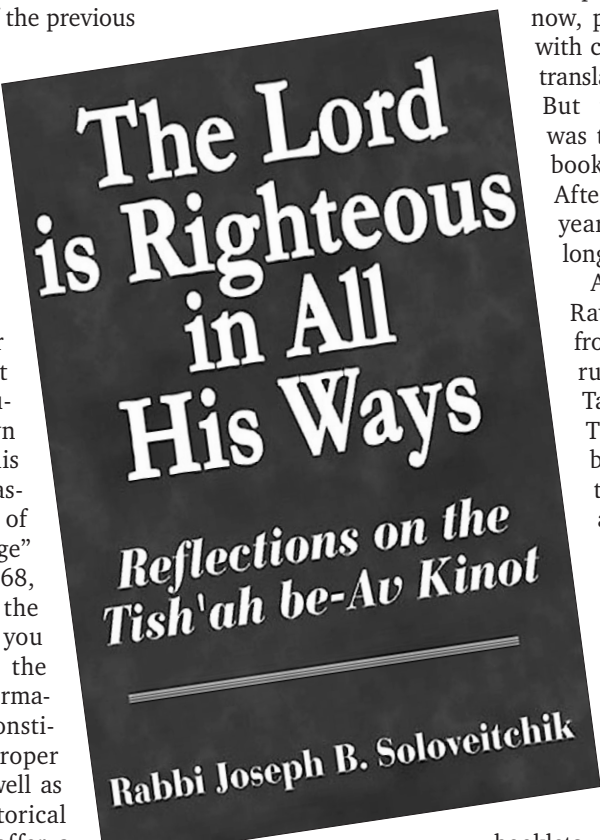
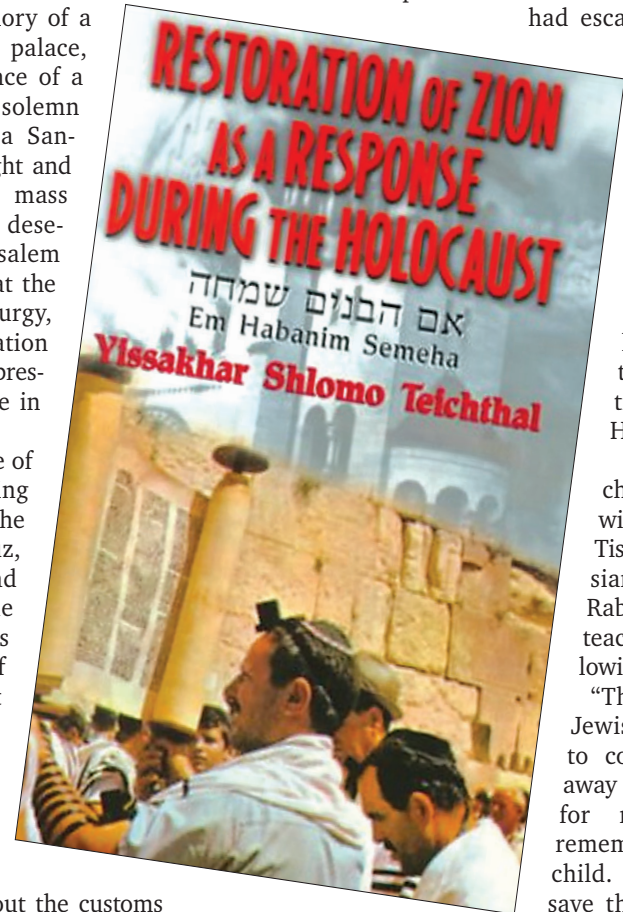
Toward the end of this sefer is a thirteen page chapter dealing with the Rav's take on the Holocaust and its relevance to Tisha B'Av. I would suggest a careful reading of this chapter. You might not agree with the Rav's conclusions but you will come away a better-informed Jew for the effort.

This time of year should inspire us to take greater stock of our appreciation for the continued status of Jerusalem under continued Jewish sovereignty, a status that is being challenged by the current regime in Washington and by their representatives here in our own community.

Hopefully our prayers, particularly inspired by the readings of Rabbi Kitov and Rabbi Soloveitchik, both of blessed memory, will help thwart the designs of those who hide behind false pretensions of friendship.

One last word: In a Kosher Bookworm column last year dealing with the Three Weeks, I made reference to Rabbi Pesach Schindler's excellent treatment of Aym Habanim Same'cha, titled "Restoration of Zion As A Response During the Holocaust" (Ktav). Many readers took note of that essay and informed me at that time of the book's unavailability in area bookstores.


This year I inform you that the book is available for purchase online. It makes for excellent and timely reading in sync with the theme of the Three Weeks. Further, I strongly urge Ktav to reprint and reissue this classic, in paperback, so as to enable schools and students to read and better understand a chapter of our people's history that has been deliberately long-ignored by many who should know better.



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Photo courtesy Cong. Beth Shalom Chabad
Rabbi Anshel Perl with swastikas sprayed on his shul. They were removed before Shabbos.

Chabad shul in Mineola defaced

BY MAYER FERTIG

The young maintenance worker from Brazil didn't know what a swastika was. She called Rabbi Anshel Perl on Friday morning wondering about the freshly painted images on the front doors of Cong. Beth Shalom Chabad in Mineola: were they religious symbols? But most everyone else who passed the shul Friday morning knew just what he or she was looking at.

"People were aghast. Screaming. People were driving by and taking pictures," Rabbi Perl recalled. "The general feeling was one of disgust and disgrace."

"Based on what was written there, obviously, it's being investigated as a hate crime and hopefully we'll be able to identify somebody who was responsible," Detective Sergeant Gary Shapiro, the coordinator of the NCPD bias crimes unit, said in a brief telephone interview.

The swastikas were spray painted on the shul sometime Thursday night. Police believe that a separate incident — obscenities drawn on cars in the same area — was not connected. A neighbor's home security camera captured video images of children carrying out those crimes.

The swastikas, painted in red, were drawn "incorrectly, I might add," noted Detective Lieutenant Ray Cote, commanding officer of the Nassau County Police Department's Third Precinct, at a news conference

at department headquarters in Mineola. "Certainly it's stupid," he said, "but we treat this very seriously."

"They sent a crime unit, scraping the paint, looking for fingerprints. That was reassuring," Rabbi Perl said.

"What went through my mind was, in 1938 the government [of Germany] sponsored this. And now, within minutes, the mayor of Mineola called. The commissioner of police [Lawrence Mulvey] was jogging — he's a friend — he heard it and came around the block to reassure us. It was good to see the government people," he added.

In an odd twist, had the crime occurred just a few days later, the perpetrators would in all likelihood also have been caught on tape.

"Even as I speak to you, the cameras are going up," Rabbi Perl said. The wiring was installed last Wednesday and Thursday as part of a planned security upgrade, and by Tuesday cameras were up "around the whole building."

"We would have caught them easily," said Rabbi Perl, but "there's no such thing as irony in this world. It's all divine providence and we're accepting it that way."

The Nassau County Police Department is seeking the public's help. Anyone with information should call Crime Stoppers at 800-244-TIPS.

- Additional reporting by Andrew Hackmack

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IS THE WINE WORTH THE MONEY?

Psagot Merlot 2006

BY ADAM NEUSTADTER

I admit it — I like drinking wine! But writing about it is a whole different ball game. As the editor can tell you, sometimes it's difficult to come up with new words to describe the same thing over and over. This, however, is not one of those times.

Upon opening the wine, you can taste soft fruit, little tannin, and almost no finish — all the qualities of an over-priced wine. Fortunately for you, me and the wine, I have patience when it comes to wine. Well at least enough to give the wine a little time to become, shall we say, a little bit friendlier.

Boy, are you guys lucky to have me. I waited, and as usual, patience, a rewarding virtue even for the less virtuous, pays off. The fruit expands even more, and even allows some of the oak to come out. The aroma is complemented by slight hints of chocolate (not that common for Merlot); some complementary tannins evolve and begin to grab hold of the palate. The palate stays consistent. The finish is somewhat soft and thin. But then again, it is a medium-bodied merlot.

Still, the thin finish makes me question how long the wine will last. At this point I would say it's ready to drink now, and probably for another year or two, though the real question is, at what price? Or to phrase it better: "Is the wine worth the money?"

While the wine did get better after about an hour, it's all about what else is out there. After all is said and done, the wine is a nice Merlot IF you can find it priced in the low \$20s. I don't know if that price is feasible. This has nothing to do with the current economic situation. It's just that there are better Merlots out there once you get into the \$20 range and certainly in the \$30s.

Adam Neustadter has taught about wine and was a sales executive for the Royal Wine Corporation for 15 years until his aliyah in 2006. He and his family live in Modiin.



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SHALHEVET

Continued from Page One

Mesivta, which together with HAFTR, operates under the banner of Machon HaTorah.

"HAFTR brought real estate and finances to the cooperative agreement. Rambam brought educational leadership," explained Yaron Kornblum, the other incoming co-president. Rabbi Yotav Eliach and Rabbi Zev Friedman of Rambam lead the various principals and administrators of the Machon. "It was HAFTR's responsibility to fundraise and pay the deficit of the startup," he said.

"HAFTR's decision was a unilateral decision, made over our forceful objections," Rabbi Friedman told The Jewish Star. "We believe it was unnecessary and unfortunate. It was very painful." Shalhevet parents are searching for ways maintain the school he said, but, "Right now my focus is making sure these wonderful girls have a home for next year."

"We have a fiduciary responsibility to our parents, especially in these times — we have a lot more people out of work, asking for tuition assistance — to use our resources to help people within the HAFTR family," Kornblum said. The fact that few HAFTR eighth graders chose to attend Shalhevet apparently factored into the decision.

HAFTR will continue to fund the Machon, the co-presidents said, and through that, Rambam. They declined to comment about what they termed "ongoing negotiations" but stressed that further changes to the Machon HaTorah relationship at this time would be for Rambam to decide.

"I'm devastated and I'm hoping that we'll be able to muster the parents together to continue in an independent form," said the mother of an incoming 10th grader. She didn't want to be named, citing concerns about placing

her daughter in another school, if need be. "I personally hope that we can somehow make it continue."

"It's an exceptional school. She took Arabic. She can now read and write Arabic after one year. She took advanced math. The Ivrit was excellent. The Limudei Kodesh was excellent. College bowl, debate team. It is an excellent school."

Robbie Zeitz, the father of an incoming freshman, who was apprised of the decision this afternoon called it "unconscionable."

His daughter, an eighth grader at Shulamith School for Girls in Brooklyn, went through "trauma and turmoil" there this year. Shulamith will not have a ninth grade in September. "We found Shalhevet and knowing it was part of Machon HaTorah, we felt secure and reassured," he said. "40 girls were set to go and now, without warning and with less than two months until school starts, their future and their security has been pulled right out from under them by an unconscionable act."

"We recognize the extreme issue as far as placement," Honigsfeld said. "We are mitigating that by offering seats in our high school at the same economic terms." HAFTR's tuition is significantly higher. "Alternatively, administrators from both Rambam and HAFTR will assist getting these students placed in other all-girls yeshivot in the metropolitan area," he said, and "any advance payments of tuition will be fully refunded, one hundred percent."

"We already have at least one prospective child who has contacted us," about attending HAFTR High School, said Ruben Maron, the executive director. "We have at least one who is registering, we've had other inquiries."

Shalhevet "was a great concept but bad timing," Kornblum said.