

# THE JEWISH STAR

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Fire hero

## Rabbi Yitzy Bald saves two from flames

By Elana Dure

On his way to shul in Bayswater last Shabbos afternoon, Aug 29, Rabbi Yitzy Bald was focused on making the 1:37 p.m., minyan for Mincha. Suddenly, he was shocked to see a chimney smoking in the heat of summer. He stared for 30 seconds, then approached the smoking house on the corner of Bays Park Place and Goldspring Road.

As Rabbi Bald neared the house, he realized the smoke was coming not only from the chimney but from other places as well. Once in front of the house, he saw and heard a woman and her 12-year-old daughter shouting for help from a second-story window.

"Save us!" the woman yelled. They were locked in the room without a phone and had no way out.

"When you see someone in panic — and they were in panic — it is frightening," said Rabbi Bald.

Not knowing what to do without a cell phone, he shouted for help but no one responded. He offered to catch the woman and her daughter as they jumped out the window, but the victims were reluctant to do so. Out of ideas and desperate for help, Rabbi Bald began banging on the doors of neighboring homes. One neighbor gave him a ladder, but it was too short to reach the window. Another neighbor brought a double-extension ladder that was tall enough, and mother and daughter climbed down as several men held the ladder in place.

911 was called and a half-dozen fire

*Continued on page 5*



## A woman in chains

Photo by Claudio Papapietro

Rabbi Jeremy Stern, executive director of the Organization for the Resolution of Agunot, led a rally to denounce a man who would not give his wife a get in Brooklyn on Aug. 18.

### Prenuptial agreements, public pressure and legal recourse. Will anything change for the Agunot?

By Michael Orbach

The rally was for an imprisoned woman who was not behind bars.

Two dozen or so college-age protesters, young Orthodox men and women, stood in front of an off-white stucco house in Brooklyn.

The Aug. 18 rally was called by the Organization for the Resolution of Agunot, known as ORA, to protest the fate of a 27-year-old woman named Tamar. Despite the fact that Tamar and her husband have been separated for two years and civilly divorced since April, her husband, 34, an attorney on the staff of a high-profile congressional committee who lives in Silver Spring, Md., is refusing to give her a get, a religious divorce. Without the get, Tamar is an

Agunah, a "chained" woman, bound to her husband by Jewish law and unable to marry again.

The Brooklyn house belonged to her husband's uncle, a rabbi who had advocated on the husband's behalf in beis din and supported his refusal to give Tamar a get. The protesters chanted slogans mocking the uncle and handed out fliers bearing photographs of the husband and uncle, along with a letter from Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky, a Rosh Yeshiva in Philadelphia, that criticized the two men. The Jewish Star is withholding the name of the husband to avoid potentially hindering the get process.

Tamar and her husband were married in 2006, when she was 22 and he was 29. The marriage was "rocky from the start," she said,

*Continued on page 3*

Shabbat Candlelighting: 7:05 p.m. Shabbat ends 8:04 p.m. 72 minute zman 8:34 p.m. Torah Reading Parshat Nitzavim-Vayeilech Zman Kriat Shma 8:56 (Magen Avrohom) and 9:38 (GRA & Ba'al Tanya)

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# A woman in chains

but the couple had a daughter together. In 2008, when their daughter was five months old, she moved back in with her parents in Philadelphia. After two months, Tamar felt that the marriage was over and began divorce proceedings. Her husband filed an emergency appeal to force her to move back to Silver Spring but was turned down by the court. The couple went to the Baltimore Beis Din to arbitrate their divorce. Midway through the mediation, against beis din protocol, her husband took the case to civil court, she said.

When the judge indicated that he would rule in favor of Tamar, the husband attempted to bring the case back to beis din, but beis din refused to hear the case since there was a verdict from a secular court. The court ruled that Tamar would receive full physical custody of their daughter and share legal custody with her husband. When the two were separated Tamar asked for a get and her husband refused. That's when ORA stepped in.

Founded in 2002 by several undergraduate students at Yeshiva University, the organization works to help women and men attain full religious divorces. In most cases, according to Jeremy Stern, the director of ORA, the organization works as a third party to help couples resolve their get issues. Most cases ORA deals with involve men refusing to give a get. When mediation proves impossible, the organization ramps up its efforts, in some cases using whatever public and legal means are available.

"We use all legal remedies to pressure the recalcitrant parties," Stern explained. "We don't bust a knee cap but we include social, financial and legal pressure."

The public rally was the result of a failure to negotiate a get with Tamar's ex-husband. The hope was that the public pressure against him and his uncle would make him reconsider. The night before the rally, the husband called a rosh yeshiva at Yeshiva University in the hope that ORA could be pressured to call off the protest.

"A get is not meant to be an instrument of extortion," said Rabbi Kenneth Auman, the rav of the Young Israel of Flatbush, who attended the rally. Rabbi Auman estimated that in the 25 years he's been in Brooklyn he's been involved in at least 10 cases of Agunot.

Tamar's case is also complicated because no one knows why exactly her husband is holding back the get. He has refused to speak about it with her and did not respond to repeated requests for an interview.

"It's very unclear what he's trying to get from me other than getting back at me," Tamar explained, adding that she was willing to compromise on some of the custody issues. "I know he has a lot of anger at me for leaving him... I don't understand what would justify him not giving a get other than getting back to me."

A family member of the husband who contacted The Jewish Star indicated that child custody was the issue. A light drizzle began during the rally and some of the protesters unfurled umbrellas. Stern announced that he had seen the uncle leave his house a few minutes before the rally began, but nonetheless, the crowd wouldn't be deterred. Stern, an energetic youthful man, began another chant. A digital camera peeked out one of the shaded windows and snapped several shots.

"We're going to come back repeatedly until [he] frees his wife," Stern screamed at the almost-empty house.

Later, the protest moved to the home of Tamar's former mother-in-law, where perplexed non-Jewish neighbors watched from a nearby porch.

In eight years, ORA has managed to resolve 140 cases through different means. Typically, the organization has 70 cases open



Photo by Claudio Papapietro

**Tamar's mother, left, and sister, take part in a rally in Brooklyn to force her husband to give a get.**

at any time, that are handled by a two member staff composed of Stern, who received semicha, rabbinical ordination, from Yeshiva University's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS), and Miriam Colton, a recent Columbia Law School graduate. Colton, who is working on Tamar's case, is a former estate tax attorney who left the corporate world after taking an Agunah case pro-bono. "I got hooked on it," she said. "It's draining emotionally but it [is] really meaningful to impact someone's life."

While the majority of the cases that ORA deals with involve a husband refusing to give a get, occasionally the encounter a woman who refuses to accept one. Those account for only five percent of the cases ORA deals with, Stern said. In most situations, the organization acts as a clear-headed, neutral go-between for both husband and wife as they divorce. The organization has dealt with couples from across the religious spectrum — from non-affiliated to chasidic.

Jewish law is explicit when it comes to the laws of divorce. If a man refuses to give his wife a get, the wife is unable to marry again unless the man dies. Additionally, a man cannot be forced to give his wife a get against his will, but must give it of his own volition.

"Jewish Law expects the man to give and the woman to receive the get," explained Rabbi Michael Broyde, a professor of law at Emory University and author of "Marriage, Divorce and the Abandoned Wife in Jewish Law." "And there's no way to readily get around that."

Publicly shaming an individual to force him to give a get is an old tactic. Typically, when a man refuses to give a get, ORA will seek a hazmana, a summons, for him to come to beis din. If he still persists in refusing to give a get, the beis din can issue a seruv, essentially excommunicating him, though the strength of an ex-communication has waned. "In Europe the community had some type of autonomy and then a cherem meant complete financial and communal ostracizing," explained Stern. "There's no way for a beis din to enforce its ruling aside from an organization like ORA."

The problem of agunot is not a new one. The Talmud first discusses the case of the Agunah when a husband goes out to war or is lost at sea.

"The term meant something different centuries ago," Rabbi Broyde explained. "500 years ago the case was a husband who disappeared, who might be dead or kidnapped, but we weren't sure. 500 years ago, a husband turns to his wife and says 'I'm going to Italy,' and he steps on a boat and we never

hear from him again. Every case was examined if the husband was alive or deceased. If he was deceased she could remarry again."

Tami Arad, the wife of missing Israeli airman Ron Arad, is currently the most famous such Agunah.

"The Forward [newspaper] about a 100 years ago used to print pictures of husbands who fled to the U.S.," Rabbi Stern said. "These women were classical Agunot. Tragically there are Agunot from the Holocaust and from M.I.A.'s in Israel. Most recently Ehud Goldwasser's wife was an agunah until they ascertained his death. [There are cases from] 9/11, men who literally disappeared."

Within the last hundred years, the term has usually come to refer to cases in which a husband simply refuses to give a get. Rabbi Stern pinpoints several reasons for men withholding a get: monetary settlement, a better custody deal for children, for spite, or for love. The last, Rabbi Stern says, is the most difficult to deal with.

"Husbands who don't get their marriages are over and they still profess their love," Rabbi Stern explained.

Rabbi Broyde sees the issue as compounded by the combination of civil and religious marriage that makes the get another factor in sometimes-lengthy divorce settlements. "The central Agunah problem in America is the relationship between the civil divorce and the Jewish divorce. People want both of these to arrive concurrently," he said. "And that doesn't necessarily happen...The problem is that upon filing a civil divorce wife and husband expect the get to be forthcoming immediately. It's not always the case, but most Agunot are in situations in which the couple is haggling still about their civil divorce. There are harder cases, but if you adopt a definition that an Agunah is someone who has a civil divorce but not a religious divorce, then you have one model of thinking about it. There are other ways to approach this also, and particularly when the couple signs a prenuptial agreement governing the giving and receiving of a get. These models are better."

The longest case ORA has is an Israeli man by the name of Danny Zadok who fled Israel and now lives in L.A. He demanded \$20 million in exchange for a get. ORA sued him for intentional infliction of damage and child support and won a default judgment against him. "I don't think the entire system is broken," Rabbi Stern said. "This is probably one of the most extreme cases."

Some communities have opted to deal with the issue of Agunot preemptively by pushing couples to sign prenuptial agreements that impose severe financial consequences if a husband refuses to give a get. However, for activists, the practice is not nearly widespread enough. "What I'm more frustrated by is when people don't do more to protect themselves from someone abusing the system," Rabbi Stern said. "I don't think it's a flaw in the system; just like you can have a business partner who gives you a run for your money, so too here."

He said that the prenuptial agreements are "100 percent successful in ensuring that the get is given in a timely fashion."

Rabbi Auman says that his shul recommends their congregants sign prenuptial agreements before marriage. He says that the practice is widespread in the Modern Orthodox community but far less popular in more yeshivish and Chassidic circles, for a variety of reasons. "They range from a general reluctance to have any kind of innovation — the Chasam Sofer said 'anything new is prohibited,'" Rabbi Auman explained. "You have people who are generally reluctant to institute any kind of new practice, others have problems with the technicalities, with issues that the get might be invalid since [the prenuptial agreement] could be considered coercion. The other objection I heard from one rabbi is it's insulting to present this to a chosson [groom] and a kallah [bride]. You

are implying that they may do such a thing. Other than the middle reason, the other two are not worthy of discussion."

Rabbi Avi Shafran, Director of Public Affairs for the Agudath Israel of America, agreed that pre-nuptial agreements are not common in the charedi world. None of his six married children has one, he said. "My understanding of the reason is that detailing what will happen in the event, G-d forbid, of a divorce would start a marriage off on a negative, dangerous note," Rabbi Shafran explained. "The message a newlywed may take from it, especially in our times, sadly, is that marriage is like any business agreement. Clauses in a contract establishing a legal partnership would understandably deal with the event of the partnership's dissolution. But a joining of two people into one is qualitatively different, and incomparably important. So, to begin the challenging but holy enterprise of married life amid thoughts of what will transpire at a divorce is neither prudent nor proper."

Colton said that the prenuptial agreement acts as a kind self-control. "Divorce brings out the worst," she said. "Things go bad and people lose control. That's why we push the prenuptial agreement. When a bad situation happens to you, protect yourself from yourself."

A marriage can be invalidated retroactively, though, according to Rabbi Broyde, situations such as this, known as Kedushai Taot, a mistaken marriage, are exceedingly rare. "The most common one is the marriage was improperly entered into," Rabbi Broyde said. "Sometimes there's fraud in the inducement and sometimes there's an invalid ceremony."

For a woman who refuses to accept a get, a man can receive a "Heter Me'ah Rabonim," literally permission from 100 rabbis, amounting to a rabbinical dispensation to marry again. That too, is rare though more common than a retroactive invalidation.

The Beis Din of America has performed Heter Me'ah Rabonim on a few occasions, Rabbi Auman said, but only when a woman was "totally mentally incapacitated" and the husband agreed to put up an escrow to care for her.

A major problem for Agunah activists is that there simply is no hard evidence about the number of women in that situation. That might change through the work of Barbara Zakheim. The Washington D.C. based Zakheim is the founder of the Jewish Women's Coalition against Domestic Abuse. She has launched a survey through 65 national Jewish organizations to determine the number and the socio-economic condition of Agunot. The impetus for the survey is sheer frustration.

"Since we seem to be going nowhere halachically, at least the community can look at it as another social issue that it has to deal with, like when we have an obligation to take care of widows, orphans, or people with disabilities," Zakheim explained. "Here we have a halachic disability."

Zakheim says that through her work with the Jewish Coalition against Domestic Violence she has been shocked by what she views as a "lack of compassion" from rabbis about the issue. In some cases, she saw rabbis telling wives to pay off their husbands to receive a get or women left in "dire circumstances" because of a careless beis din verdict.

Zakheim said she is looking to publish the results by Pesach and hopes that the Jewish community will react to it and at the very least, be able to help struggling Agunot. "If there aren't so many then it's not going to cost us so much to deal with it," she explained. "[But] if one person is sick does it make sickness any less important?"

"The community is trying to get a resolution of it in a compassionate way that will work in Halacha," Zakheim continued. "Halacha and compassion are not mutually exclusive."

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# Rabbi Yitzzy Bald saves two from flames

Continued from page 1

trucks, a police car, and an FDNY ambulance arrived at the scene about five minutes after the rescue. 20-30 firemen worked to put out the fire as a neighbor led the woman and her daughter to a bench and gave them each a glass of water. Rabbi Bald asked the woman if she called her relatives, to which she replied that she had. Her mother and father, the owners of the home, arrived about 45 minutes after the fire was out.

The fire started in the basement near the boiler room, according to the fire marshal. Fire damage was confined to the basement but there was water damage to the home as well.

An interesting side note concerns the owner of the home, Robert Avery, who several years ago spent a few hours fixing Bay-swater's Satmar eruv when it fell down on a Shabbos. Rabbi Bald and others believe that his reward for helping the Jewish community that day was that a member of the Jewish community was able to save his daughter and granddaughter from the fire.

"I happened to be in the right place at the right time," said Rabbi Bald. "Hashem was on my side."

Rabbi Bald is a musician, composer, and a sixth grade rebbe at the Yeshiva of South Shore. He is married with three children and is currently developing a boys' choir.

"He was such a good teacher [and] he was fun," said Natan Davidowitz, his former student.



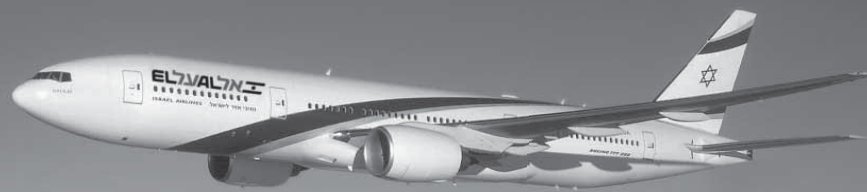
Photo courtesy of Yeshiva of South Shore

Rabbi Yitzzy Bald with some of his students, seated on a fire escape.

After Rabbi Bald gave a report to a fire fighter, received endless expressions of gratitude, and determined that everyone was safe, he continued on to shul and focused on making the 7:00 pm minyan for Mincha.

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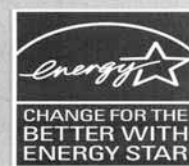
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## Familiar faces

# Weisenberg and Toback in Assembly primary

By Michael Orbach

Long-time Five Towns and Long Beach Assemblyman Harvey Weisenberg is facing what might be his toughest challenge ever, in the upcoming Democratic primary. Former Nassau County Legislator Jeff Toback, his opponent, is waging a no-holds-barred campaign to unseat the 20-year Albany veteran.

"He's done a bad job," Toback said bluntly on Friday. "Our message is resonating and we're getting it out there. People are tired of business as usual and they're ready for change. They realize that my opponent has been there for 20 years, and Albany has become a national disgrace, and they're ready for something new."

Howard Kopel, a Republican, unseated Toback in 2009, denying him a sixth term in the Legislature. Weisenberg seems unfazed by the challenge and said the primary on September 14 would give him the "opportunity to inform people who will best serve them."

Weisenberg also pointed out that as a freshman assemblyman, Toback would not wield as much power as Weisenberg does in his role as assistant speaker.

"Anybody who attacks the institution that people dedicate their lives to [will] have no access to resources..." Weisenberg explained. "You have to have a voice heard. Albany is like a different planet. My voice will be heard because my voice speaks the loudest."

Toback has learned from his Election Day defeat last year.

"Property tax is the main issue and nothing else is really close," Toback said.

Toback faults Weisenberg for not bringing enough federal aid to the local schools, which correspondingly drives up taxes. Schools around New York receive 38 percent of their funding from the state whereas local schools, according to Toback, receive just 16-percent of their funding from the state. If elected, increasing state aid to schools would be his first priority, Toback pledged.

"My first thing is I'm writing a letter to the Department of Education and hopefully bring with me the whole Long Island, Westchester, and Rockland County... and start a dialog on how to change this," Toback explained. "This should have been done 20 years ago."

However, even Toback admits to being unsure of how to change the status quo. "It seems to be a mystery," he said.

"Weisenberg has been a good advocate for the disabled and I can't take that away from him; I applaud him for his efforts but the job is more than that," Toback asserted. "In bringing back state aid [to Long Island] he's done a bad job. In government ethics, Andrew Cuomo says Albany is a national disgrace and I agree, and it's become a national disgrace while Harvey was in office."

Toback is also attempting to ride a wave of anger against what he calls Weisenberg's "double-dipping," where Weisenberg has begun receiving a retirement pension of \$73,000 in addition to the \$105,000 a year that he continues to earn as a sitting elected official.

"Harvey was the prime sponsor that made it illegal for someone to retire from the government job and collect their government pension but he left himself a loophole," Toback said. "Anytime it would be reprehensible, but in these economic times, to see an elected official write in to legislation a



Jeff Toback



Harvey Weisenberg

loophole, I don't even know what the word is... If he wants to collect retirement, let him retire."

Weisenberg said that at 76 he's been in the system for 58 years and could have retired 15 years ago. He only began collecting his pension last year when he received a call about it from the accounting department.

"What happens if I should suddenly drop dead and die? Will my wife get a pension?" Weisenberg asked a reporter. "You have to retire so your wife has a pension. I did what anybody would do to protect my family."

Toback has earned support from one of New York's most popular Democrats, former New York City Mayor Edward I. Koch.

"Ed Koch says [Weisenberg] is an enemy of reform," Toback maintained.

Koch is supporting Toback since he signed on to Koch's pledge to reform Albany. A spokesperson for New York Uprising, Koch's organization, said that Koch had not personally endorsed Toback.

"Jeff has signed the pledge and Assemblyman Weisenberg has not," the spokesperson explained. "Mayor Koch has pledged to denounce incumbents around the state who have not signed the pledged and he is doing just that."

Koch will speak out against Weisenberg in a series of automated telephone calls to registered voters.

"If I was smarter politically I would have taken the pledge," Weisenberg said, "[but] I pledged to uphold the constitution of the state of New York and do the best I can to the people that elected me. I don't pledge to anyone for a political organization what I'm going to do. That's unethical to me."

Weisenberg said he knew that he would be attacked for not signing the pledge. In his own defense, he pointed to a bevy of legislation he put through Albany with Republican and Democratic support including several bills against drunk driving and bills in support of mental health services. Weisenberg was a prime supporter of Leandre's Law, a bill that makes driving drunk with a child in the vehicle a felony punishable by up to four years in jail. Weisenberg also sponsored legislation that would require people convicted of DUI to outfit their vehicles with a Breathalyzer ignition lock. Another Weisenberg-sponsored bill placed defibrillators in schools. "50 people are alive today," Weisenberg said, as a result of that law.

Weisenberg's motivation for remaining in office is simple, he said.

"I want the job because of the satisfaction I get for the good things I do," he explained. "Other people take a job because they need a job. If you're doing it for power or money you don't belong there and that's the problem with government today."

The winner of the Weisenberg-Toback race will face the Republican candidate, tax attorney Josh Wanderer, in the general election.

# Earl a Shabbos guest?

Hurricanes have hit Long Island before yet emergency officials say not enough people prepare. Hurricane Earl is not predicted to make landfall in New York, as of this writing, but it could make a mess on LI this weekend.

The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) offers these suggestions:

**First, be informed:** pay attention to media reports about the storm. Visit Nassau County or NYC websites to familiarize yourself with evacuation routes, learn to assemble a disaster kit for home and a Go-Bag for evacuation, and develop a family communication plan.

**Plan and Prepare.** Stockpile food, water and medicine. Top off your food supply and check that you have sufficient medication on hand in the event that you can't leave the house. Have a reserve of water (it's a good idea to freeze water in gallon bags to help prevent food in your refrigerator from spoiling in the event of a power outage).

**Remember Shabbat.** The storm forecast coincides with Shabbat which may require additional preparatory steps:

**Make decisions before the storm.** The Orthodox Union issued Shabbat Protocols in Case of a Hurricane, written by Rabbi Kenneth Brander (now of Yeshiva University) with thanks to Rabbi Hershel Schachter for his guidance. The protocols are an excellent guide, but consult halachic authorities with specific questions.

**Minyan.** If a hurricane is happening on Shabbat, stay home! Try to prearrange to have the congregation lain two parashot on the next Shabbat.

Shabbat services should take place, if:

- a) the storm has passed; AND
- b) civil authorities declare the area safe.

If there is no electricity, services should take place only during daylight. If there is electricity,

they can be held as scheduled.

**Assume there is no Eruv.**

**Carrying permitted for life/limb threatening situations.**

Carrying permitted for individuals who need medical attention, without which a person's functionality is compromised, (even for a bed-ridden headache). In this case carrying should be done, if possible, in irregular fashion (i.e. carrying medicine in belt or shoe).

Carrying permitted to allow a baby, infirm seniors or a child traumatized by the event to function without compromise. In this case carrying should be done, if possible, in irregular fashion (i.e. two people carrying or wheeling the stroller/person.)

**Use yahrtzeit or hurricane candles** lit before Shabbat placed in designated locations. Use appropriate caution.)

Hang/place lit flashlights with fresh batteries in key locations before Shabbat.

If flash light/candle goes out:

When necessary (to take care of children, to eat, etc.) and there is no other light, a non-Jew can relight or change batteries.

If not having the light may create a life-threatening situation you may do it yourself.

**Moving candles and flashlight** is permitted in the following situations:

For any medical concerns no matter how slight.

Carrying permitted for comfort and welfare of seniors and children under eight (or above eight years old when child is traumatized by the event).

When possible, moving a candle should be done by two individuals.

**TV or radio** should be left on in a side room Channel should not be changed; volume on radio may be adjusted on Shabbat.

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# September 4

## Selichot Program

BETH SHOLOM, located at 390 Broadway in Lawrence, will be holding a pre-selichot program at 10:30 p.m. Guest speaker will be Julie Joseph, an adjunct professor of History and Jewish Philosophy at Stern College. She will be speaking on the topic of "Does Hashem hear our prayers? Are we ready to hear his answers?" Men and women are invited to attend and refreshments will be served. Selichot with Chazan Joel Kaplan will take place at 12:00 a.m.

## Pre-selichot Teleconference

THE CHOFETZ CHAIM HERITAGE FOUNDATION presents its annual Selichos Night Teleconference. This year's speakers include Rabbi Yitzchok Berkowitz, Rabbi Dr. Avraham Twerski, and Dr. David Lieberman. Rabbi Berkowitz is renowned posek and leads the Linas Hatzedek Kollel. He is also the co-author of "Chofetz Chaim: A Lesson A Day." Rabbi Twerski, besides being a psychiatrist and expert in addiction, is a well known speaker and author of numerous books on the topics of spirituality and personal growth. Dr. David Lieberman is an award-winning author and internationally recognized leader in the fields of human behavior and interpersonal relationships. This year's teleconference will remain available on Chazak after the live broadcast. In total, about 10,000 people are expected to hear this year's teleconference. Chazak is accessible at 718-258-2008, pin # 1234. The teleconference begins at 10:30 p.m.

# September 5

## New rabbi and BBQ

THE YOUNG ISRAEL OF WOODMERE, located at 859 Peninsula Boulevard in Woodmere, will be having a BBQ to welcome their new assistant rabbi, Rabbi Sholom Axelrod and his wife, Ruchie. The BBQ begins at 5 p.m. and will end at 8 p.m.

## Funraiser

STATEN ISLAND HATZOLAH in conjunction with Maimonides Medical Center will be holding a "Fun-raiser" from 12 p.m. until 5 p.m. at P.S. 54 at

# ON THE Calendar

Submit your shul or organization's events or shiurim to [jscalendar@thejewishstar.com](mailto:jscalendar@thejewishstar.com).  
Deadline is Wednesday of the week prior to publication.



Photo courtesy of Young Israel of Oceanside

The Young Israel of Oceanside recently presented special combat boots to the 24 soldiers of the Orev Unit of the IDF's Tzanchanin.

Sunset Avenue and Willowbrook Road in Staten Island. Come for rides, raffles and all-you-can-eat BBQ and Dunk Tank. All inclusive family membership pack is \$118 (limit 6). Uncle Moishy and the Mitzvah Men perform at 1 p.m.; BMX bike stunt show at 2:30 p.m. and Master Illusionist and Magician David Blatt will perform at 3:45 p.m.. All proceeds go to Hatzolah of Staten Island. For sponsorship and event info contact fundraiser@sihatzolah.org or call (718)-698-8171.

3666 or Rina Friedman 516-295-5724.

# September 6-7

## Bake sale for Cahal

THE ANNUAL CAHAL PRE-ROSH HASHANAH BAKE SALE will be held on Monday from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. and Tuesday, September 7th from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the home of Danyela and Josh Schupak, 375 Broadway (corner of Muriel) in Lawrence.

Delicious baked cakes, babka, kugels, challah and cookies will be available for purchase. Includes gluten-free, nut-free, soy-free, and egg-free selections. Great raffle prizes including computers, jewelry, watches, and Judaica.

All proceeds benefit the CAHAL Scholarship Fund. For information contact CAHAL 516-295-

# September 9-10

## Free Rosh Hashana Program at the Allegria Hotel

THE BACH JEWISH CENTER will be holding a free Rosh Hashana program at the Allegria Hotel complete with explanatory services. Pre-registration is required and preferred seating is available for \$100 per seat. A babysitting service will be available. For more information call 516-897-2473 or go to [www.AllegriaHighHolidays.com](http://www.AllegriaHighHolidays.com)

# September 13

## Yom Iyun

AGUDATH ISRAEL OF AMERICA AND THE MANHATTAN BEACH JEWISH CENTER present Rabbi Eliezer Feuer, rabbi of the Young Israel of Wavecrest

& Bayswater, speaking on the nationwide Yom Iyun theme "Achieving holiness in the Jewish home." The lecture will take place at 8 p.m. at the Manhattan Beach Jewish Center at 60 West End Avenue in Brooklyn.

# September 14-15

## An evening of Chizuk

ACHEINU will be presenting "An Evening of Chizuk and Chinuch," featuring a fascinating video presentation of answers and hadracha from HaGaon HaRav Aharon Leib Shteinman, shlita, on the difficult questions of raising and educating our children in today's environment. Among the many fascinating topics that HaRav Shteinman covers is, "When a child behaves in a negative way, how should a parent deal with it in the most constructive way?" Another question that is dealt with is, "How can parents and mechanchim instill a 'geshmak' for learning in our children and students?"

The video will be accompanied by parenting lectures from acclaimed speakers at two locations. On Tuesday, September 14th, Rabbi Fishel Schachter, Maggid shiur, Yeshiva Torah Vadaas, will deliver a special presentation on parenting. The program, entitled "Parent & Child: A Match Made in Heaven" will feature ideas, techniques and inspiration for parents to help children achieve their full potential. The event begins 8:20 pm in Flatbush at the Agudah of Ave. L, Bais Binyamin (corner of Avenue L and Nostrand Avenue).

The following evening, a second event will be taking place in the Five Towns and Far Rockaway with lecturer Rabbi Jonathan Rietti. On Wednesday, September 15th, Rabbi Rietti will speak on the topic of "Raising Our Children to be Ehrlicher Yidden." The event will take place in Congregation Shaaray Tefila located at 25 Central Avenue, Lawrence, 8:20 pm. R' Dov Lebovic is chairman of the Five Towns event.

To contribute to Acheinu or for additional information about these events, please call 877-5-ACHEINU.

# September 19

## Lulov and Esrog

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*Continued on next page*

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Continued from previous page

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Pre-order by messaging Asher Meckler or emailing [ashermeckler@gmail.com](mailto:ashermeckler@gmail.com). Receive a \$5 discount (\$70 instead of \$75) if you preorder by September 8. No need to pay in advance. When preordering, please specify if you want an etrog with/without a pitom.

Chinuch (student) sets are \$35 and must be preordered by September 8.

The brand new Beaver Lake Cookbook will also be available for sale for \$18 with 100% of the proceeds going to the foundation as well. It's a must have for the holidays and is filled with quick, easy and delicious recipes. Join the group at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=117737644944201&ref=mf>

You can reserve a copy as well by emailing [michalliw@gmail.com](mailto:michalliw@gmail.com) or messaging Michal Weinstein.

Don't forget to keep Tzvi Ilan Ben Gitta in your Tfillot this Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur. He has a long road ahead but with our prayers and G-ds help he will return to his family healthy & whole again.



Photo courtesy of UJA

**UJA-Federation of NY donated 370 backpacks filled with school supplies to children in the Five Towns and FR.**

## Remembering our servicemen

THERE ARE YOUNG JEWISH MEN AND WOMEN serving our country in the various branches of the American Armed Forces. It is now time that we recognize them and their loneliness and wish them only the best future and a Happy New Year in whatever circumstances they are in.

Our Jewish military personnel deserve to be remembered.

Whatever you do or believe, don't hold back your support for all our individual troops, and as Jews, we must focus in on Jewish souls, wherever they are.

All you have to do is write a card or letter (kids can draw pictures), put a stamp on it and mail it.

Call Larry Levine at: 1-917-412-8670 or e-mail him at [ZEIDIONE@MSN.COM](mailto:ZEIDIONE@MSN.COM) and he will give you the name, military address and in some cases, an e-mail address, and all mailing instructions.

## Ask Aviva

# Call for direct talks as Israel conflict spills into marriage

Dear Aviva,

My husband and I planned to move to Israel since we starting dating in med school. His family lives here but my family lives in Israel. Lately, I can sense that he no longer shares these dreams. I am not sure if it is because of his relationship with his family (they're very close) or because of an ideological shift — and I'm not sure he knows either. We have three young children and good jobs and it gets more difficult for him to talk about moving each year. We're supposed to go in less than five years. I'm afraid he'll change his mind. We never talk about it because other than this MAJOR issue, our marriage is great. We're both afraid to discuss it because we don't want to fight about it. Should I make him keep to the arrangement we agreed on 15 years ago? How can we talk about this without fighting?

-Missing Israel and my family

Dear Missing Israel and my family,

I love how people's love for Israel gets in the way of love. Not to say that loving Israel is not a worthy object of affection — on the contrary, it is one of the most worthy and necessary objects that we have as Jewish people. It's just that I've seen how relationships can be very smooth and healthy, yet there is one issue that is taboo. Or maybe it is not taboo anymore, it is just driving a large wedge between two parties. What is this issue? Israel.

Just last month I was in Cedarhurst and met a very lovely couple who were shopping with the wife's mother. They were friendly and we began chatting. I was soon privy to cute cell phone pictures of the couple's three young children. Being a marriage and family therapist, I can't help but notice family dynamics and interactions. This trio displayed very healthy communicative patterns. We were about to say, "Well, it was nice meeting you," when I prolonged the conversation with the wrong question. "And where do you two live?"

"We live in Yerushalayim. We are actually flying back tonight." I innocently said to the grandmother, "Oh, it must be so hard to live so far away from such cute grandkids." Maybe I shouldn't have been so innocent. Maybe I should have just left it with, "Have a safe flight!" But either way, I know that I can't blame myself for what happened next. I didn't cause it, I just exposed it on the sidewalk.

Everything changed and turned on its head. The grandmother's fangs came out. The son-in-law alternated between looking helpless and really miffed. Daggers shot from

the daughter's eyes. I was left to say, "Uh, oh, well, I..." Finally, when the boom was in its echoing phase, the family decided to move on. That's where we exchanged our "Well, it was nice meeting you," and as they walked away, the grandmother turned to me and said in a very loud whisper, "Tell them to move back!"

Yeah, like I have any say in this. They won't listen to you, but me they'll hear. Is she nuts? No, she's not nuts. She just feels out of control and is grasping at anything (logical or otherwise) to try to have her family live in a place that allows her to be more involved. "So what's this got to do with me?" Well, there are similarities. Both are coming from relationships that are purportedly strong and healthy in all other regards. Both seem uncomfortable to address this issue in a strong and healthy way.

Here's the difference (pay attention): The sidewalk family is not having intra-household conflicts with this. Both the husband and wife agree, it's the mother that staunchly disagrees. Unfortunately, she doesn't really have a say. You, on the other hand, should know and hear both sides of your intra-household strife. Why? Because both of your opinions count. Do you make your husband feel safe when you talk about it, or does he get the feeling that this 15-year-old agreement is hanging over his head? Do you feel comfortable to express your emotions with this issue?

You ask "How can we talk about this without fighting?" And I respond with, "You tell me." How do you talk about any conflict without fighting? And what's so bad about fighting anyway? As long as you allow yourself to squirm, fidget, cry, feel exasperated, while keeping in check any sarcasm, righteous indignation, eye-rolls or criticism, it is okay to fight. Know when you need to take a break. Remember to see past the words and find the feelings behind what's going on (fear, missing extended family, loss of control, feeling blindsighted, etc). Know that this may very well be one of the most uncomfortable discussions you'll have. You may not come to an actual conclusion. Certainly not in the first round. This should be a series of conversations. Look for a compromise, even a temporary one.

I don't have long-term solutions for you. Just a short-term one: begin your conversation. Talk, ask, listen then think.

-Aviva

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

# September 26

## Simchat Beit Hashoeva in Cedarhurst Park

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## In Good Health

# No stressing out this tiny pacemaker

By Malka Eisenberg

Science fiction is now fact on Long Island.

The world's smallest pacemaker, uniquely able to respond to emotional stress and remotely alert the patient's doctor to any adverse events, was recently implanted into the chest of a 50-year-old man at South Nassau Communities Hospital.

"The patient is doing great," said Dr. Lawrence Kanner, director of electrophysiology and arrhythmia services there. "He hasn't passed out" since the implant.

Biotronik's Evia pacemaker is twenty percent smaller than current pacemakers in use and has a longer battery life of ten years; batteries in other units need replacement in five to seven years. The Food and Drug Administration approved its use in May. Shortly thereafter it was implanted in a patient in Toledo, OH. Before the FDA approved the Evia it was in use for a year in Europe.

A pacemaker is a small appliance that is generally inserted in a patient's chest and has small wires attached to the heart muscle. It uses mild electrical stimulation to assist the heart to maintain a normal rhythm in someone who has an irregular heartbeat, or arrhythmia. Shortness of breath, fatigue, dizziness, chest discomfort and fainting are some symptoms of arrhythmia.

A typical pacemaker is monitored at office visits and may interact with a device that "looks like a remote control that sits on the

patient's chest and communicates with the pacemaker via infra red," explained Dr. Kanner. Another type of monitoring is "through the telephone but only battery and overall function" can be determined," he said. "It's remote but not wireless."

With the Evia pacemaker "the home based monitor interacts wirelessly with the pacemaker and is

completely mobile via cell phone technology," Dr. Kanner explained. The doctor would have an account with Biotronik and the pacemaker is usually monitored quarterly. The monitor sends a signal for the pacemaker to check itself and the message is sent via phone to Biotronik to the doctor's account and the doctor is alerted, Kanner continued. He pointed out that all pacemaker companies have the ability to monitor their pacemakers but Biotronik "put in the ability to get the message to the

doctor, having the pacemaker checking at home and notifying the doctor. The pacemaker self checks several times a day. If it has a dead battery or broken wire it sends an alert via the monitor through internet-based remote monitoring. In such a life threatening situation the doctor can be paged or faxed. The doctor can be found."

Kanner said that Evia's most "novel feature" is closed loop stimulation, linked to the autonomic nervous system. "It gets an idea of what the blood pressure is by looking at electrical readings," explained Kanner. "It does a pretty good job of restoring the autonomic nervous system." Most pacemakers only control the heart rate, he said.

"Some people pass out when the blood pressure is dropping," he continued. "It senses the drop before the problem (sets in) and starts pacing more rapidly to maintain blood pressure. It's the only pacemaker that responds to emotional stresses. All respond to motion such as walking faster. The Evia can respond to emotion. If someone is sitting at an intense game of cards and not moving, [closed loop stimulation] responds to that."

"There are all kinds of reasons for a pacemaker," Kanner pointed out. "Most patients have a routine pacemaker. The Evia is for specific issues."

"It's not normal to be dizzy and passing out and fatigued," Kanner stressed. If someone has these symptoms, "the patient should see a cardiologist and be evaluated."



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## Mi Sheberach: a prayer for the ill

The gabbai has just called up two men. One will lift the Torah (hagbah) while the other will roll it, wrap it and close it up (glilah). Before they strut their stuff, however, there is a slight pause as the gabbai announces, "Mi sheberach. Please approach the bimah."

The slight pause becomes a longer pause.

### IN MY VIEW



Avi Billet

Sometimes five or even seven minutes go by before hagbah-man actually lifts the Torah. People are getting antsy. Some have already taken off their tefillin in disgust. Many are talking. And the gabbai is reading names, repeating names, messing-up names, correcting the mess-ups, and saying more names.

To be sure, this is very important stuff. We pray that the One who blessed our forefathers please bless all the ill among the Jewish people. "As the congregation is praying on behalf of the sick people, so should G-d please bless the people we are mentioning, as well as all of the sick in the people Israel. Amen."

Are Mistery Antsy, Disgust, and Talking really praying for these people? They are pray-

ing they don't miss the train!

Some shuls have eliminated the delay by having the gabbai announce, "When I pause, please insert the names of the ill for whom you wish to pray." A five-to-ten second pause during which all assembled can think of their ill loved ones is not too unbearable, even for those who are blessed to have no one ill in their family.

On Shabbat, some shuls recite a collective, universal Mi Sheberach which encourages the entire congregation to participate, to avoid the monotony of the gabbai's recitation and the unbearable pause which accompanies the reading of dozens of names.

But for the shuls that still announce every name, how do they deal with Mistery Antsy, Disgust and Talking?

First of all, those gentlemen need to relax and take the proverbial "chill pill."

Having said that, however, what of the concept of "tircha d'tzibura" (burden on the congregation, typically caused by a delay in the service)? Consider that in 139:17 the Mishneh Brurah suggests one who is called to the Torah for an aliyah say the blessings with the Torah open so as not to delay the congregation with rolling open the Torah when it is time to read! How much time does it take to roll open a Torah? One second! If that can be considered "tircha d'tzibura," certainly the exhaustive list, which includes many difficult to pronounce Yiddish names (Shprintze Mushke Baila bas Yeta Frima Zissel) goes

unappreciated by many, especially those who do not contribute names to the list, because it isn't part of the davening and it stops the flow for much longer than one second.

Which leads us to ask, what constitutes a "choleh," an ill person who belongs on the list? I have been congested for two days as I write this. Am I a "choleh?" I remember a friend of mine coming to shul one day when his 1-year-old son had a cold. He included his son in the mi sheberach. Considering that children on average get sick at least three times a year (an important process to go through to help build up their immunities), does every fever constitute a true "illness"?

What about a person who is terminally ill? Or a person at a later stage of parkinsons or alzheimers ("lo aleinu")? At this stage of medical research, these people do not get better. There are better and worse days, but there is no cure. As there is a private prayer for the ill which can be recited during the Shmoneh esrei, is it proper to take up the congregation's time mentioning an ill person who will not be cured?

Before the good readers harangue my apparent "lack of faith," two stories — one Talmudic, the other contemporary:

The Talmud recounts the relationship and fallout of Rabbi Yochanan and Reish Lakish. After Reish Lakish died, Rabbi Yochanan went into depression and lost his reason. The rabbis prayed for mercy, and Rabbi Yochanan died (see the very end of Bava Metia 84a).

I recall speaking with a well known educator whose father was suffering from Alzheimer's: the disease took away his soul. He could barely communicate, and his body had only physical needs. The person I know consulted with a great posek who told him it is OK to pray that the suffering end (ie, that his father should die). (See, for example, Tzitz Eliezer Vol. 5, 28:6, who provides a formulized text for such a prayer.) While I am not suggesting one go to such an extreme, I am confident he did not include his father's name in the regular mi sheberach because he believed, in consonance with modern medicine, that the only improvement his father could achieve was the equalizing end of suffering called death. He may have had his own mixed feelings when he thought of his father during prayer, but they were private.

Do not take my comments thus far to suggest the mi sheberach is meaningless and can only be used in certain circumstances. Of course a terminally ill patient and a person suffering from any affliction can use prayers and mi sheberachs. The question is, when does the mi sheberach have to come at the relative "expense" of the flow of the davening?

The anonymity of the ill person, namely just the Hebrew name and no last name, makes it much easier for the general populace to care less and less. If they know who

Continued on next page

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# Opinion

## Mi Sheberach: a prayer for the ill

Continued from page 1

the person is, and the relationship, they can appreciate the name better and may even be interested in hearing the person's name in the prayer. Without that, most of the Hebrew names mean about the same amount to people as reading the list of donors to a museum or the names on a memorial for any battle or war to which most of us have no connection.

We are blessed to live in a time of increasing longevity. Many people in their forties and some even in their fifties still have living grandparents. In addition, our families are much larger and our social networks are much larger than they were thirty or forty years ago. We all know a lot of people, and, sadly, we know many people who are not in the best of health.

Aging is the way of the world. Health issues that come with aging are also the way of the world. It is certainly appropriate for a person to personally pray on behalf of anyone who is in need of help.

The question is — what criteria should go into putting a person's name

in a public mi sheberach — as opposed to a generic-with-no-names public mi sheberach?

I think tircha d'tzibura (unnecessarily delaying the flow of the davening) is a major factor to consider. Bearing in mind that Misters A, D and T are present, I posit that saying "ba'avur shekol hakahal mitpal'lim ba'avuram" — that our prayers on behalf of the ill should be listened to on account of the fact that the entire congregation is praying for them — is a lie every time the entire congregation is not reciting the mi sheberach in unison.

What is to be done?

Perhaps people can truly reflect on why they insist on placing names into the mi sheberach. Some people get so hung up about it, they think the merit of mentioning a person's name in the mi sheberach on a regular basis will help cure the ill person. I tend to disagree, primarily because I think there is a better formula for praying on someone's behalf — namely adding the person's name, three times a day, to one's private shmoneh esrei in the supplication during the eighth blessing,

R'fa'einu ("Heal us"). It takes up no one else's time, it is personal, it is meaningful, and it is six times more regular than the thrice weekly mi sheberach (18 times a week in total). It can cause us to really reflect and to really petition in a sincere way how and why we wish for the ill people in our lives to be healed.

Let us reserve the mi sheberach with mentioned names for the people in our community, for members of our individual shuls (whom we all know) who are known to be afflicted with illness, be it cancer, a coma, a serious car accident, recovering from a heart attack, etc. Perhaps we can even announce, "We are praying for Mr. X, Mr. Y and Mr. Z, and for Mrs. A, Mrs. B, and Ms. C who are in need of our prayers. Mi sheberach avotaynu..." Let us recite our own personal list of friends, relatives, relatives of friends, etc in every shmoneh esrei we say individually.

Those who need our personal prayers will benefit from them. Those who need communal prayers will benefit from them. No one will be a liar, no one will get upset, and everyone will have the opportunity to make the davening a more personal experience, an experience that is intuitively caring, one which allows all participants to feel pleased with the flow and pace and the sensitivity to avoid "tircha d'tzibura."

### What criteria goes into putting a person's name on the list?

### A personal prayer and a prayer for the sake of the community

Prayer of Pachad Yitzchak to end suffering, as quoted by Rabbi Eliezer Waldenberg (Tzitz eliezer Vol 5 28:6):

.....

Please, God, with the power of Your great mercy and abundant kindness, may it be Your will to remove - from the prisons where chained souls are found - the soul of \_\_\_\_\_ and remove him/her from his/her suffering speedily in our day, and let the spirit return to God who gave the spirit [in the first place.]

From the Siddur of Rav Amram Gaon

.....

The One who blessed Abraham, Isaac and Jacob our forefathers, may he bless our brothers and sisters of the nation of Israel who come to the synagogue for prayer and to do righteousness (ie give charity). May the Holy One Blessed be He listen to the sound of their prayers and fulfill their desires and all they ask for, for good. Let us say Amen.

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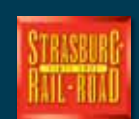


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# Gilad in Times Square

## Billboard seeks concern, care for hostage



By Elana Dure

At Times Square, known as the crossroads of the world, seven words flash across a 30-by-40 square foot, hi-definition digital billboard: Let Gilad know he is not alone.

Corporal Gilad Shalit marked his 24th birthday on August 28, — his fifth birthday as a hostage of Hamas, which kidnapped him from an IDF border patrol in June of 2006. He is denied contact with the outside world.

Attempts to secure his release have thus far been unsuccessful.

The hard-to-miss billboard is on the W Hotel at 47th Street in Times Square where it can be seen by thousands. The video short about Shalit will be shown four times per hour daily, through Sept. 5. It launched on Aug 30. The billboard presents a 30-second video excerpt and the full video can be seen online at [giladgreetings.org](http://giladgreetings.org).

The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations is sponsoring the site and billboard, which is intended to give people around the world the opportunity to express their unity with Shalit. The site also urges the International Committee of the Red Cross to compel Hamas to allow the ICRC to visit Shalit and establish that his conditions of confinement abide by international laws. The site encourages and enables people to send digital greeting cards to Shalit, either for his birthday or for Rosh Hashana. Printed cards can also be sent by mail to the Conference of Presidents or dropped off at participating JCCs, many of which are listed



Photos courtesy of Conference of Presidents

**Billboards for Gilad Shalit.**  
on the site. The Conference of Presidents will deliver the cards to the ICRC and the ICRC will bring the cards to Shalit. These greeting cards from the general public are intended to let Gilad know that he is not alone. Letters can be sent to:

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Living history

# The Prime Ministers by Yehuda Avner

Reviewed by Mayer Fertig

History books are usually boring and historical figures are usually dead. "The Prime Ministers: An Intimate Narrative of Israeli Leadership" and its author, Ambassador Yehuda Avner, are neither. Avner, who was a key aide and advisor to five Israeli premiers — Levi Eshkol, Golda Meir, Yitzhak Rabin, Menachem Begin and Shimon Peres — not only had a ringside seat during decades of history, but he also took notes. To read his written words are to hear his voice as he offers a behind-the-scenes, fly-on-the-wall account of Israel's first 50 years.

In an interview on the Jewish Star's Internet radio show (What's Next; Thursdays @ 2p on nachumsegal.com) the ambassador, now 82, told Miriam L. Wallach and me about the night Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated, how Menachem Begin grounded El Al on Shabbos, what the censors wouldn't allow him to publish, and which prime minister told which president: "You are the president of 150 million Americans; I am the prime minister of six million prime ministers'.

"That was Golda Meir to Nixon," said Avner, for the record. "I have it verbatim. If you'll hold on the line for 10 minutes I'll find it."

We took his word for it as he had already explained the secret behind this remarkable first person memoir. "I was always involved in sensitive meetings, officially scribbling notes, and then I would transcribe those notes for the official record," Avner said. "But then I

became a naughty boy. I never destroyed my scribbles ... and I held on to them, so when I retired I realized that I had this treasure trove of unbelievable, authentic, first-hand material."

Avner's book stands out for that reason. Wherever he uses quotations he is offering a direct quote based on his notes rather than relying on the more common technique of memoirists who paraphrase words into their subjects' mouths based on memories from across the years. "You have to imagine, I'm sitting in my study and I'm surrounded by numbered files, there must be about 300 of them," Avner cheerfully explained in the British accent that has remained with him since making aliyah from Manchester to Jerusalem as a teen-aged Bnei Akiva leader in 1947. "I must be a nutter to keep all this material."

He had "tremendous problems with the censor," he said. An appeal before a committee of cabinet ministers to rescue three chapters was unsuccessful. "Anything that had to do with psychological warfare, he erased. Anything that had to do with military intelligence, he expunged, and anything that had to do with Israel's nuclear capabilities he wouldn't even allow me to look

at, even after I'd written it," Avner disclosed.

Avner held "tremendous affection" for Levi Eshkol, found Golda Meir a "daunting figure," "had a very close relationship" with Yitzhak Rabin, having worked with him for nearly a decade, and called Shimon Peres "an extraordinary, extraordinary individual" and a workaholic.

But Menachem Begin was his favorite.

"It's not so much because of ideological reasons — I was never in Likud," Avner explained, "but because to me he was ... the ultimate Jew, if you like. I am an observant Jew and it was rather lonely on occasions, over the decades in which I worked with these secular prime ministers. Menachem Begin came along, and he knew what Shabbat was, and he insisted that all public engagements be kosher."

Begin instructed Avner to make certain that a state dinner being held in his honor by President Jimmy Carter would be strictly kosher, "and I inadvertently started off a war of kosher caterers," recalled Avner with a laugh. Kosher events at the White House are common today but then it was a first, and a big relief to Avner, who was a veteran of state dinners and of making do, "while everyone else was chomping on their pheasant."

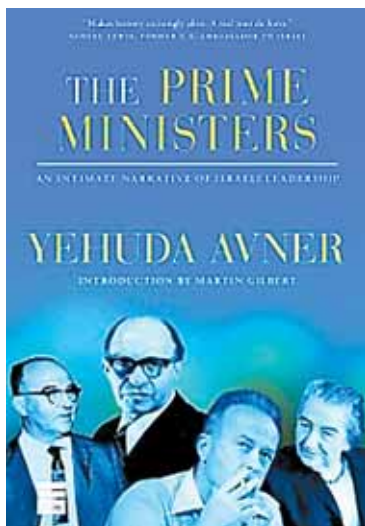
On an earlier occasion, he recalled, "When President Ford was hosting Prime Minister Rabin and everybody had been served their, whatever it was, luscious meaty stuff ... eventually I was served and it looked like fireworks" compared to the non-kosher food served to the other guests.

"I had this base of lettuce as thick as a bible, on top of that was a mound of chopped, diced fruit, on top of that was a blob of cottage cheese, on top of that was a swish of whipped cream. It stood about a foot high and Barbara Walters was sitting next to me and she began to applaud. And the President leaned over to Rabin and whispered something in his ear and Rabin whispered something back into his, whereupon the President stood up, raised his glass and called out to me, 'Happy Birthday, young fella.' With that the whole room stood up and they began to chant 'Happy Birthday.' The problem was that they had misspelled my name card. Instead of Yehuda they'd written 'Yeduha' and everyone was singing 'Happy Birthday dear Yeduha.'"

But the best part of the story occurred later when he asked Rabin what had possessed him to tell President Ford that it was his birthday. "What else should I have told him, the truth?" Rabin shot back. "And tomorrow there would be a headline in the newspapers that you had kosher and I didn't and the religious parties will bolt the cabinet and I'll have a government crisis on my hands! Atah meshugah?! Are you crazy?"

Years later, when Rabin was elected prime

else was chomping on their pheasant." *Continued on page 24*



**Wishing you a happy, healthy, prosperous  
New Year, may this year bring peace to Jerusalem**

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5 7:00 AM - MIDNIGHT	6 7:00 AM - MIDNIGHT	7 7:00 AM - MIDNIGHT	8 6:30 AM - 5:00 PM	9 ROSH HASHANA CLOSED	10 ROSH HASHANA CLOSED	11 CLOSED
12 7:00 AM - 7:00 PM	13 7:00 AM - 7:00 PM	14 7:00 AM - 8:00 PM	15 7:00 AM - 10:00 PM	16 7:00 AM - MIDNIGHT	17 6:30 AM - 3:00 PM	18 YOM KIPPUR CLOSED
19 7:00 AM - MIDNIGHT	20 7:00 AM - MIDNIGHT	21 7:00 AM - MIDNIGHT	22 6:30 AM - 5:00 PM	23 SUCCOS CLOSED	24 SUCCOS CLOSED	25 CLOSED
26 7:00 AM - 9:00 PM	27 7:00 AM - 9:00 PM	28 7:00 AM - MIDNIGHT	29 6:30 AM - 4:30 PM	30 SHMINI ATZERES CLOSED	1 SIMCHAS TORAH CLOSED	2 CLOSED



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# L'SHANA TOVA



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## The Kosher Bookworm

# New and old takes on repentance

The classical rabbinic writings of teshuvah, repentance, are found in great number on the shelves of Jewish libraries worldwide. Teshuvah has been the center of much Jewish theological thought and discussion. However, for the most part, those interested in teshuvah were forced to content themselves with simple translations, mediocre commentaries and numerous well-intentioned rabbinic sermons that attempted to make teshuvah relevant to today's world.

On the other hand, "Ascending the Path: Insights Into Rabbi Moshe Hayyim Luzzatto's Mesillat Yesharim" is a successful and practical classic. The commentary by Rabbi Yaakov Hillel, the rosh yeshiva of Yeshivat Ahavat Shalom in Jerusalem, goes into practical detail to explain the concepts of teshuvah and the value of its effective and successful practice for contemporary Jewry today. The

book is helpful to both the uninitiated and the learned. Rabbi Hillel's success is apparent in his colloquial, yet eloquent, language which brings opens this once closed book to the thousands of Jews who can benefit from it. For that we are indebted to Debra and Richard Parkoff of Lawrence whose untiring

efforts enabled this work to see the light of day. This book will surely help many gain spiritual enhancement during the upcoming holidays. The Ramchal's spiritual legacy has been enhanced through this effort. Hopefully the Parkoff example will inspire others to do likewise on behalf of other classical Jewish works.

This year also witnessed the publication of "Repentance: The Meaning and Practice of Teshuva", [Jewish Lights, 2010], by Dr. Louis Newman, a professor of religious studies at Carlton College in Minnesota. Dr. Newman presents a modern rendition of the ancient concept of teshuvah, thus making it understandable and comprehensible to those for whom repentance, as a religious code of behavior, is a foreign mode of conduct.

Admittedly, teshuvah is a complex subject and Newman is the first to acknowledge this. The book is organized as

a discussion with the reader rather than lecture to the otherwise uninitiated.

The concepts of sinfulness, and atonement as well as their psychological, moral and spiritual dimensions are dealt with in a non-adversarial manner. Each concept is given its due, and supplemented with examples and quotes from the familiar contemporary scene. The presentation gives the reader the feeling that what is being brought to them is of a relevance, worth both their immediate and serious attention.

For the majority of Jews today, the call to teshuvah, as garbed in the tone of the old order, rings hollow. This does not mean that teshuvah is an irrelevant concept, but rather that the methods employed to teach and explain it are in need of a new manner of presentation and vocabulary. In this regard, Newman performs well. Under Newman's careful hands, old values and concepts are not compromised. There is no debunking of religious synagogue,

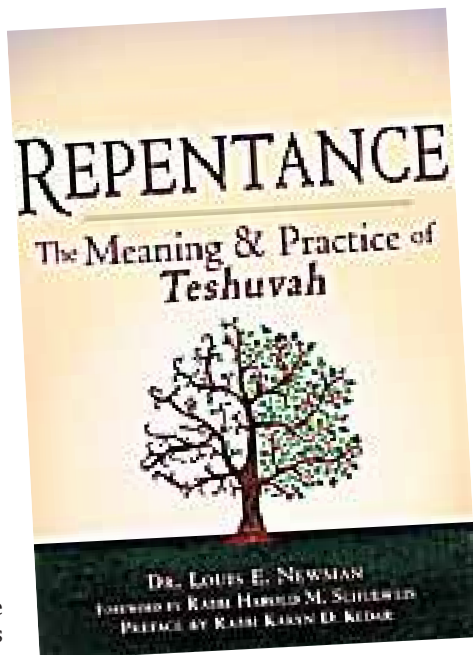
home-based ritual, time honored sacred mitzvot and other "old time" strictures. Rather, Newman gives our faith and its quest for human spiritual progress a new and refined purpose, a new glow to make any religious traditionalist proud.

"Repentance: The Meaning and Practice of Teshuva" represents a new genre of literature in this field that will hopefully make the high holiday experience more meaningful to those of us who are unschooled in the deeper meanings of Teshuva.

Once again, The Sh'or Yeshuv Institute is to be complimented for publicizing another liturgical commentary by Rabbi Yitzchok Sender of Chicago. This year's brief 36-page study is titled, "An In Depth Study of the Rosh Hashanah Mussaf Prayer." The work explains some of the concepts that went into the structure of the longest continuous liturgical service of the Jewish year. Rabbi Sender describes the basic order of prayer, the differences between Ashkenaz and Sefard prayer services, the position of Rabbi Yochanan ben Nuri concerning Kedushas Hashem and the attendant sections at the heart of the service. Rabbi Sender also gives a detailed explanation of the 10 verses of the three basic sections of Malchiyos, Zichronos, and Shofros. This handsome little booklet is a great supplement to your machzor and is available through the yeshiva by calling 516-239-9002. You will not regret the effort nor the study of Rabbi Sender's scholarship.



Alan Jay Gerber




## Wishing everyone a Sweet, Happy & Healthy New Year



Elizabeth (Liz) Berney  
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Republican Candidate, U.S. Congress,  
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# My Brooklyn boyhood

## Q & A with Martin Lemelman

**Michael Orbach: Why did you write "Two Cents Plain: My Brooklyn Boyhood"?** 1996.

Martin Lemelman: My first book, a graphic memoir, "Mendel's daughter," was the story of my mother surviving the Holocaust: how she lived in the forest in a hole where she hid with her two brothers and sisters. That was just her voice. I didn't intend on continuing the story but after I finished it, I thought I really need to continue. Initially it was my own story — how I dealt with my parents who were survivors — but it evolved into something more: their memories and their experiences in America as immigrants.

**MO: What was the process of remembering these events like?**

ML One thing leads to another. It's kinda funny how memory comes about. I smelled cardboard and I thought about the back of the candy store where my father kept all the merchandise, where we lived. It's kind of a literal remembering, but sometimes it's almost visceral. When I rub my thumb and forefinger together I feel the tail of the mouse that I killed.

**MO: The book has an organic feel to it.**

ML: I wanted it to be like that. I wanted it to have a feel of we're all sitting around the table. My memory is contradictory to my mother's and she tells me I don't know what I'm talking about.

**MO: When did your parents pass away?**

ML: My father passed away in 1984 and my mother in

**MO: What is the story about?**

ML: The story is about parents who come to America with two different versions of what America is. They make a life and through what happens to them, you not only find out about their lives, but about the immigrant experience.

**MO: How did your parents differ in their view of America?**

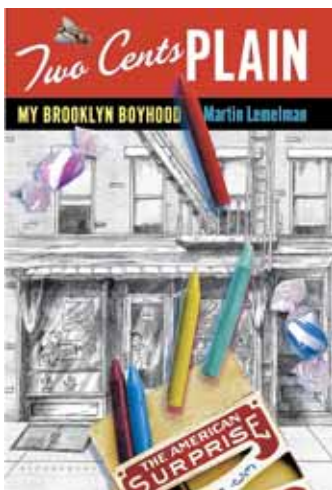
ML: My father wanted the idea of the golden land, [where] he could make it big and my mother wanted to live a regular life. In contrast, my mother was willing to integrate into society — she learned English; my father felt he lost a lot, he was kinda cheated out of his life in Europe. He wanted to be rich but he refused to learn the language. Up to the day he passed away, he was a stranger in a strange land.

**MO: What was your childhood like?**

ML: It was really interesting and very rich. It wasn't great sleeping in the back of the candy store, but it was wonderful getting up in the middle of the night and getting ice cream. It was nice, but it was hard to live with two parents who were damaged. I was lucky to have a brother whom I could rely on.

**MO: Is it a sad book?**

ML: No. Basically it sounds like a cliché, but it's life: funny and sad. It has hope. Is it a sad book? It's how you grow up and how people deal with life.





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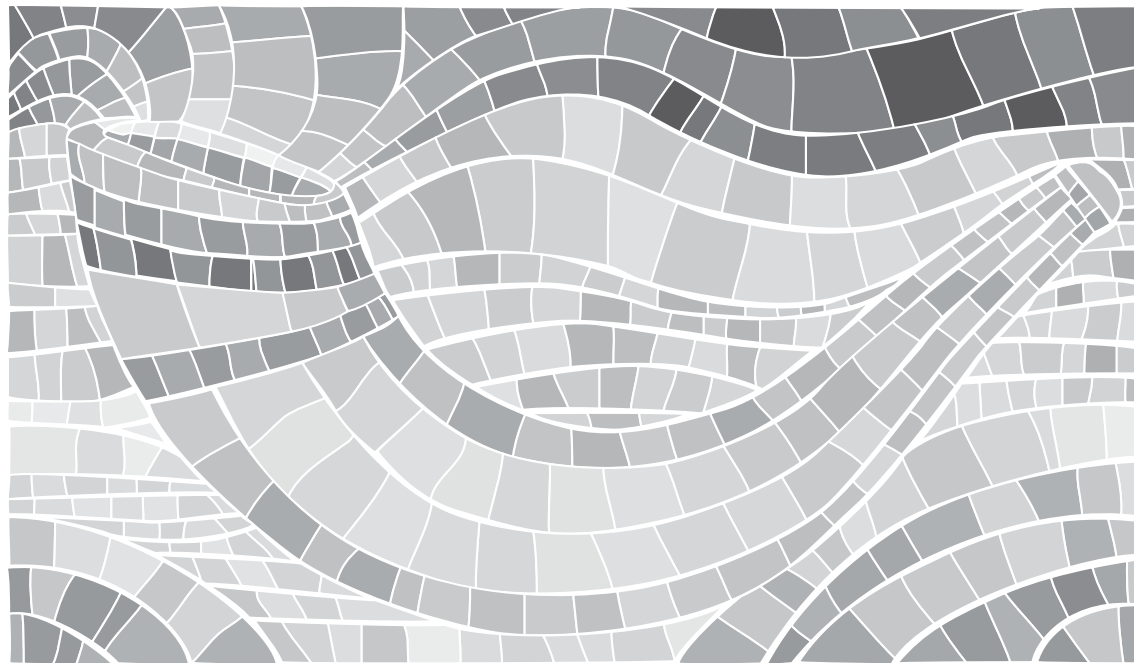
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# Our Collective Voice



We are a people of many passions, viewpoints, and traditions.

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## Opinion

### What Busher means

**A**lmost everyone with an interest in the Middle East has an opinion on the opening of Busher, the Iranian nuclear plant. Newspapers, weeklies, radio and TV news are all editorializing, hypothesizing and predicting. But more interesting than the Western press is what the regional press is saying.

**I'M THINKING**



**Micah D. Halpern**

Understanding the local press is critical to understanding the regional impact Busher will have. The ripple effect of this nuclear plant will no doubt be felt throughout the Middle East. The West will have to respond and the response that has the best chance of success will understand what Busher means not only to Iran, but to Iran's friends, enemies and neighbors.

So what are Iran's neighbors saying? Hezbollah's leader Nasrallah has made a very powerful argument for building this plant. According to Nasrallah, "Building the Busher nuclear power plant was cheaper than Lebanon's investment in its power grid. I call on the government to build a nuclear power station to produce electricity, which we can then sell to Syria, Cyprus and other countries in the region." In other words, Nasrallah wants Lebanon on board. He wants it to emulate Iran and has begun to lobby Lebanon's government to that end.

The government of Kuwait is in complete dis-

agreement with Nasrallah. Kuwait News Agency, KUNA, covered the opening of Busher by explaining that their country is petrified that a leak, meltdown or attack will endanger their people, their water and their natural resources. In an open and honest evaluation of the impact of Busher on their country KUNA writes that "Kuwait's concern is based on fears of any leaks due to natural causes that may have future consequences."

SUNA, the Sudan News Agency, has weighed in, too. Remember, Sudan is a thugocracy, responsible for mass murders in Darfur. And Sudan has declared that they, too, want to develop a nuclear power plant. Sudanese energy officials have already begun talking to the UN nuclear watchdog about opening not one, but two nuclear plants. In fact, SUNA reports that Sudan has already received permission for the plants; construction on the first is set for 2020.

For their part, the International Atomic Energy Agency — the world's watch dog for everything nuclear, is saying that the Sudanese plants are for research and research only.

Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia have already begun either investigating or planning their own reactors. Syria's, built by North Korea, has already been blown up by Israel.

Israel's reaction to Busher is clear, obvious and has been made very public.

Regional tensions are high. Fear is palpable. Busher has taken on a life of its own. The West will have to tread forcefully, but carefully.

*Micah D. Halpern is a columnist and a social and political commentator. Read his latest book THUGS. He maintains The Micah Report at [www.micahhalpern.com](http://www.micahhalpern.com).*



*Wishing you and your family a joyous & peaceful New Year.*

**Jeff Toback**

Democratic Primary Candidate for 20th Assembly District

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## That time of year

There are certain periods of time that one can set their clock to. If you are a Yankee fan, the end of August means you can begin planning for the post-season. If you are a Met fan, you begin planning for the off-season. If you are of school age, you can begin pestering your parents to buy you

**FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BENCH**



David Seidemann

all of the school supplies that you never used last year. If you are a teacher, you count the days till the first scheduled vacation. If you happen to be a cantor, you begin to clear your voice. If you are the rabbi, you begin to clear your schedule. And if you are a simple congregant, you begin to clear your conscience.

If you are the President of the of the United States and are two short months away from either the mid-term elections or the general elections, you begin your traditional foray into the Middle East peace process. You convince yourself that you will be that

one president that will be able to accomplish what no other president has been able to.

And no matter how many times we reset the clock, the result is pretty much the same. Each year at this time, every 2-4 years, it's not so much that we pray for new things; rather, we pray that those dreams which we have envisioned again and again will finally come true.

But there is a difference between dreams and reality. Dreams are what occur when one's eyes are closed. To affect reality one must have their eyes open. One must plan ahead. One must have foresight and a strong grip on reality. The Yankees win because they build with their eyes open. The cantor chants with his voice box open. The rabbi speaks with his mouth open and the wayward return with their hearts open. Each of the above also succeed because they refuse to embark on a fool's errand.

With open eyes the impossible becomes possible. With closed eyes even the possible becomes impossible.

The cantor who can't carry a tune can't inspire. The preacher who can't carry the message can't deliver. The sinner who can't refrain from his desires can't return. The enemy who can't lay down the sword can't make peace. The cantor's partner is his prayer book. The rabbi's partner is his

Torah. The sinner's partner is his belief in redemption.

The cantor's prayer book, the rabbi's Torah and the returnee's belief, all invite their counterpart to engage in efforts that will sustain life. They do that by containing expressions of hope and acknowledgment of the other's right to exist and grow and develop. Without that promise of "you carry me and I'll carry you," they would indeed be embarking on a fool's errand.

And so at this point, dream as I must, I can't place this week's Middle East peace initiative in the category of the cantor, the rabbi, and the soul wishing to return. Absent is the voice from the other side that proclaims "my sword is laid aside my eyes are open my house is in order, my factions are united in wanting to make peace with Israel."

Who are we dealing with? Peace with Fatah only to have to endure the misery of Hamas, Hezbollah, Syria and Iran? Peace with Fatah that will be rejected by the other parties? Concessions to Fatah that will enable Hamas and Hezbollah to be within closer striking distance? Is it really any different this time? Are our eyes open or shut?

For some strange reason I have faith in Bibi that he will not sprint onto a fool's errand. I somehow feel that this time, while the plan from Washington is the same, the


result will be different. I don't know why. I just feel that Israel finally has had enough of compromising her future to gain favor in others' closed eyes.

In that respect I see a silver lining in the present attitude of Washington's treatment of Israel. They have made it abundantly clear that Israel and only Israel can secure its own future. I hope Bibi sees what I see. Intifada

Perhaps I am naïve but I see it ending differently this time. Either the Palestinians will finally come to their senses or they won't. In the past, Israel has had to endure an intifada when the Arabs refused to see reality. They acted with impunity because Israel allowed them to. I feel times have changed. The people of Israel have changed and perhaps even Bibi has changed. If so then "never again" might really mean "never again"

Many a dream is launched in Washington. I prefer to keep my eyes open to the reality. Hopefully Bibi's eyes are wide-open too.


*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*



*Wishing you and your family a healthy, joyous and prosperous New Year*

**Francis X Becker, Jr.**  
Nassau County Legislature  
Candidate for Congress

396254




*L'Shana Tova,  
Wishing All Of My Friends A  
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## Editorial

## Tell it to the orphans

The news kept getting worse on Tuesday. A terrorist attack near what turned out to be Kiryat Arba. Four people shot and injured. Then three dead, CPR in progress on a fourth. Then four dead, one a pregnant woman. Nearly a dozen new orphans, and then the detail that could have pushed anyone over the edge: the ZAKA volunteer who responded to the scene to ensure the respectful burial of the dead, and discovered that his wife was among the victims. Chills and tears revisit as the words are typed.

Hebron spokesman David Wilder called the attack “pure, unadulterated barbarity” — an understatement considering that after shooting the car the terrorists fired again at close range just to make sure the four were dead. Wilder asked: “You know what it’s like to inform ten kids that their parents aren’t coming home anymore, that they were killed by terrorists an hour ago?”

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was on his way to Washington for “peace talks.” Various groups urged him to turn his plane around and return to Israel, canceling his planned

direct negotiations with the powerless, duplicitous Palestinian president.

In the post-9-11 spirit of “Don’t let the terrorists win” we find it difficult to say cancel peace talks, even over this tragedy. Why give these cruel killers power over any event beyond the ones they create? The real problem with these talks is how they were a fool’s errand to begin with. How do you enter into serious negotiations with someone who demonstrates — through his Arabic comments, through his failure to rein in terrorism or anti-Israel school curricula, by honoring terrorists with street signs — that he is not a true partner?

Why bother? Politics, US pressure and world opinion all factor into the answer, of course.

These are terrible decisions that Israel’s leaders have to make. Sitting in the seat of power, being pressured by the White House, certainly means seeing a different view than the rest of us. As we edge closer to Rosh Hashanah, day by day, we pray that G-d gives Netanyahu and his advisers the guidance and wisdom they’ll need to make the best decisions.

## The Prime Ministers by Yehuda Avner

Continued from page 16

minister for a second time, Avner returned from Australia at Rabin’s request to work for him once again but just two days later Rabin was murdered.

“I was at the hospital that night. Need I say it was not only shocking, it was frightening — terribly frightening,” Avner somberly recalled. “The mind goes into a certain shock. It’s a combination of shock and self-protection. It’s an acknowledgement that what has happened is so much beyond belief that it is really beyond belief.”

A notable achievement of Begin’s, as recounted by Ambassador Avner, was grounding El Al’s fleet on Shabbos.

“I can tell you it didn’t happen because of coalition considerations, although at the time the Agudah had become a very important part of his coalition. Be-

gin told me weeks beforehand that ‘boosha v’cherpa, that it is a shame and a disgrace that El Al is flying on Shabbat.’ And I said, ‘You’re ready to take on the El Al union,’ which was one of the strongest of the unions? And he said, ‘B’zmano, in the proper time.’ And there came the proper time when he made that extraordinary speech in the Knesset, when some of the left wingers were constantly trying to heckle him and he used the expression that, ‘It is inconceivable that our blue and white planes should demonstrate chilul Shabbat for all the world to see, Jews and gentiles.’ And ever since, El Al has ceased flying on Shabbat.”

“The Prime Ministers, An Intimate Narrative of Israeli Leadership” (The Toby Press) is over 700 pages long but you have my word on this: it reads like a novel. Without a doubt this unforgettable book should be required reading in every Yeshiva high school.

## Letters to the editor

## Open letter to Bayswater Jewish community

To the Editor:

I have lived in Bayswater for over 20 years; my children were raised in this community. When my daughter and her family were thinking about moving from Brooklyn I encouraged them to come to Bayswater. I thought she would find the warm, close-knit community we moved into when she was a baby, but instead my daughter and her family have experienced isolation and exclusion.

Both of my grandsons have pervasive developmental disorder (PDD) also known as autism spectrum disorder. Avrumi, the oldest, is more affected than his brother Yehuda. Avrumie is a handsome, sweet three-year-old, but he is just acquiring language and does not interact with others like typical children do. When my daughter takes Avrumi to shul, people stare at her while she tries to keep up with his constant motion, but no one talks to her; no one wants to understand. Numerous invitations for Shabbos meals she and her husband have extended have not been reciprocated. They have tried to be proactive. My daughter and her husband have talked with both religious and community leaders about the issue.

Reactions were unilaterally dismissive. They also tried to start a support group for parents of special needs children in the neighborhood. No one responded to their attempts. My grandchildren have no playmates in the community; my daughter and son-in-law have no

close friends in Bayswater. We have reached the point where we are seriously considering moving out of Bayswater to a more welcoming community.

If I believed my daughter’s family was the only one in the neighborhood experiencing rejection and isolation because of special needs children I would not be writing this letter. There are many other children in the neighborhood with challenges; many other parents who feel alone with their struggles. It is time to bring this issue out into the light and look at

what we can do as a community to make things better for children and adults with disabilities. Other Jewish communities have formed inclusion committees to research and address the needs of their isolated residents. One individual or even one

shul alone cannot create an inclusive community, but together much can be accomplished. Bayswater’s Jewish community has banded together successfully to address a number of issues including the eruv, the mikvah and the economic plight of some residents. It is time to draw upon this same spirit to address the needs of children and adults with disabilities and their families.

Diane Weiss  
Bayswater

## Carbon monoxide not the only danger

To the Editor:

Kudos for highlighting the hazards of blechs and related unsafe practices on your front page (“Hot food hazard for Shabbos”; August 27, 2010). Working at a major hospital, it is distressing to see that a disproportionate number of burn victims are from Jews and that hospital admissions spike each Yom Tov.

In response, some shuls have been proactive by devoting space on bulletin boards and sending periodic reminders to their kehillos to take extra care - particularly over a 3-day Yom Tov when the hazards are multiplied.

I commend Rabbonim that successfully minimize household risks by communicating safer halachic alternatives to flames for Neiros Shabbos, Yom Tov and Yizkor candles. When people use electric light, countless lives are potentially saved, people become less afraid of lighting Shabbos candles that will be left unattended, and it certainly avoids the danger and unfortunate chillul Hashem when individuals light regular candles in prohibited settings such as hospitals or hotels.

Rabbi Daniel Coleman  
Chaplain, North Shore University  
Hospital

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# only simchas!

Celebrating Jewish Life

## Marriages

Wedding of Chaya Mizrahi (Monsey, NY) & Aryeh Chaim Urist (West Hempstead, NY) — Aug. 29, 2010

Wedding of Ariel Fein (Lugano, Switzerland) & Sara Bluma Kruger (Bayswater, NY) — August 26, 2010

Wedding of Joshua Wenig (Woodmere, NY) & Laura Sussman (Woodmere, NY) — August 22, 2010

## Engagements

Engagement of Chani Gross (Baltimore, MD) & Elisha Zarecki (Toronto, Canada) — August 29, 2010

Engagement of Adam Finkelstein (West Hempstead, NY) & Tali Friedman (West Hempstead, NY) — August 29, 2010 (See story on page 27)

## Birth

Birth of Baby Girl to Yonina (Bomzer) & Shloime Kaufman (Brooklyn, NY) — August 26, 2010



Wedding of Josh Wenig & Laura Sussman

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# Parashot Nitzavim-Vayelech

## Some teshuva questions for your consideration

This Saturday night, the Ashkenazic communities begin to say Selichot in preparation for Rosh Hashana. Sephardim have been saying them since Rosh Chodesh Elul. I'll never forget the first night of Selichot in my yeshiva in Israel, when Rav Yehuda Amital, z"l, who passed away less than two months ago, would lead the yeshiva in his unique style of the traditional melodies.



Rabbi Avi Billet

I am sure I was not alone with the eerie sensation I'd feel up my spine as the hairs on the neck would stand up as the collective voice of the students of the yeshiva filled with

awe and trepidation as they responded to the kaddish.

It could be that yeshiva students go through the motions really well. And it could be that, as Israelis, the percentage of people who understood every word they were saying shattered the percentages of every group with whom I'd experienced Selichot before that.

One could easily be inspired to feel the need to do "teshuvah" — literally to return to G-d as much as possible in the waning hours of the final days of the year before Rosh Hashana.

Our parsha speaks of the day when "You will return to G-d... with all your heart and with all your soul." (30:2) This phrase is reminiscent of the commandment to love G-d with all your heart and soul (Devarim 6:5) as well as other similar commitments to G-d (4:29, 10:12, 26:16, 30:10). The commentaries talk about the greatness of teshuvah (repentance), mostly quoting the Talmud (Yoma 86a-b) which includes a number of qualities of teshuvah: "It brings healing to the world, it reaches the Throne of Glory, forgives viola-

tions, brings the redemption close, purposeful sins are judged like accidents (Resh Lakish says they are viewed as merits!), it lengthens a person's days."

The most simplistic way of looking at teshuvah is considering there are two ways one can sin: against G-d and against one's fellow man. Teshuvah, therefore, consists of repairing those relationships and committing to do things that will indicate you are sticking with the promise of the new you.

I call this "hypocritical thinking." I heard a story that the Gaon of Vilna would pay someone to tell him in what way he needs to improve. Who would otherwise criticize the Vilna Gaon?

Recognizing that we all need reminders now and then, and acknowledging that I am guilty of a number of these myself, here are a few questions for consideration which the Jewish Star offers everybody, free of charge.

Are we careful to wash, but forget to bench?

Are we careful to make sure there is a mashgiach in a kosher restaurant? And then do we allow ourselves to eat a soup or salad in a non-kosher restaurant — where there is surely no mashgiach?

Do we admonish others who say lashon hara about us? But don't admonish ourselves when we participate in similar conversations about others?

Do we raise our eyebrows at those who come late to shul, but don't back it up with coming on time ourselves?

Do we facilitate growth in learning and spirituality — giving our spouses the chance to attend the classes they want to or need to attend?

Do we spend our spare time catching up on missed TV shows? Do we spend any spare time catching up on Torah study (parsha, daf

yomi, halakha)?

Do we send our kids to yeshiva, complaining about tuition, and then make \$50,000 bar mitzvah bashes, or six-figure weddings?

Do we scream about modesty and the need to dress a certain way, and then forget about the same rules when they're inconvenient for us? (The story of the woman with the bikini and the tichel on Miami Beach during Pesach vacation always struck me as ironic.)

Do we use the computer for learning and for business, but also for...?

Do we set aside time for learning once a week? Do we set aside time for poker once a week? Do we learn and play poker together

within the same hour and a half? (Perhaps there are merits. On the other hand, maybe Talmud and poker are contradictory to one another.)

A thought for all the roshei yeshiva and rabbis — can we learn to say things that are permitted and to teach the "way we do things" as opposed to focusing on all the things that are "assur," prohibited?

Do we judge people favorably, giving them the benefit of the doubt? Or do we focus on their negative qualities and make all kinds of assumptions about them?

Do we honor and respect our children as much as we expect them to honor and respect us?

Living a purely honorable existence is near-impossible. Never doing anything wrong is impossible. But we ought to give it the best shot we can. As human beings, we are capable of more; we are capable of being better. We are capable of living to the beat of a more consistent drum.

Let us take these thoughts to mind and heart, and commit to doing teshuva, with all our heart and with all our soul.

**Living a purely honorable life is impossible. But we ought to give it our best shot.**

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Tali, finally its our turn  
*Will you marry me?*

## A brilliant idea Simcha on OnlySimchas.com

By Meira Davidowitz

It's not everyday that people get married through OnlySimchas.com.

Sure, everyone posts photos of their engagements, weddings and bar mitzvahs on the site. But on Aug. 29, the site featured a rather conspicuous advertisement: Two kids in their early teenage years in an old photograph — a boy with blonde hair and braces and a girl with glasses — superimposed across a red background.

The caption read: "Tali, finally it's our turn. Will you marry me?"

The advertisement and the accompanying proposal was from Adam Finkelstein to his long-time girlfriend, Tali Friedman. Finkelstein and Friedman, both of West Hempstead, grew up just down the block from one another on

Maple Street, and went to the Hebrew Academy of Nassau County for elementary school. They dated from when they were in fourth grade until they parted ways at the beginning of high school. They began dating again after they returned from Israel four years ago.

Both use the website regularly to check up on old friends and people they've lost touch with. Finkelstein figured OnlySimchas would be a good way to propose and he emailed the site about his idea along with a photograph of the two when they were in elementary school. The site posted the banner for the entire day, free of charge.

Friedman said yes to the proposal and photos from the couple's engagement are on, of course, OnlySimchas.com.

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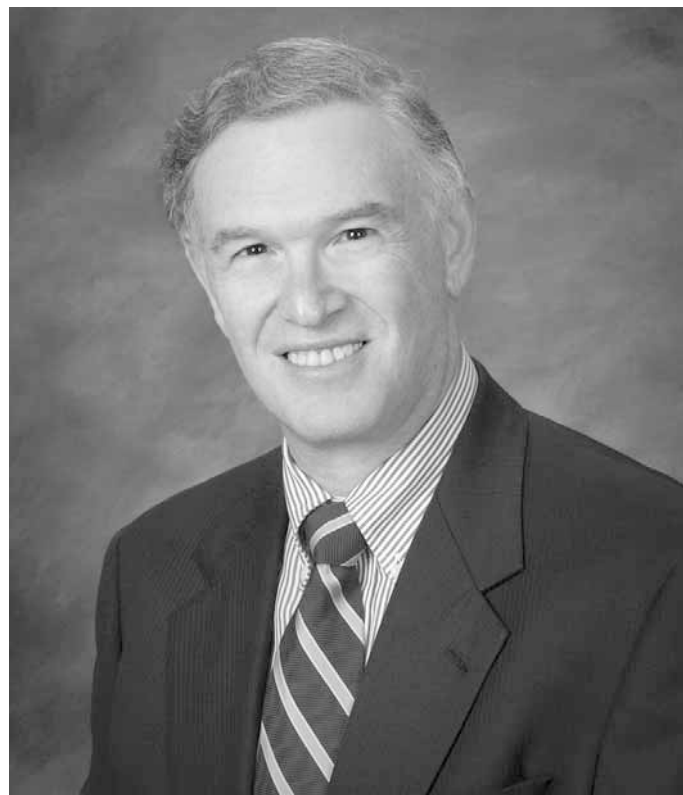
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# Plum surprising A most unusual yeshiva fundraiser

By Meira Davidowitz

All is not as it seems at Plum, an upscale boutique that opened in May at 85 Eldred Lane, just off Central Avenue in Cedarhurst.

For one thing, it's not a consignment shop; all the merchandise is from donors who receive a tax-deductible receipt for their gift. For another, the profits go to Yeshiva Darchei Torah's intervention programs: the Rabenstein Learning Center, the school's resource room; the Weiss Vocational Program, where high school students get hands-on instruction in a number of trades and technical fields; and the Adult Weiss Vocational Program, where adults can retrain for new careers.

Plum is "a way to make money without asking people to write a check," said Joel Kaplan, a Darchei board member and former president who supervises Plum. "It's a win-win all the way."

The yeshiva hired Chava Lowy to manage the store, "and she made the store gorgeous," Kaplan said in praise. Jazz plays in the background, the walls are purple and the atmosphere is relaxed. "We try to keep things young and exciting... not like a regular store," explained Lowy.

The shoppers and the merchandise at Plum are diverse and there is lots of activity at any given moment. One woman approaches the manager about a bag she saw the other day. Another woman wheels her stroller around the store, while a third places a bag of donations on the counter. On one table stands a stack of books about art and French furniture while another table displays women's hats. The tables are for sale, too.



Photo by Andrew Vardakis

Plum sells everything from fruit knives to light fixtures and, of course, clothing. Only high-end clothing makes it to the shelves (Gap and up). Plum offers designer wear for less — a lot less. "Most people are looking for a good find, a steal," Lowy said.

Along with two other women, Lowy sorts, inspects, prices, shelves, and sells the merchandise. Pricing is determined by demand, brand and an item's value on eBay, the online shopping and auction site. For example, jean skirts are more popular and therefore more expensive than jean pants.

Donations overflow a storage room in the back that is too full to walk into. Lack of storage space will not inhibit Plum and if there isn't enough room, the store plans to rent another space. Lowy used to rent maternity gowns from her home but moved the gowns to the store where she now spends most of her time. The gowns make a negligible profit, she reports, because most of the income goes into buying new gowns.

Plum is engaging the community. Last week, a Facebook page was created. A silent auction is planned along with a calendar of events for the store window. Lowy says she's also contemplating selling online.

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Photos by Zechariah Mehler

Top: Wolf and Lamb's pepper-crusted filet. Below, lamb merguez.

## Kosher Critic

# Wolf and Lamb

By Zechariah Mehler

A close friend once told me "I don't consider myself to be in a serious relationship with a girl until after I have brought her on a date to Wolf and Lamb." Intrigued by his attitude, I immediately made plans to visit this relationship-affirming restaurant. My first impression helped me understand why my friend would feature Wolf and Lamb so prominently in his dating routine.

Wolf and Lamb Steakhouse, located on 10 E 48th Street in Manhattan, is an inviting restaurant with exposed brick and an French-style open kitchen. The restaurant is described by its owners as classic American cuisine. I couldn't help but notice that on a random Wednesday night they were busy. Despite the crowd, it was not hard to get a table and, unlike most Manhattan restaurants, the people in the restaurant did not create a deafening cacophony of chatter.

Having asked for a sampling of their menu I was brought several appetizers. The first was a lamb merguez with garlic mashed potatoes. The lamb sausage was complex and flavourful with just enough spicy heat to leave a pleasant, warming aftertaste. Paired with the garlic mashed potatoes, this dish is in my all time top ten. Next up was a gravlax served on a bed of baby mesclun. The gravlax was cured in house using a fantastic cut of salmon and then sliced thick. Even though I am not much of a fan of lox I have to admit this was very very good. Next our waiter brought us a plate stacked high with southern fried pickles. At first the concept of a deep fried pickle was slightly alarming to me and then I tried them. Crunchy and delicious, I implore everyone who reads this to go out and try it. They are inexplicably good.

For our main dishes we sampled the pepper crusted filet and the pan-seared red snapper over a sweet corn puree. Cooked to perfection, the filet melts in the mouth and imparts that same pleasant heat that adds a real depth to the dish's flavor profile. The red snapper was clean and fresh-tasting and paired beautifully with the sweet corn chowder underneath it. For desert I was served a Belgian chocolate souffle and an apple cinnamon bread pudding with a warm apple chutney. Any regular reader of this column



knows of my affinity for chocolate, however, despite how amazing the Belgian chocolate souffle was, the shining star of my desert was the apple cinnamon bread pudding. Its texture was soft and light with a refreshing flavor reminiscent of french toast. The bread pudding is a must-try for any patron of Wolf and Lamb.

After a fabulous meal I spoke at length with the maitre d', Zalmen, a member of the family that owns Wolf and Lamb. Zalmen told me that the goal of his family's restaurant is to have elegantly presented delicious food without any pretension. They have made a point of making the restaurant as warm and inviting as possible and are always looking to add new and exciting items to their menu.

After this visit I understood why my dating friend made a point of coming here so often. At Wolf and Lamb you can eat a gourmet meal on par with any other kosher restaurant in the city.

The difference is that if you wanted to, you could also go to Wolf and Lamb and just get a burger or one of their delicious grilled sandwiches without needing to take a second mortgage on your home. You don't only go to Wolf and Lamb for special occasions since that would drastically limit your exposure to this wonderful place. It's the kind of restaurant you become a regular at, sample the whole menu and make a point of going to just because you can. A restaurant like this is rare in the kosher world and I am glad to have found it. Should you take my advice and begin frequenting this culinary jewel, look for me. I will be the one at the corner table eating the bread pudding and fried pickles.

Zechariah Mehler works in Kosher Marketing. Follow him on twitter @koshercritic

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Herald Community Newspapers seeks an experienced journalist to report for and edit one of our newspapers. The focus of our paper is community news; on the people in the neighborhoods we serve, covering the schools, events, government and the people, places and events that make our communities tick. Qualified candidates must have at least two years of newspaper or wire service experience in reporting and editing. Long Island residents a strong plus. Candidates must have driver's license, own car and cell phone. As a community journalist, you will be required to cover meetings and other evening events in the local community. Good salary and benefits. Qualified applicants should e-mail their resume and salary requirements to joconnell@liherald.com with EDITOR/REPORTER position as the subject line. MUST SUBMIT YOUR SALARY REQUIREMENTS. No phone calls, please.

### RECEPTIONIST FOR NEWSPAPER

Publisher and Self-Store Facility in Garden City needed. The ideal candidate should have excellent communications and customer service skills, be professional, be reliable and dependable and have reliable transportation. Candidate should have computer knowledge and working knowledge of MS Office. Candidate MUST be able to work a schedule of some weekday evenings and every weekend. Job Responsibilities include, but are not limited to: Answering phones and greeting customers, Assisting new customers by showing store facility options and pricing, Collecting payments from customers, Contacting customers for late payments, Ensuring building and facility is locked and secured prior to leaving, General administrative responsibilities, Candidate MUST be able to work the following schedule and must be reliable and dependable. Schedule: Saturday from 8 AM to 5 PM; Sunday from 10 AM to 4 PM; Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 2 PM to 8 PM Qualified candidates should email their resume, cover letter and salary requirements to hramoo@liherald.com.

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Photo by Miriam L. Wallach

Shoshana Wallach on The Beast, passing the 305-foot tall Lady Liberty.

## Dear That's Life,

There's a certain swagger, maybe confidence, or perhaps even arrogance that goes along with telling someone you're from New York. With that strut comes a major sense of pride. Saying you're a New Yorker means you are savvy, street-smart and have millions of people just like you back home. You, my friend, are a card-carrying member of the greatest state in the Union. You are in a New York state of mind.

A relative who grew up on Long Island but now lives in New Jersey told me last week that even while she and her family were on vacation, she told people she met along the way that she was a New Yorker. I reminded her that she drives a car with Jersey plates and had to give up her New York State driver's license years ago, officially making her a resident and member of the Garden State. And yet, she told me, it did not even occur to her to tell people she lived in New Jersey. She professed to "still" being a New Yorker and besides, she rationalized, who really tells people they are from New Jersey anyway?

Years ago, my husband and I went to Hawaii. On line at a supermarket, buying anything we could find with an OU, we stood next to what appeared to be other tourists and began to make small talk. "Where are you from?" is the easiest and most appropriate question to start with. "We're from New York," I said, dripping with pride. "We're from New Jersey!" She exclaimed, adding "I guess we're neighbors!" Um, not exactly. "We're neighbors *here*," I said jokingly. "But when we get back, I won't even know you." Bad, bad, snobby New Yorker. Shame on me.

New Yorkers: you can't pull the wool over our eyes nor can you convince us there's a bridge in Brooklyn that's for sale. We wear the hats of our favorite teams with glee and mock those who wear the paraphernalia of our opponents. We are the chosen people. And we can pick an out-of-towner out of a crowd faster than we can say Bloomberg.

Having chosen to spend one of this week's absurdly hot days in Manhattan, I took two of my girls on The Beast — the Circle Line Speedboat tour of New York Harbor with exceptional views of Lady Liberty. We were warned about getting wet. which on such

a hot day was really the best news we had heard, and told that loose sunglasses or hats were going to quickly end up as property of the Hudson River. "Take your hat off if you want to keep it," said the guide, "unless it's a Boston hat — then, I don't care." And with that, we were quickly grinning and having a blast — and we had not yet left the dock.

The tour guide was charming, entertaining and very proud of his New Yorker status. He enjoyed having fun at the expense of others, but it was all in jest. He knew the crowd was with him and he also knew whom he could and could not pick on. New Yorkers, and especially people from New Jersey, were fair game.

As we returned to the dock at the end of the tour, we passed the pair of identical structures on either side of the Hudson that house the ventilation system for the Holland Tunnel, recycling the air down below every 90 seconds. The guide explained that we were actually riding right over the tunnel as he spoke and then said that if someone were to look down into the water right at that moment, he would be able to see the top of the tunnel.

Well, pity the fool who bought that line. The poor gentleman who sat in front of me stood up, looked over the side of the railing and stared straight into the water. "Do you live in New York?" Asked the tour guide of the gentleman who had stood up. His friends had nodded in the affirmative. "And you are a New Yorker? Like you are *from* here?" He continued, to which the gentleman said that yes, he was. "And you believed me?!" He exclaimed. "Dude, you can't see the top of the tunnel from here!"

Needless to say, the guy felt very silly — and the laughter of everyone on board, including his friends, did not help. "And you call yourself a New Yorker?" Added the tour guide, rubbing it in. Insert further uproarious laughter by his officemates right here. I have a feeling that the guy is not going to live this down for a while.

Hey, buddy: if New York doesn't work out for you, there's always New Jersey.

MLW

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