

THE JEWISH STAR

Independent and original reporting from the Orthodox communities of Long Island

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IN MY VIEW

Brandeis: break laws to rescue Jews

BY RAFAEL MEDOFF

Seventy years ago this week, David Ben-Gurion sat down to write a long letter to Louis D. Brandeis, the recently-retired Supreme Court justice, elder statesman of American Zionism, and one of the most influential Jews in America. That Ben-Gurion was updating Brandeis on the latest developments in British Mandatory Palestine was routine. That Ben-Gurion was briefing Brandeis specifically on recent efforts to smuggle European Jews into the country, in defiance of British immigration restrictions, was more than a little unusual.

Since 1937, Ben-Gurion's rivals, the Revisionist Zionists and their Irgun Zvai Leumi allies, had been engaged in

"aliya bet," or unauthorized immigration. Irgun emissaries in Europe had been sending boatloads of European Jews to Palestine, landing late at night at deserted coastal locations, out of view of British patrols. Recently, the Labor-affiliated Mossad l'Aliya Bet had joined the effort and organized its own ships.

By contrast, most American Zionist leaders opposed taking any steps that might upset America's ally, Great Britain. Veteran U.S.

Zionist leader Rabbi Stephen Wise told Ben-Gurion that he (Wise) was urging American Jews "to march shoulder to shoulder with England in the war against fascism," and he could not deviate from this position even if the Zionist cause suffered." Wise's Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs claimed that the Irgun's aliyah bet ships "resemble concentration camps."

Ben-Gurion, too, aimed his share of barbs at the Revisionists. In his June 1939 letter to Brandeis, he claimed that the food and hygiene on the Irgun's ships were unsatisfactory and that Mossad l'Aliya Bet was doing a much

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Dr. Medoff is director of The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, www.WymanInstitute.org.

Summer camps set to combat swine flu

BY YAFFI SPODEK

Forget bug bites and poison ivy — this season, it's the spread of the H1N1 'swine flu' virus that many camps are trying to tackle.

More so than the classroom, camp conditions may be a prime breeding ground for the spread of swine flu, as campers often live in

close, communal quarters, sharing bunk beds, bathrooms, food and, inevitably, germs. As schools let out and summer camps prepare for an influx of campers and staff, precautionary measures are being taken to keep everyone as healthy as possible.

At Camp Morasha in Lakewood, Pa — home to over 500 campers, including close to 300 from Long

Island — the directors and nurses are taking no chances as they gear up for opening day, scheduled for June 29. In a letter sent out last week, parents and staff were notified of a new, stricter protocol regarding Morasha's health policy for the summer.

"In coordination with the Pennsylvania and Wayne County Health

Departments and in accordance with the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) recommendations, our camp medical staff requires that any staff member or camper who has been diagnosed with the flu, or has exhibited flu-like symptoms within the 48 hours prior to coming to camp, must remain at home," the letter said.

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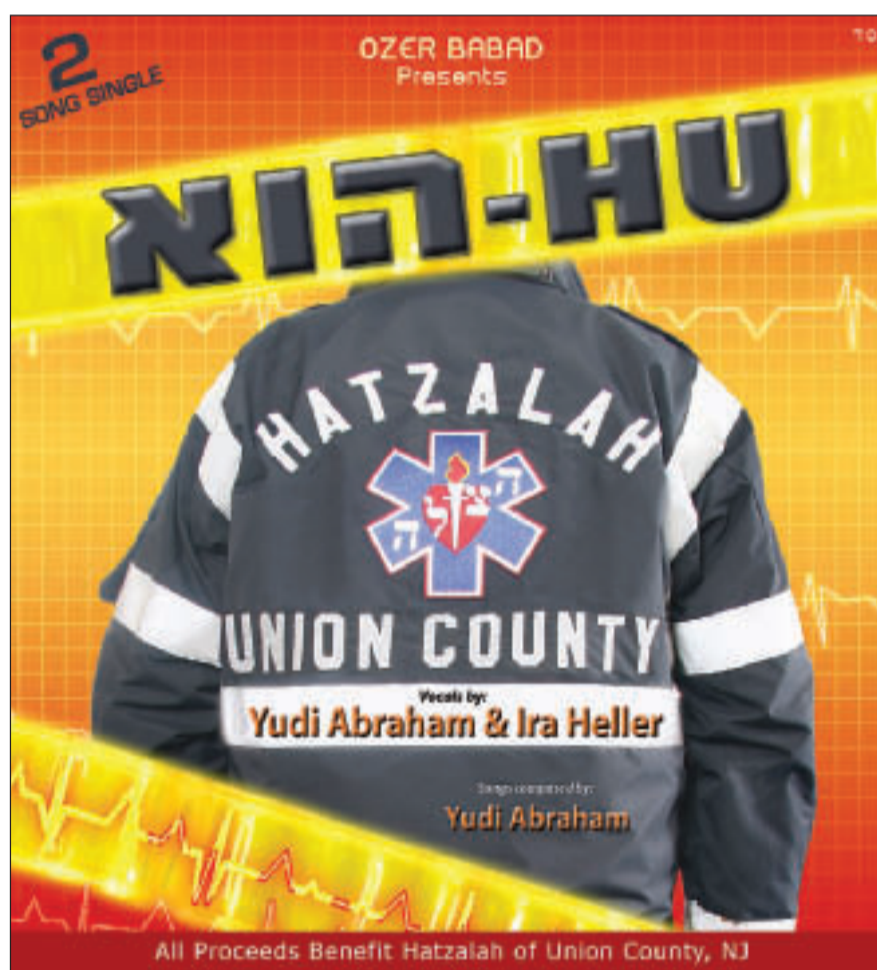


Image courtesy hatzalahofunioncounty.org

Cover art of two-song disc professionally recorded as a fund-raising tool.

The new charity box: no coins, just tunes

BY MAYER FERTIG

For as long as there has been modern Jewish music, there have been Jewish music fundraising concerts. Then, in 1988, the ante was upped when the first Lincoln Center benefit for HASC (Hebrew Academy for Special Children) was professionally recorded and later sold as an additional fundraiser. More than 20 years later,

against the backdrop of an economy that is leaving many charities whistling in the wind, two organizations have released to the public brand new music, professionally produced, recorded and distributed, in order to raise funds not for the performers but for the charity.

Several weeks ago a former member of Hatzalah of the Five Towns and the

See CHARITY, Page 11

Buy one, bin one

Eliezer Project partners with JCC to help food pantry

BY YAFFI SPODEK

On your next grocery run, be on the lookout for the newest item now on display at local supermarkets — a bin to collect canned and boxed non-perishable food items for donation to a food pantry.

The Eliezer Project has teamed up with the Jewish Community Center of the greater Five Towns in an effort to replenish the JCC food pantry, which has suffered from an increase in demand and a decrease in donations. By strategically placing bins in several local supermarkets, both organizations hope to assist needy neighbors who cannot

afford to pay for kosher food.

"We are instituting a program in which we will be placing receptacles past the checkout counter of each of the main food purveyors in the community, and patrons will be encouraged to donate food specifically purchased to be deposited into the bin," explained Sam Bergman, executive director of The Eliezer Project. "We are hoping it will make a serious contribution to the needs of our clients and the rest of the community."

"The growing number of families in crisis makes this an absolute necessity," said Rina Shkolnik, executive director of

See ELIEZER PROJECT, Page 9

THE KOSHER BOOKWORM

"The Accidental Zionist" by Rabbi Ian Pear

Let me start by saying that this is a very informal, somewhat irreverent book — zany at times about subjects that are dead serious. To put a smile on the face of an impending disaster takes some doing, and in this Rabbi Ian Pear succeeds.

The basic premise of the book is that we, the



Alan Jay Gerber

Jewish people, are in deep trouble. Surprise! When aren't we in trouble? In good times we have trouble and in bad times we have tzores. What's new about that?

Well, in this book we are presented with a series of challenges that reflect the views of a

See BOOKWORM, Page 10

Streit's Matzo to sport Kof-K in 2010

BY MAYER FERTIG

The Kof-K logo will make an encore appearance on the Streit's Matzo box for Passover 2010, alongside the Soloveichik kashrus seal that has been on Streit's products since

the 1950s. The change is a result of the ban on Streit's matzo products enacted by the Vaad HaRabonim of Queens and



Pesach.

the Vaad HaKashrus of the Five Towns and Far Rockaway just before last

Although Rabbi Moshe Soloveichik had been the sole hashgacha on Streit's matzo since 2007, the two community organizations claimed their sudden action in

2009 was necessary due to Streit's lack of a nationally known hashgacha.

Rabbi Yosef Eisen, rabbinic coordinator of the Vaad of the Five Towns, pronounced the news about the Kof-K and Streit's to be "wonderful." Would he expect any problems

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Shabbat

Candlelighting: 8:11 p.m. ■ Shabbat ends: 9:22 p.m.
Torah reading: Parshat Korach

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IN

THE JEWISH STAR

Engagements

■Engagement of Yaakov Walden (Monsey, NY) & Rochel Segal (Brooklyn, NY) — June 16, 2009
 ■Engagement of Ary Nudell (Baltimore, MD) & Ahuva Rayman (Monsey, NY) — June 15, 2009

Bar Mitzvahs

■Bar Mitzvah of Avromy Streicher (Brooklyn, NY) — June 20, 2009
 ■Bar Mitzvah of Eitan Goldblatt (Monsey, NY) — June 15, 2009
 ■Bar Mitzvah of Yossi



Ary Nudell & Ahuva Rayman

Scheff (Brooklyn, NY) — June 15, 2009

Graduation

■Graduation of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Semicha Class of 2009 (New York) — June 21, 2009



A new little Kohen

A new little Kohen, Yosef Eliyahu ben Baruch HaCohen Caplan, was born on Monday morning, June 15, 2009 to Baruch and Aliza Weiner Caplan of Far Rockaway. His bris was on June 22 at Sh'or YOSHUV where the sandek was Rabbi Naftali Jaeger, the Rosh HaYeshiva.



Yosef Eliyahu ben Baruch HaCohen Caplan

Yosef Eliyahu was named in memory of both ancestors and Gedolim — Yosef for the Ben Ish Chai, Hakham Yosef Chaim MeBagdad, and for his paternal third great-grandfather, Joseph A. Balinky; and Eliyahu for the Vilna Gaon, Rabbi Elijah ben Shlomo Zalman, as well as for his maternal great-grandfather, Elias Weiner, and his paternal sixth great-grandfather, Eliash Bochur.

He has been warmly welcomed by big sisters Esther Malka, Chana Rivka, and Sarah; cousins Gwen, Owen, and Shawn; Uncle Hillel, Aunt Joann, Aunt Elana; and grandparents, Neil and Judi Langer-Surnamer Caplan of Long Beach, and Judith Marks and Mordechai Weiner of Cedarhurst.

To view entire galleries, please visit www.onlysimchas.com



That's Life

Edited by Miriam L. Wallach

Dear That's Life,

I have a confession to make.

After printing a top 10 list of songs one should be embarrassed to have on a play list, I have done something that goes way beyond buying just one embarrassing song. On the "I Can't Believe You Did That" list of embarrassing things to do, going where I did qualifies as owning every song by Tom Jones, Cher, WHAM and Air Supply and listening to them while wearing a "Frankie Goes to Hollywood" T-shirt. And while I did not believe I could run into anyone, there they were: a group of women from the neighborhood, excited to be there while I was praying for obscurity. I had been outed. Once you see people you know, you have no choice but to come clean. And so, in a moment of true honesty, I need to admit

that yes: I went to the Chicago/Earth, Wind and Fire concert at Madison Square Garden last week and yes: I had a blast.

No matter what the problem is, no one can help you until you admit you have a problem. But the truth is, there were 50,000 or so of us who had a 'problem' that night, dancing to "Boogie Wonderland" like our lives depended on it, singing "Saturday in the Park" like we were actually partying on the great lawn itself, or unabashedly belting out "You're the Inspiration" at the top of our lungs. For some reason or another, life seemed to stop that night and no matter what was going on in the economy or in Iran or in any two-state solution, thousands of people left their worries at the door and came to have a good time — and that they did.

Truthfully, I am a classic rock kind of gal. Other concerts I've attended include Rush,

Green Day, The Stones, Billy Joel, Eagles (too many times to admit), Styx, and Dave Matthews. The night in question was an aberration from my norm. But it felt very right, although I was worried that someone would take away my daughter's REM concert shirt as a punishment for my wrongdoing. Being part of a 70s karaoke night — and for all intents and purposes that's what it was — was much more fun than I anticipated it would be and I found myself laughing out loud, unprepared for all of the fun I'd be having or that I'd allowed myself to have.

So I confess — I was there — and I don't regret it. Good music is good music, even if the men on stage in muscle shirts are old enough to be my dad. And after all, one thing I can say for sure about the 70s is that it's a hard habit to break.

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A closer look at end-of-life care

BY YAFFI SPODEK

Rabbi Binyamin Mayefsky of Far Rockaway could not have predicted where life would take him once he graduated from Yeshiva University, but the father of two is happy to have found his calling as a chaplain for the Hospice Care Network.

"As a chaplain, I go see Jewish patients and their families all over Queens, Nassau and Suffolk, usually in their own homes," said Rabbi Mayefsky, 31, explaining his role. "I visit them, I talk to them about their spiritual journeys, I say prayers with them, and I talk about how they're doing with their illness, and how it relates to them from a spiritual perspective."

The Hospice Care Network (HCN), which began in 1988, is a non-profit organization that services patients and their families by addressing their physical, emotional and spiritual needs during the end stages of life. The staff includes an interdisciplinary team of doctors, nurses, social workers, dieticians, pastoral care providers, bereavement counselors and trained volunteers. Three years ago, HCN began an Interfaith Outreach program that trains people to become advocates for their congregation. Recognizing that hospice can be a sensitive subject, HCN believes that by creating personal connections within religious organizations, they can better reach out to people.

After finishing his rabbinical courses at YU's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, Mayefsky attended the Healthcare Chaplaincy, an organization in New York City that trains people of different faiths to become chaplains. Following that, he studied Clinical Pastoral Education for several years and later secured his current job at HCN, where he has worked since September 2007. As the only rabbi on staff at HCN, Mayefsky is automatically assigned to all Jewish patients, but he visits people of different faiths as

well.

"So many of their experiences are similar, as far as talking to them about their illness, whether they're religious or not," he observed. However, "I find that with Jewish patients who are religious like I am, I'm able to make a connection with them based on that," he said.

Another part of Rabbi Mayefsky's job is centered on outreach to the rest of the Jewish community, where many are unaware of the services provided by HCN. "I go to different shuls and talk to rabbis and people in the community about what hospice does," he explained.

But it is not only the Jewish community that is largely unfamiliar with the concept of hospice care.

"My program began because we found that people came very late to hospice, from lack of knowledge about our services or because of the misconception about what it really is," said Angela Cesa, the Interfaith Outreach Coordinator for HCN. "It is not meant to be given in the last week of life. The criteria is that a person has a terminal illness that the doctor believes that, if it progresses the way it normally does, the person's life expectancy is six months or less. That's the time that a person could enter a hospice."

The Interfaith Outreach program aims to help people in those earlier stages, rather than in their last few weeks of life. "We had the idea that when people are struggling with terminal illness, they turn to their faith community," explained Cesa, an interfaith minister. "If there are key people who know about hospice and can give that information, we have a better chance of having those people enter hospice at a more appropriate time... We try to reach out to different churches, synagogues, mosques, temples of any kind and we have representatives in almost all of the faith communities now."

Cesa also clarified that hos-

pice is not a place, but a way of caring for people. While 90 percent of patients receive hospice care in their own homes, there are freestanding hospice facilities available, as well as treatment in nursing homes and hospitals for those who may not have family or others to care for them in their final days.

Since The Interfaith Outreach program began in 2007, 50 lay people have been trained to become advocates for their congregations. Each is required to have the approval of the leader of their religious community, and to pledge confidentiality. Following that, they participate in a five-hour training course given by Cesa or by one of the chaplains on staff.

"The advocate is like a familiar presence, someone you can talk to who will hold your confidence," Cesa said. "You are more likely to turn to someone you know. It's very low-key. For example, if an advocate knew someone in their congregation dealing with a terminal illness, they could very gently advocate for that congregation, hoping to get the dialogue going with families that might need it."

Close to 20 years ago, Barbara Prins, a HCN-trained advocate, began working as a client visitor, providing respite assistance to people who were caring for sick relatives in their homes.

"I have always been in favor of it, because my father was involved in it in Florida, so I know firsthand how they can be of help," said Prins, a member of the Central Synagogue of Nassau County, a Reform congregation in Rockville Centre. "If people bring it up, I am happy to tell them what I know. More and more people are living longer and need help, and since I maintained contact with hospices for a few years and I saw that Reverend Cesa was part of it, I was glad to come for a refresher course in the training."

"I don't get paid, but I accept people's gratitude," Prins added. "It's my privilege to help them in any way I can because

it's the Jewish way and I like to... As much as the doctors can do, sometimes patients need hospice care more."

The religious component of hospice care is an integral part of HCN's work. "When people die in other places, they don't often have the benefit of the intense spiritual connections that we can give them," explained Cesa. "We can facilitate their own spiritual leaders coming to visit them. Rabbi Mayefsky is available around the clock to speak to them."

For more information on HCN and to learn how you can become an advocate for your congregation, visit www.hospice-care-network.org.



Rabbi Binyamin Mayefsky of Far Rockaway works as a chaplain for the Hospice Care Network.

STREIT'S MATZO TO SPORT KOF-K IN 2010

Continued from Page One

next Pesach about allowing stores in the Five Towns and Far Rockaway to stock Streit's matzo? "Absolutely not," he said.

Rabbi Yoel Schoenfeld, who heads the Queens Vaad and led the way on the initial Streit's ban, was more cautious.

"Obviously, we're very delighted that they're taking a national hashgacha," he said, but "we'll have to see how they proceed. That's something that's going to have to be left to our kashruth committee."

Rabbi Moshe Soloveichik began supervising Streit's matzo production in 2001 following the death of his father, Rabbi Aharon Soloveichik, zt"l. The elder Rabbi Soloveichik, a brother to Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveichik, had overseen Streit's since the 1950s and was considered beyond reproach. The son was publicly embarrassed earlier this year to learn that he, apparently, was not.

"I received apologies," he said. "One rabbi called an hour and a half before Pesach [after] all the stores were closed down. I received an apology from another rabbi for not having called me to find out the details."

As for working with the Kof-K again, Rabbi Soloveichik said, "I've worked with them before and we worked well together... I guess [Streit's] feel it's a form of protection to have a national hashgacha from people who would say all kinds of things without having a real basis for it."

The Kof-K now has a business relationship with Streit's that makes him unable to comment, said Rabbi Daniel Senter.

For Streit's the addition of the Kof-K is purely a business decision, as it was to remove it after the 2006 baking season.

"I have spoken to [the two vaads] and I'm still not sure why they did what they did," said

Alan Adler, one of the cousins who operate the company founded by his great-grandfather, Aron Streit. "I asked, 'Is there any way to get Streit's into the stores without a national hashgacha,' and they only responded, 'If you have a national hashgacha the problem will go away.'"

Adler said the added expense would not cause the price of matzo to go up. The company estimates the ban last Pesach, which Adler called "an ambush," had cost Streit's about \$200,000 in lost orders.

Prominent local rabbonim were critical of the Vaad of the Five Towns' sudden move against Streit's and promised to do a better job of policing its activities.

Consumers were supportive when the ban became public, said Adler. "Almost everybody we heard from was outraged by what the vaads did and came out to support us."

"I got e-mails from people who never bought Streit's before and after this incident they went out and bought Streit's for the first time. That's the kind of support we had," he revealed.

Conspiracy theorists — and there are many — predicted Streit's would be "forced" to engage the services of the Orthodox Union, which is both the largest kashrus organization in the United States, and Rabbi Schoenfeld's employer, but the matzo maker chose to renew its relationship with the Teaneck, NJ-based Kof-K.

"We already had a history and an established relationship with the Kof-K," Adler explained. "Had we been writing on a clean slate we might have made a different decision." No slight to the OU was intended or should be inferred, he stressed. He also disputed the notion of a conspiracy to maneuver Streit's into buying additional kashruth supervision.

"I do not believe that the major agencies were behind [the

ban]. I don't think they are morally inclined to engage in this kind of activity to drum up business. We have good working relationships with the national agencies. They are our friends, not our adversaries," Adler said. He added that since Streit's has never paid for supervision from local organizations such as the Vaad HaKashrus of the Five Towns and Far Rockaway, or the Vaad of Queens, there is no cause to suspect that financial motives were behind the ban.

"I think it shows a loss for the people who have to rely on the Vaad's and have lost confidence in them," said Adler. "For Streit's it's a victory because our customers gave us overwhelming support and told us that our product was acceptable to them just the way it was."

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OPINION

The other crowds in Tehran

Editorial

Angry crowds in the streets of Tehran are nothing new. Most of the time in recent decades those crowds have entertained themselves by burning American flags and shouting catchy slogans like "Death to America," which the crowds usually refer to fondly as "The Great Satan." That's a charming term coined by the late, unlamented Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini. He first used it in a speech on Nov. 5, 1979, a day after 52 Americans were taken hostage at the U.S. Embassy; an ordeal that would continue for 444 days until the clock finally ran out on the useless Carter administration. (Yes, kids — that's the same Carter who showed signs of Stockholm syndrome, in which hostages identify with their captors, when he recently urged Europe to take Hamas off the terrorism list.)

A year earlier the Iranian revolution culminated with the overthrow of the Shah. Amazingly, millions of Iranians then voted to institute a theocracy. That's when Americans first latched onto the notion that most

Iranians are nuts. Now, however, their children have apparently concluded that granting total control of their country to aged religious leaders who hate everyone who's not just like them was a bad idea. So, they have now taken to the streets.

Just how much difference there is between the first set of crowds and the new, second set is arguable. It doesn't seem like it would take much prompting to set these new crowds to work burning American flags and denouncing the U.S. and Israel, but a CNN interview with a protester the other day offered food for thought:

Mohammad: "Yes. Let me tell you something. For about three decades our nation has been humiliated and insulted by this regime. Now Iranians are united again one more time after 1979 Revolution. We are a peaceful nation. We don't hate anybody. We want to be an active member of the international community. We don't want to be iso-

lated... We don't deny the Holocaust. We do accept Israel's rights. And actually, we want — we want severe reform on this structure. This structure is not going to be tolerated by the majority of Iranians. We need severe reform, as much as possible."

A government can easily whip up hatred — read any good Palestinian textbooks lately? It's worth wondering if the situation in Iran regarding attitudes toward Israel might not be irredeemable after all. After all, Iran is a Muslim country but its people are not Arabs; they are Persian.

With all this in mind it's hard to know how to hope it all turns out. If Khomeini, the current ayatollah, and his man Ahmadinejad crush the current unrest then their true colors, and the true threat they pose, nuclear and otherwise, will finally be revealed for the entire world to see. Or, if the theocracy is truly overthrown, perhaps real change can come to Iran, including an end to its bankrolling of Hamas and Hezbollah. That would be good for everyone.

Letters

That's Life awards

To the Editor:

The Five Towns Auxiliary Police would like to express our real thanks for your giving us a Creativity Award! (That's Life; June 19, 2009) We are proud to say that our commanding officer, Lieutenant Gluck, is the creative force behind the Auxiliary Car Staging program. To request that a car be parked near your home, please contact us by visiting our website at www.FiveTownsAuxiliaryPolice.org. We do feel it is important to note that our cars are not always unmanned. In fact, we run daily and nightly patrols across the Five Towns.

We are also happy to say that the Auxiliary Car Staging program is far from our only genius idea. In fact, we have numerous, if less visible, new ideas that have been implemented recently. For example, we have equipped each of our cars with a defibrillator since we are frequently the only official presence at large events; we have provided each officer with an off-duty beeper so that we can quickly respond to community emergencies; our officers have received training in gang culture and gang recognition to understand warning signs; and we will shortly unveil a new portable Command Post to make us more visible at community events.

Looking forward to always sharing good news with you,
SGT. DAVID SPIER
Five Towns Unit
Nassau County Auxiliary Police

Thanks for hosting HALB

To the Editor,

Kudos, once again! Thank you so much for another very interesting and thorough tour of the newspaper plant. The parents who attended gave me such positive feedback. A personal thank you for explaining that 'errors do happen,' even within a professional setting. I had some very upset students who realized there were errors in the final, final drafts of their student paper! You made their day...and mine too. Also thank you for commending my students on their "mostly perfect behavior." I am a big believer in positive reinforcement. Have a wonderful summer. I will continue to read your paper on-line each week.

BINA KRIEGER
Coordinator of Enrichment
Hebrew Academy of Long Beach

Shulamith closing costs

To the Editor:

Having a school lose a \$2.5 mil-

lion deposit because the school does not have the funds to close — and not trying to cancel the contract if and when they had notice that the school very well may not have the funds to close — is a terrible breach of fiduciary duty (Bnot Shulamith wins zoning for Inwood campus; June 19, 2009).

Parents would prefer to have the deep pockets of the board cover this cost than have it cost the Brooklyn students their community school.

If there are parents in the Long Island community who are willing to negotiate an amicable solution to this dispute (instead of endless litigation), I would welcome the opportunity. They are welcome to contact me at malkyhome@gmail.com for contact with the Brooklyn parent's group.

Brooklyn parents have no interest in having the Long Island campus suffer, but we also want to preserve the school in Brooklyn that we have had and enjoyed for over 70 years.

STUART WEICHSEL
Brooklyn

First Nazis, then poverty

To the Editor:

The Jewish Star did a wonderful job reporting on my son's documentary about Holocaust survivors living in poverty (Surviving surviving; June 19, 2009). Less than two days

after the release of the paper, the video on the Vimeo website had experienced 499 hits. That is an astounding response! It says a lot about your readers...they read and respond to your paper. Let's hope we have contributed to helping relieve the misery these very special people are experiencing.

HAROLD KLEIN
Woodmere

Editor's note: readers can view "Surviving surviving" online at www.vimeo.com/5064899

CLARIFICATION

Tuition payments for the 2009-10 school year made in advance for students at Bnot Shulamith of Long Island will be applied to that school, and tuition payments for students who attend Shulamith School for Girls in Brooklyn will belong to that school, if and when the two become separate institutions on Sept. 1 as scheduled. There was room for misunderstanding of that point in an article in the June 19, 2009 issue (Bnot Shulamith wins zoning for Inwood campus). It made reference to an understanding between the current Shulamith board and Jacob Abilevitz, the president of a boys' yeshiva in Brooklyn who has volunteered to also take on responsibility for Shulamith in Brooklyn when the executive director, Rabbi Moshe Zwick, moves to the school in the Five Towns, as he is scheduled to do.

PARSHAT KORACH

Me, or your own eyes?

BY RABBI AVI BILLET

There is a common theme in three verses at the beginning of the book of Bamidbar, which is echoed in our parsha: "V'ha'zar hakarev yumat." (Bamidbar 1:51, 3:10, 3:38, and in 18:7) Translation: the stranger who comes close [to the workings of the mishkan] will die. In other words, if you have not been appointed by G-d to do specific holy tasks related to the workings, packing and unpacking of the mishkan, don't do it, because you'll die.

With this in mind, the premise for the showdown with Korach seems odd. Korach and his cohorts approach Moshe saying, "You have gone too far! All the people in the community are holy, and G-d is with them. Why are you setting yourselves above G-d's congregation?"

We can speculate as to what they were complaining about. Perhaps their complaint was over the spies incident, or over the decree to be in the desert for 40 years. The people did not understand why they could not enter the land. Perhaps they were complaining about leadership, of who should be in charge, and who had the rights to do specific tasks.

The difference between Moshe and, say, a rabbi, is that Moshe was appointed to his task by G-d. It is hard to approach Moshe's hiring committee to say He did a lousy job in His search process.

Regardless, there are a number of ways that Moshe could have proven his appointment came from G-d, and that only he and Aharon were chosen to fill these roles. If Elijah on Mt. Carmel could defeat over 400 false prophets through a heavenly sign and cause the entire nation to scream out "The Lord, He is the G-d!" then certainly Moshe could cause believers to see that G-d had chosen him!

And yet Moshe suggests that Korach, along with his 250 followers, should take fire pans and place k'toret on them, an act clearly punishable with death! How could he have them do this, knowing they will die as a result?

Ramban suggests G-d Himself told Moshe to use this test. Rashi and others suggest this is the ultimate test — if a person can

emerge unscathed from burning k'toret, that person may be designated to serve in the mishkan, which is exactly what they wanted to do.

But Moshe knew differently. Every time G-d wanted to kill people, Moshe stood in His way and defended them until there was no longer a defense. Despite his inside information, how could he go ahead with it and not tell G-d this test is unacceptable?

Perhaps Moshe recognized that some people will not settle for anything less than what they want. They can be proven wrong, or they can see proof for what is true, but will still not believe it.

Groucho Marx once said, "Who are you going to believe? Me, or your own eyes?" From Moshe's perspective, Korach was not going to believe anything other than what his heart told him. Moshe could prove anything to Korach through miraculous events. Korach believed in G-d! He did not need convincing of that fact.

But Korach did need to prove to himself that he was as good as Aharon, and that Moshe was wrong. And Moshe, having gotten to know his brilliant, confrontational cousin (with perhaps some input from his siblings, Aharon and Miriam, who grew up with him), knew that Korach would settle for nothing less.

It is a strong person who can stand up to someone else. Stronger persons can recognize when the task at hand is out of their league. The strongest people pull out before the going gets worse, recognizing that some roles or some tasks are not for them to handle, are beyond their capabilities.

Some rise to the challenge and are successful. Others fail, and fail miserably. Korach's failure is one we do not wish on anyone, for failure can be a tremendous learning lesson from which the strong can only grow.

But his failure also came from an attitude that says, "I know better. And no one else could possibly be right, because I am Korach. And Korach knows."

With that attitude Korach fell to his death where he learned the ultimate lesson, one which the Midrash Tanchuma claims he proclaimed from his death pit: "Moshe speaks the truth, and his Torah is the truth."

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OPINION

FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BENCH

Wouldn't it be great ...

Two sisters each had issues that had hijacked their daily lives. One had a rare medical condition that affected her mobility and would require transfusions and/or surgery. The other was emotionally exhausted; her 42-year-old son couldn't seem to find a wife.



David Seidemann

Both sisters, while not belonging to the Lubavitcher Hasidic sect, attended weekly classes given by the wife of a Lubavitcher chasid. She, keenly aware of the sisters' suffering, suggested that the two women visit the grave of the late Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson. There they would find a book of letters authored by the late Rebbe over the years, generic letters sent to his flock addressing their individual and collective sufferings.

It couldn't hurt to make the trek to the Ohel, as the Rebbe's monument in Queens is known, the two sisters reasoned. They found The Book of Letters and sister number one opened the book. I heard this story from the woman herself, a client of mine, who shared it with

me after she read the column I wrote last week about my grandfather.

"I opened the book," she said "precisely to a letter that read as follows: 'My dear daughter, I know how concerned you are regarding your health. But do not fear. All will be well. Your healing will be

divine and will not come from any doctor of medicine.'" She cried, closed the book and handed it to her sister. Her sister opened the book precisely to a page, to a letter, that read: "My dear daughter, I know how concerned you are regarding your child, but do not fear, I know the girl's family. They are wonderful. You will be making a simcha soon."

Four days later the sister with the medical condition arrived at her doctor's office for a scheduled appointment. The doctor was flabbergasted when he reviewed the medical images; that which was evident in the previous scan had disappeared. He had no explanation to offer her but posed a question: "I just gave you incredible, unexplainable news and you are not react-

ing," he said. "I would figure you would be dancing around this examination room."

"I knew four days ago," she replied. "I've been dancing for four days." She explained her odyssey to the Rebbe's grave and actually took her doctor there to show him the letter she had read that had changed her life.

Sister number two did not experience such immediate relief. Two months later she felt the need to escape to Israel for a few days to recharge her batteries and to pray in places utilized by so many for that purpose over thousands of years.

On the very weekend that she was away, her 42-year-old son called his mother's sister, his aunt, my client, the one whose medical condition had cleared up, and asked if he could bring a friend for Shabbos lunch. When they walked through the door that Shabbos morning, the aunt instinctively threw her arms around his guest, a beautiful girl named Chana, kissed her, and said, "Welcome to the family."

That Saturday night the aunt received the phone call they had all been waiting for. The 42-year-old man was engaged. "Come over right

now — I'll make a L'Chaim and a vort," the aunt said, offering to make an engagement party in her home on no notice.

"No, not now," her nephew responded. "First we have to go to the Rebbe's grave in Queens." "But you aren't Lubavitch," said the aunt. "I know," he replied, "but my bride is Lubavitch and we need to go to the Rebbe's grave first."

Once again the Rebbe's words were true. For the bride was indeed a wonderful girl and the Rebbe, as the initial letter said, did know her family. Her paternal grandfather and the late Rebbe of blessed memory were well known to one another, having shared many experiences in their younger years.

But here's where the story gets creepy. The bride's paternal grandfather and the groom's paternal grandfather knew each other as young yeshiva students in the early

1900s. In fact, they were chavrusas, study partners, in the famed Ponevezh Yeshiva. When they parted ways so many, many years ago, they thanked each other for the spiritual

growth they allowed the other to attain. They thanked each other for being best friends. They had a picture taken together that the families still maintain. But most importantly, they said to each other, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if one day one of my grandchildren would marry one of yours?" That is how they parted company, only to be reunited generations later.

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



I'M THINKING

Thank you, Jeremiah Wright

Your comment about being prevented from talking to your friend Barack Obama by the Jews was nothing short of anti-Semitic blabber, but you opened up a Pandora's Box that has been sealed for too long.



Micah D. Halpern

It is for the correction made to your comment for which I am most grateful. By saying that you misspoke and meant to say "Zionists," not "Jews," you implied that it is the Zionist who is the danger to our society, more so than the Jew.

According to Wright there exists a simple and obvious delineation between Jews and Zionists. Jews are OK, Zionists are trouble makers. Wright has bought into the Ahmadinejad line. The Iranian leader and many of his colleagues in the Muslim world never refer to Israel by name. In place of Israel euphemisms are used, the Zionist state, the Zionist entity, or simply, the Zionists.

The Zionist is differentiated and separate from the Jews who are considered interlopers. Zionists are in charge of Israel. Zionists are gobbling up Palestinian land. Zionists are the settlers. Zionism is the external force, colonizing the land, ideologically encroaching on Islam and the Palestinians. Zionism is a foreign transplant of European nationalism superimposed on the Middle East causing turmoil and conflict and serving no good. It is the Zionists who are perpetrating a Holocaust on the Palestinians.

In the culture in which Jeremiah Wright thrives, Zionism is politically correct shorthand for Jew hatred.

Many call this pastor by the title Reverend. I cannot do that. "Reverend" means "respected." A Reverend is a person who is respected, revered. "Pastor" means "leader of a group." Jeremiah Wright is undeni-

ably a group leader, but he does not have my respect.

In the 1970s the United Nations passed the "Zionism is Racism" resolution and Vanessa Redgrave called Jewish youth advocating for Israel "Zionist Hoodlums." I remember protesting Regrave's statement by proudly strutting a T-shirt that read "I am a Zionist hoodlum." Years later the resolution was repealed, not the hatred.

Zion is one of the many biblical names given to Jerusalem. Zionism is a movement. Zionism is the Jewish movement to recreate a state in the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people. The original objective of Zionism was to normalize Jewish life by allowing Jews to be the masters of their own destiny and creators of the Jewish future. Zionism meant that Jews would be responsible for their own safety.

Zionists believe that Israel has the right to exist, the right to flourish and the obligation to exercise power in determining Israel's destiny. A Zionist is a Jew, there is no way to distinguish Jew from Zionist or Zionists from Jews. Anyone who claims to be anti-Zionist is a hater of Jews. Anyone who supports Zionism is a friend of Jews and the Jewish state.

Jeremiah Wright, Israel is here to stay. Israel is not going away. And the Zionists who

live in Israel will continue to live and to work, to create and to innovate and enhance the lives of all of us in the areas of

medicine and technology and agriculture.

Tirade away if you must. The Zionists have withstood

worse.

Micah D. Halpern is a columnist and a social and political

commentator and the author, most recently, of THUGS. He maintains The Micah Report at www.micahhalpern.com

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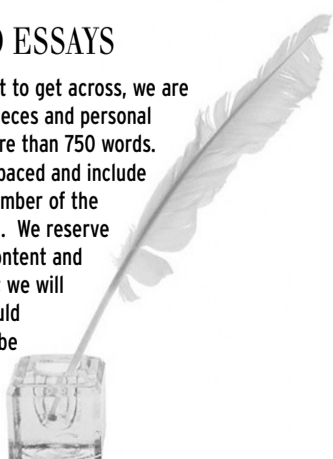
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OPINIONS AND ESSAYS

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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.

Five Towns - The Five Towns Shul Softball League for men is expanding from 8 teams to 12 teams. The games are played on Sunday mornings during the months of July and August. Any shul that would like to join should please contact Eli Dworetzky, the commissioner, as soon as possible, at tiredcpa@aol.com.

Long Beach - The Young Israel of Long Beach will be holding a Building Renovation Campaign Kickoff Breakfast on Sunday, June 28 at 9 a.m. in the shul's social hall, 120 Long Beach Boulevard. The guest speaker will be the Honorable Peter T. King, a Member of the U.S. House of Representative who will be speaking on "Iran: A Threat To The United States, Israel & The World." All proceeds will go to the refurbishments of the shul. For more information, please call (516) 431-2404.

Cedarhurst - The JCC of the Greater Five Towns is offering a Mahjong review class on Monday, June 29, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. The fee is \$20 and pre-registration is required. For more information and to register, please call Sheryl at (516) 569-6733, ext. 222.

Manhattan - American Friends of The Max and Ruth Schwartz Hesder Yeshiva Of Sderot will hold their Annual Awards Dinner on Tuesday, June 30 at The Puck Building, 295 Lafayette Street in New York City. Among the guests of honor will be Mrs. Ruth Simon of Lawrence. Please respond by June 22 to ensure program recognition. For more information, please call (212) 274-8900 or e-mail dinner@sderot.org.

Oceanside - The Friedberg JCC Baby Boomer Club is hosting a wine tasting on Wednesday, July 1 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Cost is \$10 per person and additional fees may apply. The club is for those born between '46 and '64. The JCC is located at 15 Neil Court. For more information please call (516) 766-4341 or e-mail aschiller@friedbergjcc.org.

Lawrence - Kulanu Young Leadership Division presents a movie night on the lawn on Tuesday, July 7 at 8 p.m. at the home of Ariel and Baruch Glaubach, 15 Albro Lane in Lawrence. Hot dogs, popcorn, snacks and drinks will be served. The cost is \$54 per couple, with proceeds going directly to support Kulanu programs and services for children with disabilities. In case of rain, the event will take place on Wednesday, July 8. To join the Kulanu Young Leadership Division, please e-mail movienight@kulanukids.org or call (516) 569-3083.

Oceanside - The Friedberg JCC is hosting a Bereavement Support Group for recent widows and widowers, beginning on Wednesday July 8, from 5-6 p.m., and running for 8 weeks. The group will focus on the healing process and ways to cope with grief. A brief interview with the social worker is required prior to the first meeting to determine proper placement. The cost is \$120. For more information or to join, please call Rachel Bruckenstein, LMSW, at (516) 766-4341 ext. 131.

Oceanside - Friedberg JCC Lecture is hosting an event called "Together Again: Great Teams of the Silver Screen" on Wednesday, July 8 at 2:00 p.m. Join film historian Phil Harwood look at romantic teams from the golden age of Hollywood to the present. The event costs \$6. For more information, please call Maddy Levi at (516) 634-4154 or e-mail mlevi@friedbergjcc.org.

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

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.

Oceanside - The Friedberg JCC is hosting "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, "The Baseball Talmud," a historical narration of Major League Jewish Baseball in America. Cost is \$6. For more information, please call (516) 634-4154 or e-mail mlevi@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. The presentation will include information about Mercy Medical Center's Geriatric Assessment Program, nutrition, prevention of falls, and the affects that an aging parent has on 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.



Photo by Miriam L. Wallach

Waddling home for Shabbos

It was Friday afternoon, close to sundown; the drivers may have been in a hurry but the Canada geese were not. This image was captured in Woodmere as the gaggle made its leisurely way across Saddle Ridge Road with what appeared to be an alert parent bringing up the rear.

Lawrence-Cedarhurst and Bnei Akiva North America are happy to announce the launching of a new Bnei Akiva chapter in the Five Towns. The chapter will be open for 4th and 5th grade boys and girls of the entire community. Activities for boys and girls will be separate and will be led by our Bat Ami girls, Alona and Nofar. YILC is located at 8 Spruce Street in Cedarhurst. For more information, please call (516) 569-3324.

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 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 moshehkaufman@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.

West Hempstead - Bereavement Support Group for widows and widowers will be held every Wednesday in the JCC of West Hempstead, from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m. There is a \$140 fee. The JCC is located at 711 Dogwood Ave in West Hempstead. To join, please call Rachel at (516) 766-4341, ext. 131.

ONGOING EVENTS

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IN MY VIEW

Continued from Page One

better job. He described how it was using small motor boats to meet the ships several miles out in the Mediterranean and then taking the passengers to shore in small groups. But if American Zionist leaders were opposed to aliyah bet, why was Ben-Gurion offering Brandeis all these details of the operations? The standard biographies of Brandeis make no mention of him breaking from the rest of the American Jewish leadership on the aliyah bet issue.

The recent discovery of Ben-Gurion's letter to Brandeis prompted my colleagues and I at The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies to dig deeper into the question. Our findings were surprising and significant.

Another clue that galvanized our search appeared in the published letters of Brandeis, edited by Prof. Melvin Urofsky. In a letter to his American Zionist colleague Robert Szold on May 23, 1939 — just eight days after the publication of the British White Paper, severely restricting Jewish immigration to Palestine — Brandeis wrote: "The landing of the 308 'illegal' immigrants was a dramatic event, coming at this time." Brandeis's use of quotation marks around the word "illegal" hinted that he did not regard them as illegal at all.

An additional hint may be found in the 1981 memoirs of Yitshaq Ben-Ami, an Irgun activist who was deeply involved in the aliyah bet operations. Ben-Ami described a meeting between an Irgun supporter and Brandeis, in Washington in early 1939. According to Ben-Ami, Brandeis, after hearing a report on the aliyah bet effort, remarked, "If I were a young man like you, I would be with you."

The smoking gun turned up in the papers of the late Isadore Breslau, the American Zionist movement's chief representative in Washington in 1939. The document, composed by Breslau, recounts a private meeting between Brandeis and six veteran American Zionist activists, at Brandeis's home, on July 31, 1939. Breslau wrote:

"Speaking on the question of immigration [Brandeis] said that Jews would continue to immigrate regardless of the White Paper. When someone suggested that it was illegal, he said that the Jewish people considered it legal in view of the fact that any attempt to curtail immigration was in violation of the terms of the Mandate; that it may be considered illegal by Great Britain but that we Jews considered it to be legal."

Thus one of the most distinguished and widely-respected jurists in America, a man who had devoted his life to upholding the law, was embracing an activity that America's closest ally regarded as criminal — and which even fellow-Zionists such as Stephen Wise opposed.

To understand this seeming paradox, one needs to recall that as a rising young legal star in Boston in the early 1900s, Brandeis earned the nickname "the people's attorney," because of his commitment to helping the disadvantaged and his heartfelt interest in how the law affected the lives of ordinary people. To him, the law was not just a collection of words on paper, but had to relate meaningfully to real life.

The British policy of keeping most Jews out of Palestine was "legal" only in the dry, technical sense; it was not legal in any sense that had to do with what was happening in the real world. A law that helped doom millions of innocent Jews could not be truly legal, not in the sense that Brandeis understood the law. And the modern day 'Underground Railroad' that was taking Jews out of the Nazi inferno and smuggling them to freedom and safety, could not be truly illegal.

SUMMER CAMPS SET TO COMBAT SWINE FLU

Continued from Page One

"The camper or staff member may come to camp after all symptoms have been resolved for 48 hours and are free of any fever-reducing medication for a full 48-hour period."

Flu-like symptoms, according to the letter, include fever of 100 degrees or higher, sore throat, nausea and/or vomiting, headache, cough, diarrhea and runny or stuffed nose. Any staff member or camper who exhibits these symptoms once they are in camp will be swabbed for the influenza-A virus. If they test positive they will be sent home until symptom and fever-free and off any fever-reducing medication.

"We understand that this may be a disappointing experience and an inconvenience for you," the letter continued. "However, we must consider the health and safety of the entire camp community. It is much better to have a delayed start for a camper or staff member than to risk introducing an easily transmittable illness to the camp population."

Morasha has also installed washing stations and Purell dispensers in key locations around the campus to keep germs at bay, specifically in the camp kitchen, where waiters will wear gloves and adhere to even stricter sanitary practices than usual. As another precaution, staff members will be trained during orientation to learn about the symptoms of the flu

so that campers who contract it can be properly isolated to prevent spread.

The policy outlined in the letter was developed by Morasha's head nurse, Karen Perl, who consulted with several doctors and nurses from other sleep away camps, many of which sent out similar health alerts.

Camp Lavi, which also hosts a large contingent of campers from the Five Towns area, sent a letter last week as well. Like Morasha, it is adhering to recommendations from the Pennsylvania health department, requiring sick campers to remain at home, and mandating that those who become sick will be sent home, if necessary.

"We are working closely with our medical and professional staff to minimize the chance of any viral illness spreading in camp," the Camp Lavi letter read. "As you know, the measures that are being put in place will minimize the potential of exposure, but cannot completely eliminate the risk."

Lavi's letter noted that the best way to limit the spread of any virus is by washing hands several times a day, leading the camp to install alcohol free hand sanitizer dispensers in each bunk as well as near the dining room, canteen and other heavily populated areas in the camp. Their staff will also be trained to recognize flu symptoms and prevent the spread as much as possible.

Sleep away camps are not alone

in trying to combat this critical health issue. HALB's Avnet Day Camp is also on a heightened health alert, according to Director Jack Tarzik.

"There's a Department of Health meeting on Tuesday that our health directors will attend and based on whatever information we get on Tuesday, we will be following up accordingly," he told The Jewish Star. "We also have a staff presentation on Wednesday and our health director will be addressing the staff in terms of what they need to be on the lookout for — what procedures to be following in camp, as preventative measures, and of course we will be communicating with parents should there be any situation that needs to be addressed."

In an attempt to address this timely health concern, the Foundation for Jewish Camps organized four conference calls on June 17 and 18, to convene a "virtual table of Jewish camp professionals to discuss, network and share what is taking place to campers and staff with flu-like symptoms in the camp setting," according to their recent newsletter. The letter also included a suggested list of ideas gleaned from the conference call, to help camps formulate policies and protocol regarding sick campers and staff members.

However, these precautionary measures may not have been implemented in time to help some camps avoid a flu outbreak. Just days into

the first summer session of Camp Ramah Darom in Georgia, dozens of campers came down with the flu last week, though it was unknown if it was the H1N1 strain of the virus. A similar outbreak occurred at Camp Daniel Boone in North Carolina, where dozens of boy scouts came down with the flu two weeks ago, and two kids tested positive for H1N1.

On June 16, Nassau County Health Commissioner Dr. Maria Torroella Carney announced the county's first death — a woman with confirmed H1N1 Influenza A virus, who recently gave birth. To date, Nassau County has had 74 confirmed cases of the H1N1 virus.

According to the Nassau health department, the same groups at risk for seasonal flu-related complications are considered to be at risk for H1N1 Influenza A virus-related complications. These high-risk groups include children under five years old, pregnant women, residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities, adults aged 65 and over, and people with underlying medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, hematological disorders, metabolic disorders, and immuno-suppression.

Dr. Carney advises individuals to protect themselves by washing hands often, covering nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing, avoiding contact with eyes, nose or mouth, avoiding close contact with sick people, and staying home when sick.



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SLICE OF LIFE

Red onions

BY EILEEN GOLTZ

First question I'm always asked about onions is why do they make you cry and what can you do about it. It's a chemical kind of answer. Onions contain complex sulfur compounds. When you cut into an onion, two chemical reactions take place. First cut into an onion releases its enzymes which comes in the form of strong odor. The cutting also releases alliin (sulfur gas) that irritates the eyes, nose and mouth and can make you look like a running faucet.

Many a cook has her own method for avoiding tears while peeling onions. I'm talking everything from wearing scuba goggles to peeling and chopping the onions while holding them under running water (not so easy to do). While the running water

trick actually works, it's not really practical. I have a better suggestion: Put the onion in the refrigerator until it's very cold and then chop it. Yes, this does take a little bit of prior planning but think of the tissue you'll save. Very cold onions seem to have less of an effect on the eyes and nose.

Onions come in a variety of colors: white, yellow, and red (or purple); flavors range from mild and sweet to strong and REALLY strong. Yellow onions are full flavored and work in just about any recipe. The red onion, my favorite, is a good choice when fresh or lightly cooked ones are called for (wonderful for grilling and char-broiling). White onions are typically used for milder dishes.

Most onions are sold loose by the pound, although some types are sold in five or 10 pound

bags. Look for onions that feel dry and solid all over, with no soft spots or sprouts. The neck should be tightly closed and the outer skin should have a crackly feel and a shiny appearance.

Onions should be stored in a cool, dry, open ventilated space away from bright light. Onions absorb moisture so please don't store them under the sink or near anything toxic. Also, it's not a great idea to store onions near potatoes because potatoes give off moisture and produce a gas that causes onions to spoil more quickly.

Like I said, red onions are my favorite and they are available year around. So while the red onion would be my first choice for the following recipes, any color can be substituted.

ITALIAN ZUCCHINI AND RED ONION (dairy or pareve)

Great hot or at room temperature

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 4 (1/2-inch-thick) slices red

onion (about 1 large)

- 2 pounds small zucchini, cut lengthwise into (1/4-inch-thick) slices

- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, divided
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1/3 cup (about 1 1/2 ounces) parmesan cheese (optional)
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh oregano (or 2 teaspoons dried)

Prepare grill to medium-high heat. Combine the olive oil, red onions and zucchini in a bowl. Sprinkle the mixture with 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper; toss gently to coat. Arrange vegetables in a single layer on a grill rack; grill 4 minutes on each side or until zucchini is tender and vegetables are well marked. Remove zucchini from grill; reduce grill heat to medium-low. Grill onion an additional 5 minutes or until tender. Combine zucchini, onion, and vinegar in a large bowl, tossing to coat. Sprinkle with remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt, remaining 1/4

teaspoon pepper, cheese, and oregano. Serves 4 to 6.

MEXICAN RED ONION SOUP (pareve or meat)

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 6 large red onions thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon of sugar
- 1 teaspoon of oregano, dried, crumbled
- 3/4 teaspoon ground coriander
- 3/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- 1 1/2 tablespoons flour
- 7 cups of vegetable or chicken stock
- 1/2 teaspoon of salt
- 1/4 teaspoon of pepper

In a stockpot or 5-quart Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over low heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring frequently, for about 30 minutes or until softened and slightly colored. Sprinkle the onions with the sugar, oregano, coriander, cumin, allspice and cinnamon; cook for another 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the red wine vinegar and orange juice and cook for another 4 minutes. Sprinkle with the flour and cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Stir in the stock and bring to a boil over moderate heat. Adjust the heat so that the mixture simmers gently, cover, and cook 20 minutes longer. Stir in the salt and pepper.

GARLIC WHITE BEANS WITH RED ONIONS AND SPINACH (pareve)

- 2 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 bunches spinach (about 1 pound), washed
- 2 15-ounce cans white beans (cannellini beans), rinsed and drained
- salt to taste
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 red onion, peeled, halved and sliced
- freshly ground black pepper

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the red onion, season lightly with salt and pepper and cook for 2 minutes. Add the garlic and continue cooking until the onion softens, about 5 minutes. Turn up the heat and cook until the onion turns light brown on the edges. Lower the heat to medium, add the white beans and cook until the beans are thoroughly heated. Add the spinach and balsamic vinegar. Continue cooking until the spinach is just wilted. Adjust the seasonings and serve. Serves 4.

RED ONION TART (dairy or pareve)

Delicious warm or cold

- 3 tablespoons butter or margarine



- 1 lb 10 oz red onions, sliced very thinly
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 fl oz white wine
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme (1/2 teaspoon dried)
- Salt and pepper
- 12 oz puff pastry
- 4 fresh figs, quartered (optional)
- walnut oil (optional)

Preheat the oven to 425. Grease a 9 inch tart pan with butter. Slice the onions very thinly. Melt the butter in a large frying pan and cook the onions for about 10 minutes until very soft, take care not to brown the onions. Add the wine, vinegar and thyme and cook until all the liquid has evaporated. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Cut 2 discs of pastry to the size of the tart dish. Cover the pastry with the cooked onions mixture. Place a disc of pastry over the onion mixture and tuck the edges in. Prick the top of the pastry all over with a fork, (this will allow the steam to escape during cooking and therefore keeps the pastry crisp). Bake in the preheated oven for 15 minutes or until golden and risen. Place a large plate over the tart dish, invert and shake firmly to release the tart. Serve warm with the figs and drizzle with a little walnut oil. Serves 4.

GREEN BEANS WITH CARAMELIZED RED ONIONS (pareve or meat)

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 medium red onions (about 1 3/4 pounds), cut into 16 wedges each
- 1 pound green beans, trimmed
- 1/2 cup vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 teaspoons light brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden, 10 to 15 minutes. Meanwhile, bring a large saucepan of lightly salted water to a boil. Add green beans and cook, uncovered, until crisp-tender, 6 to 7 minutes. Drain. Add broth to the onions; cook for 5 minutes. Stir in vinegar, brown sugar, salt and pepper. Add the beans, cover and cook for 2 minutes. Serve warm. Serves 8.

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Homeland security grant in Far Rockaway

BY THE JEWISH STAR

Beis Medrash Heichal Dovid, the post-high school program affiliated with Yeshiva Darchei Torah, is one of five Jewish institutions in Queens that will split grants worth more than \$300,000 from the Non-profit Security Grant Program.

Congressman Anthony Weiner (D-Brooklyn and Queens) made the announcement Tuesday at a meeting at the Israel Center of Conservative Judaism on 73rd Avenue and 167th Street in Queens.

Sixty-one religious organizations in New York City will receive funding. The security awards come just weeks after New York City police and federal agents thwarted planned bombings at shuls in Riverdale, in the Bronx.

"We sent in an application and we're very happy that it was accepted," said Baruch Rothman, a spokesman for Beis Medrash Heichal Dovid. "For a very long time the yeshiva's campus has needed a fence and now it will have one."

Beis Medrash Heichal Dovid owns two buildings at either end of the



Beach 17th Street view of the Yeshiva Darchei Torah and Beis Medrash Heichal Dovid campus.

Photo courtesy of www.google.com

Darchei Torah campus where construction is currently underway. The new fence is to enclose the entire property. The yeshiva comprises a program for unmarried students and a kollel where students have the opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree in Talmudic Law.

ELIEZER PROJECT

Continued from Page One

the JCC. "We hope our neighbors give generously and that the word gets out to the families that truly need this assistance."

Signs posted at the entrance of each store will notify and remind customers of the project, advertised as 'buy one, bin one.'

"The food pantry is not a secret," noted Bergman, "and we're hoping this project will heighten awareness of the need to contribute food, but also of the existence of the food pantry for those who are buying food but might prefer getting it for free."

The bins, scheduled to be in place by Thursday, June 25, will be located in Brach's, Glatt Kosher Kingdom, Gourmet Glatt, Kosher World and Supersol. "Each of these stores enthusiastically agreed to participate," said Bergman.

The Eliezer Project has also recruited volunteers to work together with the JCC staff to pick up the donated items and

deliver them to the JCC food pantry, where they will be sorted and distributed each week.

The 'buy one, bin one' initiative is just one of several ways in which the Eliezer Project tries to help its clients — unemployed or underemployed breadwinners who need financial assistance. Now totaling close to 140, the client base of The Eliezer Project has increased over the last few months.

"We now see between four to six new unemployed people every week and two to three clients in other services we provide," said Bergman. "It's been getting a little more dire. We are meeting with people who have been out of work even longer. This is sort of the next stage, where there is greater incidence and closer threats of house foreclosures. As the crisis continues unabated, the impact on people who are let go — people with businesses, not just employees — and who have seen a severe decline in income has become even more egregious with the passage of time,

while they managed for a few months, but now it gets tighter."

The Eliezer Project is now offering full or partial subsidies to clients on a limited basis. The subsidies will be provided for specific purposes such as the a professional or vocational retraining programs; the obtainment of advanced degrees or certifications; premiums for low-cost health insurance; emergency utility payments; and temporary children's day-care services used in connection with job searches.

Several clients have gotten jobs and made valuable contacts through the organization. "I see an uptick in hiring and there seems to be a few more employers hiring, although everyone is still cautious," observed Ellen Aronovitz, the employment director. "They are starting to hire the people they need for their business so that gives me a little more optimism."

Even those clients who haven't found suitable work yet are benefiting in other ways from workshops and seminars offered by The Eliezer Project, and from one-on-one meetings with the staff, which also includes financial manager Esthy Hersch.

"My belief is that every meeting and every contact is valuable but no person or organization comes close to what I have gained from the Eliezer Project, and specifically Ellen Aronovitz," said one client, who did not wish to be named. "Please note that this is a compliment to Ellen, but I wonder when she sleeps."

Other clients praised the organization's "wonderful e-mails with job opportunities and helpful articles" and "the amazing quality of jobs" available to them through The Eliezer Project.

"Sometime people wait a

little bit before they come to us, and then when things are not progressing, they say, 'Let me try The Eliezer Project,'" explained Aronovitz. "We're

another resource for them."

The organization is still relying on the community to donate funds and notify them of jobs or other services that may be suit-

able for their clients.

To reach The Eliezer Project, call (516) 284-2942 or visit their web site, www.eliezerproject.org.



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BOOKWORM

Continued from Page One

man — a rabbi — who is a YU grad (and proud of that) and a ba'al teshuva who takes his religious beliefs very seriously. Rabbi Pear has degrees in law from New York University's School of Law and in international relations from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service.

Today, Rabbi Pear is the founding rabbi of Shir Hadash, a popular Jerusalem-based shul, educational institute and community center. Before going to Israel he spent a summer as a guest rabbi at the Atlantic Beach Jewish Center just after the stewardship of Rabbi Basil Herring and before Rabbi Samuel Klibanoff assumed the rabbinate of that distinguished shul.

Given this eclectic background, one should not be surprised to see a book so brazen and challenging, by so young an author, be written as a warning against secular nationalism and in defense of religious Zionism.

What I found most endearing about this book was the sharp focus that Pear places on his deep devotion to the religious component of the State of Israel's purpose for existence. To me, this focus is everything. Without our belief in the divine origin of our claim to Eretz Yisrael, all else is worthless — yes, absolutely worthless.

A goddess nationalism, however phrased in eloquent secular terms, is not relevant to our people's quest for a homeland in the Land of Israel. Pear places this divine claim as the predicate for all that comes in train when it involves the safety, security and wellbeing of Israel.

And mind you, this predicate transcends all of our religious denominational divisions, particularly that of the Mesorati (Conservative) movement in Israel who share the same exact belief in the divine origin of our historic claims to Israel.

In addition, Pear clearly defines how halacha-based ethical monotheism, and an ethical behavior and lifestyle, is at the essence of the Jewish people's purpose as an agent of G-d's rule on earth. Basically, Israel is the base for such a message to go forth to all mankind. There is no other purpose for both our existence as a separate nation among the nations of this world and for Israel's existence as an "Am Segulah," a treasured, chosen nation. Despite a powerful



What a Priest, a Pornographer and a Wrestler named Chaim... taught Me about Being Jewish, Saving the World and Why Israel Matters to Me

IAN PEAR

military, a promising high-tech economy and a magnificent higher educational system, we, as a nation, according to Pear, are only defined by higher spiritual criteria. And how right he is, with no apologies and no misgivings.

Pear's style of writing, as noted before, helps to make these arguments all the more understandable because of their charm and obvious sincerity. While at times a bit much, his personal anecdotes do make their points obvious to even the most casual of readers. This helps to strengthen arguments that when presented by others seem forced or embarrassingly clumsy at best. In Rabbi Pear's pen, they are presented with a smile by a man confident in his intellectual skin as to the justice of his beliefs.

Toward the conclusion of this book, the author quotes from one of America's premier Jewish theologians, Rabbi Dr. Eliezer Berkovitz, of blessed memory, who said the following that should serve as the capstone to this review. He states as follows:

"The concept of Israel as a holy nation [should] not only not conflict with the universalism of Israel's prophets, but actually lead to it as its own logical completion. The idea of a holy nation is not to be confused with that of nationalism. The goal of nationalism is to serve the nation; a holy nation serves G-d. The law of nationalism is national self-interest: the law of a holy nation is the will of G-d. In nationalistic ideology, the nation is an end in itself; the holy nation is a means to an end."

No one else could have said this better than Rav Berkovitz, and Rabbi Ian Pear knew this, and had the grace to share his words with us.

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Supreme victory for special-ed students

BY THE JEWISH STAR

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled Monday that school districts are permitted to reimburse parents of special education students in private schools without first enrolling them in public ones.

"This is a welcome victory for disabled children and their parents," said Rabbi Abba Cohen, Washington Office director and counsel for Agudath Israel of America. "Too often we have found that school districts are not able to live up to their mandate of providing a 'free appropriate education' for children with special needs. This could be lack of funds or the ability to satisfy the educational, cultural or other requisites that

would allow these children to excel."

In those circumstances parents must be given the flexibility to find a successful program for their child, he said.

"Forcing them to utilize public programs known to be failing or providing inadequate services and resources — indeed essentially wasting years of valuable time — is educationally unsound and, in effect, nothing less than a punishment for these vulnerable children," Rabbi Cohen noted. "What the Supreme Court has now affirmed is that parents have the right to put their children and their special needs first, and to move ahead responsibly and expeditiously to provide what they believe will be most likely to bring the children success."

CHARITY BOX

Continued from Page One

Rockaways, Yudi Abraham, released "Hu," a two-song 'single' to benefit Hatzalah of Union County, based in the New Jersey communities of Elizabeth and Hillside, where he now resides. Now a Hatzalah volunteer there, Abraham composed both songs and performed them with his next-door neighbor, the popular Jewish music performer Ira Heller. The disk got the full treatment of a radio premiere on "JM in the AM with Nachum Segal" and is available at Judaica stores everywhere for \$4, with all proceeds to Hatzalah. (Full disclosure: I helped found Hatzalah of Union County a number of years ago and am still involved with the organization.)

Two weeks ago a full-length album called "Avodas Tzedaka" also premiered, a presentation of A T.I.M.E. (A Torah Infertility Medium of Exchange), which estimates 9,000 babies have been born since 1994 to couples its helped with infertility issues, marital counseling and even adoption.

The album was the brainchild of Shloime Kaufman, who performs most of the songs, joined by Abie Rotenberg, Dovid Gabay, Baruch Levine, Michael Pruzansky and A.K.A. Pella. It certainly doesn't sound like a charity project: in addition to the top vocal talent it boasts first class musical arrangements by Tony Coluccio, whose day job is to produce songs for some of the biggest names in the pop music industry. The album even boasts that holy grail of Jewish music — a selection with English lyrics that isn't a treacly love song to the Almighty.

"Music has a special power," said A T.I.M.E. founder Brany Rosen. "The language of Shamayim [heaven] is music. I heard this from Rav Avraham Chaim Feuer: A little baby, if you sing to it, it calms down. If everyone is talking at the same time you can't make out what they're saying but if thousand of people sing together you can hear them." Music relieves stress, she added, and stress plays "a tremendous role" in infertility.

On a more practical note, she said, "We hope to cover some of our bills with this. We hope that with the money we raise a lot of wonderful babies will be born."

Although "Avodas Tzedaka" has a professional sheen to it, "we're not talking about an album that cost \$70,000," said Shloime Kaufman. "Not even \$40,000" — a more common price tag for a Jewish music recording. Donors covered about half of the cost; the organization laid out the rest. He hopes to begin turning a profit for A T.I.M.E. in about a month. "With your help," he said, laughing.

Kaufman is passionate about A T.I.M.E. and about his music. "It's an emotional, meaningful album," he said. "Every single song — there's a reason why it's there."

Yudi Abraham, known to colleagues in Hatzalah as RL-92 during his year in kolel at Sh'or Yeshuv, came up with the idea of a two-song "single" as a fundrais-



Shloime Kaufman

er and then rounded up the necessary sponsorships nearly single-handedly.

"That was the hardest part of the entire project," he said. "So many people said, 'If it was a different year...' For every one I got, I got 15 to 20 no's. Believe me."

He knows there's stiff competition in the Jewish music market for consumers' limited disposable income, including a number of new artists.

"Within May and June there are eight debut albums. What makes this different is that buying the album for \$3.99 helps us go on saving lives," he said. "The bottom line is it's about Hatzalah. We want people to enjoy the songs but we want people to buy the CD for Hatzalah."

Abraham, who also played keyboard on one of the songs, said he knew he was doing the right thing in pursuing the project when he met up with Ozer Babad, whom a friend had recommended he engage to produce the single.

He was on his way home to Hillside when he called Babad to introduce himself. Babad said he was also New Jersey-bound. "Where are you now? ... On the Staten Island Expressway? ... Me too. Where? ... At Exit 12? Me too."

Soon they were sitting in Babad's car on the side of the road listening to one of the songs Abraham had composed. Babad liked it and signed on to the project.

"If there was ever hashgacha pratis (divine intervention) — just giving you a little sign that you're heading in the right direction," Abraham noted.

In some ways the economics of the Jewish music business have come to mimic the secular market, albeit on a much smaller scale, Babad said.

"It used to be that the show was a business card for the CD. Today it's the opposite. The show is the moneymaker," and for most up and coming performers "it's not even the show, it's the wedding."

Tzedaka albums may just be the next big thing in the Jewish music business, Babad believes. "Tzedaka (charity) organizations need money — people don't have a lot of money to buy CDs. So if you can give tzedaka and buy a CD at the same time, it's a no-brainer."

Sheya Mendlowitz, who put HASC on the map with the concert series he founded, believes quality will be one of the keys to success for music albums released by charities in the future.

"If there's good material then it will have success. And if it's done for the right cause. It shouldn't be just that people are using the organization as a vehicle to sell the music."

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