

The JEWISH VOICE & HERALD

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Community school finishes first year

JCDS holds first graduation; seeks additional \$1.2M

By Jonathan Rubin
jrubin@jfri.org

PROVIDENCE

Twenty-two eighth-grade graduates in blue robes filed giddily into the auditorium to the aptly chosen song "Closing Time," by the rock band Semisonic. Even more appropriate was the graduation theme at the Jewish Community Day School — "The end of a beginning," which, for this, applied to the school itself as much as for the graduates.

June 11 marked the new school's first graduation, but June 26 may mark the day when the school acquires a much-needed funding stream to allow it to truly become a "school of excellence."

On Monday, the Federation will be holding a special board of directors meeting to consider a request for \$1.2 mil-



Photos by Jonathan Rubin

MOMENTS TO GO — Waiting to enter the auditorium at their graduation are (from left) Kyla Mor, Yelena Malyuta, Raul Lovett, Simone Labine and Alexa Gladstone.

lion over six years, with the understanding the school will also raise \$1.2 million over the same period. Funds will be used

for capital improvement to the current site on Taft Avenue, as well as for programmatic costs and paying the interest on a line

of credit for short-term cash flow needs. If approved, these funds

See SCHOOL, page 13

Cong. Shaare Tzedek passes torch, Torahs

By Jonathan Rubin
jrubin@jfri.org

SOUTH PROVIDENCE

— Jeff Shapiro didn't think it was right to have dusty Torahs. His synagogue, Congregation Shaare Tzedek, had stood for years practically unused in a rough part of South Providence, the sole remnant of a Jewish community that had moved away decades before.

The synagogue, however, was reborn on June 11, when its Torahs and history found a new home at Congregation Beth Shalom, on Camp Street in Providence. The few remaining members of Shaare Tzedek removed ceremonial objects and records from the synagogue and drove them to the Jewish Com-



Photos by Jeff Shapiro

(From left) Alison Rose, Barry Bessler, Rabbi Mitchell Levine and Marion Bessler escort Torah scrolls from Shaare Tzedek to their new home at Congregation Beth Shalom in Providence.

Three more kids die in Gaza

GAZA CITY (JTA) — An Israeli airstrike in the Gaza Strip killed three Palestinian children Tuesday. Israeli aircraft fired a missile at a car carrying an Al-Aksa Brigades squad in Gaza City. The suspected terrorists managed to leap free of the vehicle, but a dozen bystanders were wounded. The dead were identified as a boy and girl, aged 5 and 7, and a 16-year-old. The Israeli army voiced regret for any civilian casualties but said the Palestinian Authority was at fault for failing to stop cross-border rocket fire from Gaza.

Before the latest deaths, Israel defended its air strikes against Palestinian rocket crews in the Gaza Strip despite causing civilian casualties. "I think we have been doing the right thing, and will continue to do so," Infrastructure Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer told Israel Radio.

Community Calendar

SUN., JUNE 25

Chabad Chai Center phonathon

9 a.m. Archer Research, 1800 Post Road, Warwick. Phonathon to build scholarship fund and community art calendar fund. To volunteer, call Rabbi Yossi Laufer at 884-7888 or Rabbi@RabbiWarwick.org.

TUES., JUNE 27

Dietitian at kosher mealsite

Dietitian Phyllis Freedman will present on "The Wonders of Water" at 11 a.m. at the Jewish Family Service Kosher Mealsite at Temple Torat Yisrael, 330 Park Ave. in Cranston. Attendees are also asked to bring in food labels for question and answer session. Call 781-1771 for lunch reservations (reservations are required).

SUN., JULY 9

Dedication in memory of Rabbi Kaplan

2 p.m. at Congregation Ohave Sholam, 671 East Ave., Pawtucket. Dedication of a Torah mantle and Bein Gavra in memory of Rabbi Philip Kaplan. Dessert reception to follow. RSVP by July 1 to Nita Pliskin, 725-3886, npliskin@aol.com or Leslie Marks-Hershey, 729-6771, fluden52@yahoo.com.

Summer programs at Emann-El Leisure Club

To be held in the temple chapel. (New entrance on Taft Ave., elevator accessible.)

Call 331-1616 for information.

THURS., JUNE 29

10—10:50 a.m. "Lesbian Seniors" with Lyn Swift & Edith Kur

11:10 a.m. — noon. "When Role Models Aren't Enough: Why we Need Heroes." Dr. Carol Ingall.

THURS., JULY 6

10—10:50 a.m. "Bull-buying and Goat-giving in Africa; Not Your Usual Tzedakah Project," Prof. Bill Miles.

11:10 a.m. — noon. "Tracking my Ancestors 'Down Under.'" Prof. Judith Romney Wenger.

THURS., JULY 20

10—10:50 a.m. "Grandparents for Peace: What Do We Do?" Rena Reis

11:10 a.m. — noon "The Arthritis Foundation: Helpful Things to Know."

THURS., JULY 27

10—10:50 a.m. "How I Came to be a Writer/ A Reading of my Work." Gerry Fogel

11:10 a.m. — noon. "Reflections of a French-Caribbean Zionist." Lotza Miles.



Photo by Jonathan Rubin

TRY SOME — Abby Seigle, 2, of Providence, gives some ice cream to her toy sheep "Baahh" at a Jewish Community Center ice cream social June 8.

Stephen F. Schiff, M.D., F.A.C.S.

MOHEL

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'Dean for the Day' shares lessons learned

By Mary Korr
mkorr@jfri.org

PROVIDENCE — As the Providence Hebrew Day School's "dean for the day" last Tuesday, Shira Krinsky, 10, met with the top brass at the Jewish Federation of R.I.

She was poised at the conference table in the office of Hershey Rosen, Federation's interim executive vice president. She listened to his engaging stories of trips to Israel and attempts to communicate with Russian Jews who did not speak English, with the appropriate smiles and nods of her head. He told her his thoughts on what makes a strong Jewish community here and around the world and asked her some questions, which Shira responded to thoughtfully.

Shira then sat down for an interview with the Jewish Voice & Herald.

Q. Were you nervous in there speaking with the head of Federation?

A. No. But I was nervous when I went into the 4th grade class this morning. That's my class.

Q. Did they ask you any questions about what it's really like to be a dean?



Photo by Mary Korr

DOUBLE DEANS — Shira Krinsky, 10, was "Dean for the Day" last Tuesday at the Providence Hebrew Day School. One of her "professional" tasks last Tuesday was to accompany the "real" PHDS Dean, Rabbi Peretz Scheinerman for a meeting at the Jewish Federation.

A. I let Rabbi Scheinerman do most of the talking. But I did answer one question.

Q. What was that?
A. The class wanted to know if I got a free soda for being dean. I said not so far.

Q. Where else did you visit?
A. The high school lounge. I was nervous there too.

Q. What did they say to you?
A. They asked me if I would delay final exams.

Q. Did you?
A. I just laughed.
Q. What have you learned on the job today?

A. That Federation raises money for Jews here and overseas;

that the BJE teaches the teachers, and that the pre-K class doesn't know what a dean does and would rather draw.

Q. How were you selected as Dean for the Day?

A. I won it at the school auction, and that the pre-K class doesn't know what a dean does and would rather draw. I got one of those a lot of kids buy a lot of tickets to try and win but I only bought one. And they picked my name! My mother came home from the auction and told me. I wasn't at the auction, it was for adults only.

Q. If you could make one rule for the school, what would it be?
A. We would have color war every week.

Q. What is color war?
A. Color war is a contest between teams — reds and blues.



Photo by Jonathan Rubin

Hebrew Day graduates 8

PROVIDENCE — The school year drew to a close for the Providence Hebrew Day School / New England Academy of Torah, both of whom held their graduation ceremonies June 22. Sonia Felder, 8th grade student council president, gave remarks to her class.

Above: The eighth grade graduating class of 2006. From left: Max Bessler, Aaron Schechter, Adina Schectman, Tova Gerber, Chana Diamond, Sonia Felder, Rochel Haldorsen, Shelby Hauser.

Photos of NEAT next issue.

Q. Oh, you mean like the red states and the blue states?

A. No, I mean the boys and the girls are divided into teams. There are two boy teams and two girl teams, red and blue. We make banners and we have a theme. Last year the theme was Purim. And the color was purple. My team won.

Q. What is your theme this year?

A. We're not having color war this year. The teachers said so. That's why I would rule to have color war, but not just once a year, once a week. It's fun.

Q. Would you like to have Rabbi Scheinerman's job, now that you know what it's like?

A. I can't. I have to go into fifth grade.



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Opinion

Independent probe needed in Gaza deaths

First, a brief history lesson. In the spring of 1948 at the height of the Arab siege of Jerusalem, the city's Jewish defenders were dismayed to see that Jordanian artillery was successfully seeking out and destroying hitherto secret electrical power stations throughout the city. Suspicions as to who had been betraying their locations soon centered on a Haganah major, Meir Tubiansky, an electrical engineer who had designed and installed them.



Yehuda Lev

Tubiansky was secretly arrested, tried before a makeshift court-martial and shot, leaving behind a young wife and a small child.

Several years later the Israeli government ordered an investigation into the circumstances of the trial and its outcome. Then one day a chastened Prime Minister David Ben Gurion stood before the Knesset, apologized to Tubiansky's widow and family and guaranteed the government's support for her and for the welfare and education of their child.

He accepted full responsibility for the tragedy and did what he could to make amends. No excuses were offered, none were expected.

This came back to mind earlier this month when there appeared on the front page of the New York Times the photo of a young Palestinian girl screaming in anguish and terror over the partly visible bodies of seven of her loved ones lying dismembered on the Gaza beach. The child was formally adopted by Abu Mazen, president of the Palestinian Authority, and is now being cared for by relatives.

It seemed apparent from the first that the slaughter of a picnicking Palestinian family was caused by an errant Israeli artillery shell, one of a salvo that was aimed at a target 400 yards distant where terrorists were planning to fire Qassam rockets into Israel.

From Israel there came an initial explanation. The explosion was caused by a mine that the Palestinians had planted while Israel still held the Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip. Later this was amended; it was a Palestinian rocket aimed at Israel that had gone off-course. In addition, the timing of the blast indicated that it could not have been set off

by an errant Israeli shell.

Many found it difficult to accept the results of an Israeli Army internal investigation. The group Human Rights Watch examined the bodies in the morgue. Its report stated that they had suffered wounds indicating an explosion from above, not below. And a nearby UN observer reported to his headquarters that the nearby shelling was, in fact, taking place at the time of the tragedy.

Together with this, an Israeli military spokesman admitted to a London Times journalist that its report had omitted the fact that Israeli gunboats were shelling the area and that THEY may have been the source of the shell.

Never mind. We are not concerned here with assessing blame or in judging whether or not Israel should continue with its policy of targeted assassinations in which more civilians than targets seem to perish. There are sustainable arguments on both sides of the dispute. Israelis have to deal with the Qassam rockets that continue to fall on its Negev villages and those who send them have somehow to be stopped.

(One interesting sidelight to Israeli reactions: Demonstrations against targeted assassinations have spread in Israel,

one of them in front of the home of the army chief-of-staff. Among the protesters, the daughter of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, whose contribution to the debate that followed the tragedy was, "The IDF is the most moral military in the world.")

In 1982 Israel suffered a similar crisis of conscience when Lebanese Christian militias slaughtered hundreds of Palestinians in the Arab refugee camps of Sabra and Shatilla near Beirut. No Israelis took part in the three-day massacre but Israeli soldiers stood by and made no effort to prevent it. The incident recalled for many the anger we all felt against those Christians in Europe who stood by during the Holocaust and did nothing.

Four hundred thousand Israelis massed in Tel Aviv to protest the military inaction. The government appointed a commission headed by a justice of the Supreme Court to investigate the extent of Israel's responsibility and military and civilian leaders were dismissed and military practices were changed. Israel's true friends abroad are waiting for just such a response.

Yehuda Lev is a retired journalist who has worked in Israel, Europe and the United States.

Letters to the Editor

Naches



"Are you interested in making a contribution to the 'Society of Jewish Men Who Have Broken Their Mother's Hearts'?"

Submission Guidelines

Submissions must be signed and include city of residence and telephone number. Letters should be limited to 250 words, and viewpoints to 700 words. Submissions may be edited for length. Send submissions to: Jewish Voice & Herald, 130 Sessions St., Providence, RI 02906, or E-mail to: voiceherald@jfri.org.

On the Cranston Jewish Community Center

A friend who has recently moved to North Carolina from Rhode Island has been passing along the Jewish Herald and Voice to me, and I noticed a few minor errors in your article about the possible move of Torat Yisrael to East Greenwich.

My parents, the late Dr. Morris and Eleanor Botvin, were among the five founding families of the Cranston Jewish Community Center (not club) in the late 1940s, and I was its first Bat Mitzvah in 1955, under the tutelage of Rabbi Julius Goldberg. In the beginning years, the CJCC rented public school space for Sunday school, there being no classrooms at its then bare-bones concrete block facility on Park Avenue.

I started attending Sunday school there when I was four years old. My most vivid memory of this period was learning to sing "Rock of Ages" as a Hanukkah hymn of sorts. (I find its lyrics, by the way, as incomprehensible today as I did as a child.) I believe the CJCC did not actually become a congregation until the 1960s.

Roberta Botvin Morris
Chapel Hill, N.C.

Roberta Botvin Morris was the founding editor of the Jewish Community Voice, later to become the Jewish Voice of Rhode Island.

Pay for this paper!

More than ever, I love both getting and reading the "Voice & Herald." This is especially the case because of the vital need we have to publicize events and programs within our local community.

I see from the enclosed envelope that you do solicit contributions. Nevertheless, I wonder how often people bypass your solicitation without giving the message you convey any serious or meaningful thought. Do people even stop to think about the fact that this biweekly publication, with wonderful information about world events and local news, is free to all?

I realize that the cost of the "Voice" is primarily absorbed by local advertising, and the subsidy from Federation, which is considerably less than in the past. Nevertheless, I truly believe that something more is warranted.

We have a motto in the Winkler family that we should always do the right thing. I am, therefore, enclosing a check for \$50. This is just a starter. I believe the fair thing to do is to pay for the "Voice" in the same manner as I do for my local paper.

Richard G. Winkler
Wakefield

THE OLD OLIVETTI

Ebbets Field, lost shrine of the artful Dodgers

Which is more important, religion...or baseball? Or is baseball the ultimate religion? It's a tough call. I grew up as a Jew (but not as a Red Sox fan) in the leafy East Midwood section of Brooklyn. Until the first time my father took



Josh Stein

me to Ebbets Field, I'd only seen it on the grainy TV in our living room. In black and white. I gasped in astonishment when I first saw the real thing. The vastness of the perfectly mown green outfield grass, the brown of the base paths, the sparkling white uniforms of the Brooklyn Dodgers, all a forestage of heaven, I thought.

When the god-like players poured out of their dugout and sprinted to their positions, Hodges to first, Gilliam to second, Pee-Wee to short and Robinson to third, the deep uncompromising ebony of Jackie's skin made me feel

but only Boston had an official case (of the Bambino). The Red Sox religion has uniforms (hats and jerseys); we have our priests (managers and coaches); we have our songs (Neil Diamond's "Sweet Caroline" and the risqué "Dirty Waters" whenever we win at home); we have our epic stories, of Buckner's bumble in '86, of Fisk's home run in '75, of leaving Pedro in for just too long in 2003; and we have our sacred space, Fenway Park, hallowed by its halls.

My other religion is a form of Judaism possibly unique to me. I attend synagogue, but don't generally pray. I wear the uniform (*tallit, tefillin and kippah*); I sing songs in *half-understood Hebrew*. I maintain a kosher diet, more or less, mostly more; I behave in what I hope is an ethical manner. I believe that God created the world and man, except when I believe that chemical forces interacted and KABOOM! there was the Earth. Either way, it doesn't particularly matter.

As I sing the songs in a language I only half-understand, I am in commu-

"The deep uncompromising ebony of Jackie's skin made me feel proud to be a Brooklynite because even then I knew that we'd been the first to allow black athletes to play."

nion with my ancestors of a hundred or more generations, and with my descendants for an equal amount of time; as I think about the half-understood forces of nature being slowly unraveled by struggling human science, I continue to wonder if the Almighty is the originator of the Big Bang. God only knows, but He's not talking. Of this, though, I am certain: The whole thing is designed so that we could use our minds, not depend on revelation, to figure out His physics. I read the bible, believing it to be divinely inspired. It has some powerful stories and some interesting perspectives on life and love (one might also say the same of Shakespeare) and I go on with my life.

I wonder if those who insist that America is a Christian nation (in Kentucky the governor is demanding that textbooks refer to BC and AD, not to BCE and CE) intend to keep us non-Christians around once they've transformed our country into their theocracy. Religion ought to be like those games of yesterday at Ebbets Field — uplifting, community building, and with heroes like Jackie Robinson standing resolutely on third base.

Amén.

Joshua B. Stein is a professor of history at Roger Williams University. He can be reached at jstein@rwu.edu.

In later life I became a Red Sox rooter by choice, but, in fact, it wasn't much of a switch at all. Ebbets Field and Fenway Park are very similar; the Yankees are still the arch-enemy. Like the Brooklyn Dodgers, the Sox have only reached the Promised Land of World Series Victory once in my lifetime, in both cases having to defeat the Yankees to do it. And like the Dodgers, the Sox have heroes of the past, god-like figures who walked the earth (Stanley Joe Wood, Ted Williams, Carl Yastrzemski); we both have our traitors (Harry Frazee, Walter O'Malley)

Letters to the Editor

NCJW endorses Clergy for Choice

In response to Prof. Josh Stein's column of May 26, 2006: The National Council of Jewish Women, Rhode Island Section whole-heartedly and publicly supports and endorses the efforts of the Rhode Island Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice to demonstrate a religious basis for preserving and promoting the freedom of women to control their reproductive choice.

Our Section has a 100-year-history in the forefront of the battle for equality for women. Women have learned they cannot achieve equality as long as their freedom of choice is constrained by religiously based governmental policies. We recognize that there may be a handful of opponents to reproductive freedom for women, who base their opposition on a personal morality, and not on religion.

We can only hope that those opponents will realize that they are affording aid and comfort to religious extremists who seek to eliminate all freedom

of choice to all women everywhere. Since the founding of our nation, we Americans have been dedicated to the proposition that public policy should never be dictated by religious belief.

The Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice illustrates one of the reasons for that proposition: Religions can and do differ on moral issues. Religious freedom assures us that no set of religious beliefs will control the lives of all Americans.

We also believe that the choice is not between life and death but rather between one life-in-being, the mother, and one life-in-potential, the fetus.

It is arrogant to suggest that the choice is between expediency and morality. The choice is between necessity and inequality.

Lana Israel
President, National Council of Jewish Women, RI Section

Shafran: 'Judaism is anti-abortion'

Neither Yehuda Lev's arrogation of the right to decide that an unborn child would rather not be born, nor Sandra Gandsman, Linda Nightingale Greenwood and Susan Saksen's eloquent championing of "women's reproductive rights," nor Rabbi Peter Stein's proper distinction between fetal and born life in any way diminishes the unarguable fact voiced by Josh Stein: Judaism is resolutely anti-abortion and does not leave the decision to abort to the expectant mother.

Mr. Lev surely knows that the vast majority of abortions are chosen for reasons other than the possibility that their lives will be miserable, and he should know that a life he may consider pointless might not be so harshly judged by the one actually living it.

Ms. Gandsman, Nightingale Greenwood and Saksen are perfectly entitled to assert that a woman has the right to

kill her fetus, but wrongly cast the issue in terms of "well being" vs. "expediency," it is one of morality and the valuing of potential life.

And Rabbi Stein, while correct to assert that the killing of a fetus is not the same as the killing of a baby, is incorrect to imply that Judaism provides some privilege to do the former to whatever woman happens to be carrying the child-to-be.

Jews may certainly take any position on Roe v. Wade they choose, impelled by whatever social policy concerns they may have. But no one has the right to misrepresent millennia of Jewish thought and law. Kudos to Professor Stein for his willingness to be pilloried for principle.

Rabbi Avi Shafran
Director of Public Affairs
Agudath Israel of America

Reproductive choice belongs to women

This is in regard to Josh Stein's column on the abortion issue, mostly his attack on freedom of religion. Denying a woman the right to decide whether or not to continue a pregnancy is denying a person her right to freedom of religion. A woman's right to choose when to continue and when to terminate a pregnancy equals freedom of religion. Plain and simple. One person's religious viewpoints determine whether terminating a pregnancy is an option for that person.

My viewpoint, my religious beliefs, allows me to consider the primacy of the mother's needs over the needs of the potential life growing in her womb. Who gives you, Josh Stein, or you George Bush, the right to tell me what my religious beliefs should be?

A fetus is not more important than a girl, a teenager, a woman! The needs of

the living must come first! Women have been terminating unintended, unwanted pregnancies for many, many, more years in many, many more ways than any of us know. There are many reasons why a woman chooses to terminate, but it must be her choice.

No man, no government, no religious viewpoint should be forced upon a woman. Was this great nation not founded upon principles of freedom of religion? Has our collective conscience forgotten how important this freedom is? Reproductive choice belongs to women.

Today, I am ashamed of the Jewish Voice and Herald for giving Stein a voice.

Sheryl Rothstein
Cumberland

Federation

This Week at Federation

An insider's look: Past presidents confer, campaign tops \$4.1M



Harris N. Rosen

that the President is the boss – he is the legally elected official, responsible for what happens. And it is also true that the board, which he heads, creates the policy and is the final decision maker. It is my job to be sure the staff executes that policy.

Possibly only past presidents out there will fully appreciate this, but Herb Stern and I discussed that our jobs are really divided into two parts: what you see and what you don't. What you see is the President running meetings, being the official voice of Federation and helping to create the vision. You see me leading the staff, organizing meetings, writing this article, etc.

Let's open the curtain to the part you don't see, and most

of what applies to the President applies to the Exec, so I'll use the pronoun, "we," as I really mean Federation. Here's what happened in the past 5½ months:

- Several meetings were held with the past presidents to give guidance on thorny issues. This is a most supportive group and their purview is a bit different than most. They have been there, done that, and they look through the right end of the binoculars.

- We revitalized our Community Relations Council (CRC) and their programming and presence is being felt throughout Rhode Island. Last Thursday, there was a deeply disturbing and troubling letter printed in the Providence Journal. The CRC reacted quickly and positively and has already answered it.

- We facilitated conversations among Jewish Family Service (JFS), the Jewish Community Center (JCC) and the Jewish Seniors Agency (JSA) in their quest to provide seamless services to the elderly.

- We oversaw the transition of Alperin-Schecter to the new Jewish Community Day School (JCDS) and are helping them with their financial planning. For the JCC, we guaranteed and

are paying most of the interest on the loan on the new fitness center.

- We helped the Bureau of Jewish Education (BJE) during their trying hours of remediating a mold problem which resulted in their having to vacate the premises for some three months.

- Through the Bureau we are developing a funding strategy that insures the vitality of the Providence Hebrew Day School and the JCDS.

- We helped URI Hiller move into new quarters on the Kingston campus.

- We are working with the Holocaust Museum, on possibly creating a Holocaust memorial downtown.

- Now I know this is going to sound like a prayer at Yom Kippur, but let me repeat:

We have revitalized; we have facilitated; we have overseen; we are guaranteeing; we have helped or are helping; we are developing; we are working, and we have answered.

So what's the big deal? The big deal is that you should notice all the issues that are being dealt with that have nothing to do with funding, which, after all, is our core business. This is

what a Federation should do and what we are doing. This coming year, in addition to everything else going on, we will place a great deal more emphasis on our raison d'être ("reason for being") for those who took Spanish; increasing the campaign.

So that's the part you don't see. To me, that's the fun stuff – challenging the attitude of "we can't do it because we haven't done it before." Baloney. Of course we can. And we will.

Campaign reaches \$4.1M

We've already started. The 2006 campaign this week passed the \$4.1 million mark – up from last year. Congratulations to campaign leadership – both volunteer and professional!

The Governance Committee will soon be finished, and so will the Search Committee. The Campaign team is rolling out a whole new way of doing business – that's the part you don't see either – not yet, at least, but you will.

Staff appreciation

And speaking of not seeing, you won't see the staff here on July 3. I keep talking about the hardworking and dedicated people we have. Some are carrying two jobs, often come in on Sundays, and it's time, in a small

way, to say thanks. So I have declared, with the President's approval, that July 3 is Appreciation Day – an extra non-repeatable day off with pay.

And on the subject of days off, my schedule will change starting July 1st: – I will be working a four-day week (never on Friday), which helps me accomplish my goal of spending less time at my desk at home on the weekend but still fulfilling my obligation of not leaving Federation without some type of leadership. In addition, my term as Interim Executive, will, in any case, end on Aug. 31st.

There are other ways of getting the news, and one of them is to subscribe to Daily Alerts at www.dailyalert.org, which is free. It is a summary of relevant news events that is delivered to computers each weekday morning by folks who scour the U.S., Israeli and world press for the important information. I use it here and find it quite helpful. I hope you will, too. Try it! If you don't like it, use the delete key.

In any event, please let me know of any suggestions or comments, which are always welcome, at HRosen@jccri.org. Shabbat Shalom! Hershey.

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The entrance to the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, Bureau of Jewish Education and the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association was blocked off after the glass was shattered June 8.

Federation, Bureau vandalized in spree

PROVIDENCE — The Jewish Federation of Rhode Island and the Bureau of Jewish Education suffered damage to their Sessions Street entrance on the night of June 8th; a pane of safety glass was kicked through, and BB pellets were shot through another pane. Other residences in the area were also vandalized about the same time, Providence police investigators said.

The entrance did have video surveillance but the images were not particularly clear because of the opaque glass. No arrests have

been made at this time.

Federation spokespeople who were working in coordination with the police said they did not believe the event was anti-Semitic in nature.

The glass was repaired, at the cost of \$500.

The event was the second event of vandalism in the past year, when someone spray-painted "God is dead" on the front steps and on a bench near the Jewish Community Center playground.

—Jonathan Rubin

Campaign Honor Roll corrections

The following donors were incorrectly listed in the 2006 JFRI Community Campaign Honor Roll: Dr. Henry H. and Mrs. Lore Bahr Fund** James & Shelley Botvin

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* Donors have established named funds in the JFRI Endowment Fund.

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Be sure to look for our next Donor Honor Roll coming out in November, listing donors to the 2007 JFRI Community Campaign.

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World

World Zionist Congress opens

JERUSALEM (JTA) — On a sun-drenched window ledge, three young European delegates to the Zionist World Congress sit poring over resolutions on anti-Semitism and Zionist education, debating which ones to oppose and which to support.

Dana Landau, 21, from Zurich, and Jeremy Uhr, 25, and Ilan Tojerov, 29, both from Brussels, are among the younger generation of faces at the Congress. Committed and intelligent, they wonder, like many of their fellow delegates, how to keep the World Zionist Organization relevant and results-oriented in the 21st century.

"The Zionist movement is living in the past," said David Borowich, chairman and founder of Dor Chadash, a New York-based group that seeks to build ties among young Israelis and American Jews. "What are we revitalizing? What is the Zionist movement?"

A vote at the last Congress four years ago decided that future gatherings would set aside 25 percent of seats for delegates age 30 or under.

At a plenary session held at Jerusalem's International Convention Center, many delegates spoke in favor of giving the younger generation more clout.

About 2,000 delegates and observers have gathered in Jerusalem for the four-day congress. The first congress — held in 1897 in Basel, Switzerland — launched the modern Zionist movement.

The organization's original goal was to establish a Jewish homeland. In recent years its main functions have been providing roughly half of the decision-making power for the Jewish Agency for Israel, which controls a \$350 million budget.

Half of the agency's board of governors are from the organization, as are many of its committee members.

The presence of the Zionist movement's charismatic founder, Theodor Herzl, loomed large at this year's Congress — on posters and large screens. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert addressed the group, speaking of the gap between Herzl's dream and the modern State of Israel.

In "Altenucland," the book in which Herzl imagined an idealized homeland for the

World Union for Progressive Judaism and a member of the Jewish Agency's Board of Governors, said it was only natural that Diaspora Jews align themselves with what they feel connected to — their religious streams.

"People in the Diaspora have no relationship to the political parties in Israel, especially when those political parties are always breaking up and changing," he said.

Hirsch, who once held a senior position in the WZO, said the organization was "badly in need of repair."

Judy Yudof, president of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, was representing the Conservative movement, which had one of the largest delegations.

Despite her movement's success in WZO elections, she said apathy about the movement was a major problem.

"It's very hard to get the Jews in the Diaspora to understand what the congress is all about and what the WZO is all about," she said.

What got votes out was the idea that the more seats the Conservative movement's Zionist wing would win, the more money would be allocated for programs in Israel that the movement supports. "The money in the end is what this thing is all about," she said.

In the busy lobby of the



Israeli girls sing the national anthem as they hold Israeli flags with hearts on them, at the opening of the World Zionist Organization's 35th Congress in Jerusalem Monday.

Photo: Brian Handberg/JTA



Theodor Herzl in a 1900 photo. Credit: GPO

Jews, "Herzl envisioned a utopian state. The State of Israel is not one, because in our world there is no Utopian reality," Olmert said. "In many ways, the State of Israel has exceeded Herzl's vision; in other ways it is still remote."

This congress continues the marked growth of delegates from the religious streams. Factions aligned with the traditional Zionist parties used to be dominant.

Rabbi Richard Hirsch, former executive director of

convention center, Jews from around the world mingled — long-haired, teenaged youth movement members from Argentina, retired delegates from the United States and Australian activists.

Taking in the scene was Avrom Krenzell, a lawyer from Johannesburg who heads the South African Zionist Federation.

"For us there is symbolic value in seeing 2,000 Jews come together and renew their com-

mitment to Zionism, Israel and the Diaspora," he said.

But for the young European delegates, the future of Zionism in their countries is not clear. The three that sat in the window reviewing resolutions point out one that they hope will pass: It calls for Israeli envoys to work with youth movements abroad. In recent years, they said, hardly any emissaries have been sent and funded by the WZO.

Claire Ernstof resides at Tamarisk Assisted Living. With an emphasis on living.



As you grow older, you'd expect life to slow down. But Claire Ernstof couldn't be busier, or happier. According to Claire, who has no immediate family, the other residents of Tamarisk and the caring, attentive staff have given her a real sense of family. Her apartment, the

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Almost-apprentice speaks about show

NEW YORK (JTA)—The Orthodox Jewish contestant who almost became Donald Trump's next apprentice isn't going to let his loss in the finale get him down.

"I feel great," said Lee Bienstock, the 23-year-old Jewish day-school graduate who was one win away from becoming Trump's next protégé on "The Apprentice." Though Bienstock had by many accounts accumulated a stronger record over the course of the reality show's season than his fellow finalist, Sean Yazbeck, his performance in the finale likely cost him the job.

Bienstock's appearance on the show has nevertheless been an inspiration to many.

"I get e-mails and phone calls from people of all different religions who are so happy that they have someone that's out there that's young who's serving as a role model," he told JTA.

Other than the holidays, no other element of Bienstock's religious observance made it onto the show, though he says that "any

given episode" could have had a running theme: "Lee hasn't eaten the entire time."

"It was really, really tough keeping kosher," he said. "They provided plenty of kosher food in the suite, but we spent so little time in the Trump Tower, Bienstock said. "When you're spending 48 hours at a Wal-Mart, there's nothing to eat."

Nevertheless, sometimes everyone was eating kosher. "If they didn't have any steak and we had kosher steak, I'd let them have my kosher steaks," Bienstock said, adding that the other Orthodox contestant on the show, Dan Brody, is a "good cook," noting that he used to cook a lot of the meals.

While keeping kosher didn't cause any acrimony, his leaving two tasks during the holidays did.

"I understood why they were upset, that I didn't participate the way I'd have liked to on those tasks, and I wanted to make up for it," he said, by stepping up to be project manager on an unprecedented four tasks.

Nation



Photos Courtesy: Chris Heston/ABC Universal

Orthodox Jewish contestant, Lee Bienstock, right, and winner Sean Yazbeck during the final episode of "The Apprentice" this season.

It was his willingness to step up and be a leader, he said, that he had hoped would make him a winner on Monday night, but Trump decided otherwise.

Despite the loss, Bienstock already faces a range of new opportunities. "Mr. Trump told me to meet with him next week." He added that he had already received dozens of offers at an after-party following the show.

"I'm going to be doing speaking engagements and writing a book," he said.

Nazi-looted painting nets \$135M

A Holocaust-era looted painting that recently was returned to its heirs was auctioned for a reported \$135 million.

The Gustav Klimt painting now will be displayed at the Neue Galerie, a New York museum of German and Austrian art owned by Ronald Lauder. The 1907 portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer was recently returned to Bloch-Bauer's niece, Maria Altmann. Now living in Los Angeles, Altmann, 90, pursued litigation for 7 years against Austria to get back the painting, which was first confiscated by Nazis from the Bloch-Bauers, then taken over by the state.

After a 2004 Supreme Court decision supporting Altmann and subsequent negotiations, the painting was finally returned to her. "It was important for the heirs and for my aunt Adele that her work be displayed in a museum," Altmann said in a statement released by the family.

Critics: planning institute ignores women

NEW YORK (JTA)—When Avinoam Bar-Yosef, director-general of the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, an Israel-based think-tank created by the Jewish Agency for Israel that engages in long-term strategic planning, decided to bring together the leaders of 15 major Jewish organizations, his

discussion items included Jewish identity, technology and demographic trends.

But his attention has shifted from the agenda to the invite list—notable for its absence of women.

Arlene Kaufman, co-chair of the United Jewish Commu-

nities' Operation Promise and a member of UJC's executive committee, is a guest of honor, but wasn't asked to participate in brainstorming activities. Carole Solomon, chairwoman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, was invited but couldn't attend. Critics say the imbalance speaks to gender issues that plague the Jewish world: though women have a healthy presence in Jewish organizations, they're scarce in upper-echelon positions.

Deborah Lipstadt, who directs Emory University's Rabbi

Donald Tam Institute for Jewish Studies, told JTA that gender bias is "a problem endemic to this institution."

Even some participants, such as David Ellenson, president of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, were troubled by the death of women. "How can matters of Jewish identity, relations with Israel, the influence of Islam, etc., be discussed when half the Jewish community is not represented?" Ellenson wrote to Ross.

Some argue that qualified female candidates are few and far between.

According to a new report conducted by Steven Cohen, a professor at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, women are under-

represented in top federation positions.

No woman served as a federation executive in any of the 19 largest American cities in 2005, the study found. In fact, the number of women nationwide who occupied executive director positions in federations dropped five percent nationally from 2004 to 2005, yet women constituted 70 percent of the total federation workforce last year.

Terry Meyerhoff Rubenstein, chairwoman of UJC's Gender Equity and Organizational Effectiveness team, said nominating committees often are reticent to recommend women for top roles, as they are often composed of older men who see women as being unable to take a hard line on issues.

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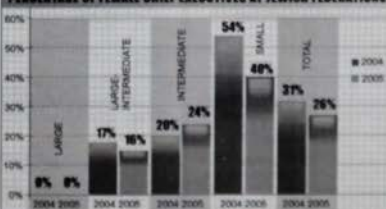
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PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE CHIEF EXECUTIVES AT JEWISH FEDERATIONS



The percentage of female federation chief executives sank to 26 percent in 2005.

JTA Graphics

News Briefs

On the lighter side....

Quartet' OKs aid

BRUSSELS: The "quartet," comprising the European Union, the United States, Russia and the United Nations, has approved a program to provide emergency assistance to the Palestinians that will bypass the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority. The Palestinians have been in a financial crisis since March when Hamas won the election for a new government and triggered a foreign aid blockade. The Palestinians welcomed the initiative, the Israeli position is not yet clear. JTA

New ambassador to U.S.

JERUSALEM: Ze'ev Boim, currently Israel's minister for immigrant absorption and a lifelong friend of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, has been tapped to be Israel's new ambassador to Washington, according to Israel Radio. Boim would succeed Daniel Ayalon at the end of the summer. Boim declined to comment on the report, saying only that he was busy at his present appointment. JTA

Fence under review

JERUSALEM: Israel's Minister of Defense, Amir Peretz, has ordered a review of the West Bank security fence route. He told planners of the 370-mile-long fence that they must be certain that its role is purely defensive and to prepare for possible re-routings where it encroaches on land the Palestinians want for a state. The decision follows a number of appeals against the fence to Israel's High Court by Palestinians, some of which were successful. JTA

Reform rabbis install leader

SAN DIEGO (JTA) — The Reform movement's rabbinic association installed a new leader and approved a new prayer book. Rabbi Steven Fox, a practicing attorney and adjunct rabbi, was installed as the group's new executive vice president at the annual convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis this week in San Diego. The conference has been functioning without a full-time leader for some time because of budgetary constraints. Other topics of discussion include intermarriage and conversion, social justice advocacy, liturgy and practice, and Israel.

Jews twice blamed

TORONTO: A judge overturned the hate-crime conviction of a leader of a Native American organization who told a reporter that the Jews are a "disease," claiming that the prosecution had not made their case. The reporter had approached him after the defendant had made a speech blaming Jews for World War II. We didn't come off too well further south, either. A tribal leader in Sudan told representatives of the Secretary Council that "The root cause of the Darfur conflict are the doing of the Jewish organizations who financed the armed rebellion." JTA



Yossi, a tall tale

RAMAT GAN, ISRAEL: Israel may be a small country geographically but in elephantology it has the world's largest. Yossi, a six-ton African elephant born and raised in the Ramat Gan Safari, stands 12 feet, 2 inches tall, a world's record for African elephants. His size doesn't seem to have hindered him in one important respect; he has already sired 19 offspring. JTA

'Hechsher' stumps spelling judge

WASHINGTON: Saryn Hooks didn't win the National Spelling Bee in Washington, last week but before coming in third she managed to stump the judges. The word she was asked to spell was "hechsher" meaning a certificate that something is kosher. The judges disqualified her, claiming that the proper spelling was "hechscher." Turned out they were wrong and Saryn was right so she was re-instated, just in time to misspell "icteritious." (Look it up.)

THE JEWISH WEEK

Young Israelis happiest

JERUSALEM: With all of their problems, most Israelis are happy and satisfied with their lives. That's the finding of a poll conducted by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics which found that 82 percent of its sample answered "yes" to the question "Are you satisfied with your life?" The highest levels of satisfaction were found among Israelis between the ages of 20 and 24 and the lowest among retirees. There are also high levels of social and job satisfaction although half of the respondents said they had financial problems. JTA

Magen David Adom meeting

The excitement over a December agreement to admit Israel's Magen David Adom to the International Red Cross movement after a 60-year exclusion may have been premature.

Officials from Switzerland, which, as the repository state of the Geneva Conventions must ensure Israel's compliance with the agreement, reported problems during a visit to Israel earlier this month. One of these dealt with freedom of passage for Palestinian ambulances through Israeli checkpoints. Also, Israel is said to be uncomfortable with an implied recognition of the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority. But Shai Franklin of the World Jewish Congress, observing meetings now taking place in Geneva to determine the issue, said that it is clear that the "movement is fully committed to admission of the MDA."

However, Muslim delegates reportedly are using procedural moves to block progress on allowing Israel's relief agency to join the Red Cross.

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JFS honors four as 'Women who give life'

By Mary Korr
mkorr@jfri.org

PROVIDENCE — Four accomplished women — Audrey Bieder, Rosalie Fain, Paula Izman and Anne Berkelhammer Krause — were honored by Jewish Family Service (JFS) for their dedication to the agency at a dinner held May 11 at the Johnson & Wales Culinary Museum.

Almost 170 friends and family members attended the festive event, in which each honoree was given a City of Providence citation for their community efforts by a representative from the mayor's office.

In addition, the women each received a Woman of Valor framed text from JFS.

Event chair Marilyn Friedman Shealey quoted from the biblical verses of *Ethet Chapil* (Women of valor or accomplishment) and noted that its message was a true reflection of the qualities each



Audrey Bieder with Erin Minior, interim executive director of Jewish Family Service.

possesses. "It could describe each woman we honor here tonight," she said. "They are the mothers who have nurtured our agency."

Of Bieder, Shealey quoted the verse: "She watches over the ways of her household and does not eat of the bread of idleness." She has helped numerous troubled students

in the Warwick School Department...she has prepared so many Passover and Hanukkah meals for her family and has such a strong belief in family..."

She described Fain as one who "extends her hand to the poor and reaches out her hand to the needy." She is an inspiration to



Rosalie Fain

many, along with her late husband Norman. She is known for her lifelong friendships."

Izman, who spent a career working with youth and families for the state, was described as a strategist who "speaks words of wisdom and the lessons of mercy and compassion are on her tongue." She "helped innovate JFS," said Shealey.

Krause was described by her family as one who shuns the limelight but is passionate about JFS. "She envelops herself in a mantle of strength," she smiles at the future.



Anne Berkelhammer Krause

She is persistent and dedicated to her family and the organizations she volunteers in," Shealey said.

The moving tributes were concluded with the verse: "Many women have done worthy, but you surpass them all." And a resounding happy Mother's Day.

There was a silent auction at the event. Almost \$50,000 was raised for JFS programs.

For more information on JFS or to volunteer in one of its programs, call 331-1244 or visit www.jfri.org.

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Holocaust Museum holds annual meeting

PROVIDENCE — The printed program for the Rhode Island Holocaust Memorial Museum's annual meeting, which was held on June 5, explained the history of Yad Vashem's project to honor righteous non-Jews who helped rescue Jews during the Holocaust. Rigorous criteria must be met before its honored status of "Righteous Among the Nations" is granted. To date, only about 21,000 people out of the millions who lived in Europe during the Holocaust are on that distinguished list. There are only a handful from other parts of the world, and until now, only one American.

But in 2006 Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust remembrance and education authority, bestowed the title posthumously upon Martha Sharp, a native of Providence and

her husband, Rev. Wainstill Sharp, originally from Massachusetts.

The Sharp's grandson, Artemis Joukowsky III, told their story as the featured speaker at the annual meeting. His heartfelt presentation was followed by the inspiring words of retired Keene College professor Bill Sullivan, who is making a documentary film about the Sharps. An excerpt from the film was then shown.

Other features of the annual meeting included the installation of officers and board members for 2006-'07 by Meyer Goldstein, the endowment director of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island. Officers will be Carol Sugarman, president; Peter Mezel, first vice-president; Jay Strauss, second vice-president; William Kolb, third vice-president; Alice Goldstein,

fourth vice-president; Rita Williams, secretary; and Toby London, treasurer.

Board members beginning a new two-year term are Stan Abrams, Myrna Aronson, Rebecca Brenner, Rev. Jim Miller, Susan Odessa, Cantor Rick Perlman, Maxine Richman, Paul Silver, and Mindy Wachtenheim.

Returning to the Board for the second year of their two-year terms are Melissa Baker, Sherry Cohen, Alice Eichenbaum, Gloria Feibish, Linn Freedman, Sharon Gaines, Susan Resnik, Ken Schneider, Albert Silverstein, and Peter Wegner.

Past-presidents, who are automatically members of the board, are Mark Feinstein, Selma Stranler, Wayne Estes, Arthur Fixler, and Ellie Frank.

Newly named to the honorary board was Aram Garabedian.

Awards were presented as follows: Singer Student Art Award — Carolyn Ruth Michael of Dartmouth High; Guestfriend Family Student Writing Award — Meg Nephinsky of South Kingstown High; Volunteers of the Year Award — Kim Strickels of Brown University; Jenny Klein Teacher of the Year — Barbara Wahlberg of Cranston High East.

David Schacter Scholarship for March of the Living — Eran Levine of the Maltraba (Jewish supplementary high school) of the Bureau of Jewish Education of the Jewish Federation of R. I.

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From page 1



TOP — Mark Kaplowitz gives his daughter Ruthie a boost at Congregation Beth Shalom when the Torah scrolls finally found their new home.

ABOVE — Rabbi Mitchell Levine, congregation leader of Beth Shalom, carries Torah scroll.



Photos by Jill Palumbo

FAR LEFT — Terry Rose, left, and Marion Bessler hold a tallit over a Torah scroll carried by Vicky Bharier.

LEFT — Rabbi David Bielory carries a Torah at a celebration at Beth Shalom with his daughter, Ayala.

S. Prov. Torahs find new home at Beth Shalom

From page 1

community Center in Providence. From there, they joined community members in a joyous parade to Beth Shalom; it was a triple celebration as the community celebrates its Centennial this year and a decade of service by Rabbi Mitchell Levine. Leadership from the Providence Commu-

nity Kollel and the New England Rabbinical College joined the festivities as well.

As part of the merger, Beth Shalom received ownership of the magnificent Shaare Tzedek building, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. Located at 688 Broad St., it was originally built

by Temple Beth-El in 1910-11.

The new owner plans to put it up for sale.

Beth Shalom also gained the five Torah scrolls and will be adding Shaare's list of *yahrzeit* remembrances to its care.

The Providence synagogue wasn't the only one to benefit from

Shaare's bounty — they donated one of the Torahs to a decimated synagogue in New Orleans, another to a congregation in Peabody, Mass., and mahogany pews along with religious artwork to the South County Jewish Collaborative for use in their planned synagogue.



BUCKLE UP — Dr. Howard Mintz transports a Torah scroll from South Providence to a Torah parade in Providence.

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A PLACE FOR YOUR SKILLS

Community school finishes first year

From page 1

would enable significant changes to be made by the start of the next school year. (See next issue, July 21 for a full report).

Federation leaders said that while they felt the request was very late in coming, the urgency of the request, late or not, required a meeting.

More firsts

Another first, just a few days before, was the school's first annual meeting, held at Brown Hillel. It was there that Principal Bill McCarthy passed the "key to the school" to Dani Steiner, who will now be acting as the school's first official head. McCarthy will be serving as principal, handling the day-to-day operations.

Steiner thanked the school's partners — the Bureau of Jewish Education, which staffs many of their educational committees and has offered support for the nascent school, and the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, that granted the \$425,000 seed money for the school in 2004.

Bruce Wolpert, president of JCDS, mentioned some of the key accomplishments over the past year, including updating the school's educational goals and guidelines in the quest to be a "school of excellence," and crafting new guidelines for kashrut, prayer, school dress and the wearing of *kippot*, a considerable feat given the varied Reform, Con-



Photos by Jonathan Rubin

Rivka Eskovitz, center, is introduced as a teacher at the Jewish Community Day School for 2006-2007 at the school's annual meeting. Other staff, starting from left, are Marie Lyons, Susan Adler, Nicole Dunn, Harshuta Lakhiani, Rena Malhotra, and Vicky Dzier.

servative and Modern Orthodox voices at the table.

The new staff for the 2006-2007 year was introduced, and teachers and administrators who would not be returning were honored.

"I see a lot of schools. Sitting here tonight, I'm impressed with every aspect of this evening," said Rabbi Joshua Elkin, the keynote speaker and executive director in the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education.

Elkin is a strong supporter of the community school model,

and called it a vital development in the face of changing realities in Jewish American life.

"Success is all about vision," he said. "It's not about money. Money follows a vision."

Wolpert said that he is continuing in his 12-year search to find the school a new permanent home. The current choice is between incorporating the school into a "community campus" on the Jewish Community Center footprint, or relocating to Warwick next to the Siperstein Tamarisk Assisted

Petition asks school to stay put

PROVIDENCE — On June 11, parents of students at the Jewish Community Day School circulated a petition asking that the school remain in Providence.

It stated: "We believe the JCC site is an exciting opportunity. The plan offers our children ample classroom space, science labs, art rooms, gym space, outdoor fields, and a swimming pool. The East Side provides a vibrant Jewish communal setting, in which children are able to walk to school, after-school activities, synagogues, and social interactions."

It stated that "taking the school out of the East Side would deal a serious blow to the unity and strength of the only Jewish community neighborhood in the state" and that JCC facilities, particularly the day-care and after-school programs, are utilized and necessary for working parents.

In addition, "many of us bought our houses here so that our children could walk to school."

Some of the petition's authors have already met with school officials to discuss their concerns.

— Jonathan Rubin

Living complex. The decision is a contentious one — 70 percent of the student body hails from Providence, but remaining on the East Side poses problems: high costs, zoning battles and a lack of secure parking agreements; Brown University will only grant the school use of its lot near the football stadium for one year.

A petition has been circulating from a group of East Side parents, asking that the school remain in Providence (see sidebar for details).

At the graduation, however, there was only the usual range of emotions swirling around the graduating class — trepidation, exultation, and relief.

Rabbi Alvan Kaufner, a founder of the Solomon Schechter School (the Alperin predecessor) more than 25 years ago, was the graduation speaker. He told the graduates to rest assured that despite the challenges ahead, "you will find

yourself exceptionally well prepared for high school."

The list of graduates for the class of 2005-2006 are:

Alan Alezker
Jacob Berman
David Brennan
Aaron Gillman
Alexa Gladstone
Simone Labine
Aaron Lenz
Raul Lovett
Yelena Malyuta
Kyla Mor
Danielle Neeman
Maksim Nieganov
Shira Olson
Rebekah Page
Andrew Quackenbush
Micha Savitsky
Talia Schwartz
Eric Shabashevich
Miriam Tinberg
Adi Vaknin
Nikki Wyszchenk
Dana Zeman

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Jewish Community Day School graduates (from left) are Raul Lovett, David Brennan, Kyla Mor, Aaron Gillman (kneeling), Yelena Malyuta, Dana Zeman, Rebekah Page, and Talia Schwartz.

Food

It's time to chill out with summer soups

By Marilyn Graff

As the Jews migrated across Europe during the Middle Ages and later, they gradually adopted and adapted many of the culinary customs of their neighbors, while preserving *kashrut*. This culinary flexibility is apparent in their recipes for vegetables and fruits.

Cold soups are a case in point. The Jews who migrated to Central/Eastern Europe and were called Ashkenazim, learned to use cabbage, beets, potatoes, carrots, and even field greens; crops which grow well in the soil and climate of that region.

The most popular cold summer soups of the Ashkenazim are beet borscht and tshav, made with sorrel or other greens and a cold soup made from whatever fruits are in season. Fruit soups are also popular in Scandinavia.

Beet Borscht

2 lbs. fresh beets, washed well, tops removed, peeled and cut into chunks

- 1 medium onion, peeled and cut up
- 3 pints cold water
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice, apple cider vinegar or 1 tsp. sour salt

(citric acid)

Put water, beets and onion into a pot, bring to a simmer and cook for 45 minutes to an hour, until beets are very tender. Add sugar, salt and lemon juice, vinegar or sour salt. Puree in a blender, return to pot,



adjust seasoning. Simmer a few more minutes. Remove from heat, cool and chill. Serve with a dollop of sour cream or float a thin slice of lemon on top.

(Note: The leafy green beets tops, stemmed and coarsely shredded, make a nice vegetable, steamed or sautéed in a little olive oil with garlic.)

Tshav

We're going to take a few liberties here, since the traditional green, sorrel, may not be easy to find. You can use spinach, kale, Swiss chard or any leafy green of your choice. If using spinach, do not overcook as it tends to develop a tinny taste. (This is probably

why so many people don't like spinach) and be aware that some greens are more bitter and strongly flavored than others. For example, Swiss chard is milder than kale.

Large bunch, 10 to 12 oz., of leafy green vegetable, washed well, tough stems removed, leaves coarsely shredded

1 medium onion, cut up, or 2 leeks, well-washed, white and light green parts only, cut up

2 Tbsp. fresh dill or 1 tsp. dill seed

1 1/2 qts. vegetable stock or water, or part milk

Salt and pepper to taste.

In a large pot, melt 1 or 2 tbsps. butter or parve margarine. Sauté onion or leeks until clear or (leeks) wilted. Add shredded greens and wilt. Stir in dill and stock or water. (If using part milk, stir in near end of cooking.) Simmer for about 30 minutes and season with salt and pepper. Chop, not too finely, in a blender or processor, return to pot, add milk if using, adjust seasoning and bring back to simmer. Cool and chill. Serve with a dollop of sour cream, or for parve, a sprinkling of very thinly sliced radishes.

Fruit Soup

Alla Goman, who works here at Federation, is a Russian Jew, who kindly brought in recipes for her native fruit soup. Here is her version — it can be served as a first course or as a dessert. Fruit soups are also popular in Scandinavia.

3 cups fruit: plums, peaches, pears, apples, cherries, apricots, berries or a combination.

5 cups water, or apple, cranberry or other fruit juice.

2 tps. lemon juice

4 Tbsps. sugar or to taste

2 Tbsps. cornstarch or plain tapioca beads

Sour cream, non-dairy sour cream, or sweet cream

Pit the fruit and peel if desired. Cut into chunks and combine in a saucepan with the liquid, lemon juice

and sugar. Bring to a boil, turn down heat and simmer for about 20 minutes or until fruit is very soft. Puree in a blender or processor or force through a sieve.

Mix the cornstarch or tapioca with an equal amount of cold water. Stir into the fruit, and cook, stirring constantly, until slightly thickened and clarified, about five minutes. Adjust sugar for desired sweetness. Serve very cold with a dollop of the cream.



Fruit Soup

Jewish cookbooks go to Gulf Coast flood victims

By Annette Keen

NISKAYUNA, N.Y. — Some 2,000 copies of *Divine Kosher Cuisine* cookbook, a recipe collection published by a Jewish congregation in upstate New York, are going to flood-devastated Gulf Coast communities whose residents lost — among many household items — valued family recipes. The cookbook contributions are made possible through a special arrangement between the Niskayuna, N.Y. synagogue, Congregation Agudat Achim, and the Memphis, Tenn. printing house, Wimmer Cookbooks. This action follows an appeal for Jewish cookbook contributions from a Louisiana librarian.

In the hard-hit New Orleans suburb of Metairie, Betty Lazarus was glad that over the years she had jotted down some of her mother's special recipes so she could give them back to her

mother, who had lost everything to the floods, including her recipe books. As librarian at the Gates of Prayer Synagogue in Metairie, Lazarus saw firsthand how widespread the book losses were among her neighbors. She sent a letter to the Association of Jewish Libraries asking for replacements.

In Memphis, Wimmer Cookbooks had just printed the initial run of a collection of traditional and contemporary Jewish recipes, *Divine Kosher Cuisine*, for Congregation Agudat Achim in upstate New York. With the enthusiastic cooperation of the congregation and the considerable financial backing from the Wimmer Company, 2,000 copies of the book are being distributed throughout the Gulf Coast.

Divine Kosher Cuisine cookbook [www.divinekosher.com] is a hardbound, full-color collection of traditional and contempo-

rary recipes with information for home cooking and entertaining. It was produced by the synagogue's catering chefs and co-authors, Rise Routenberg and Barbara Wasser, working with writer Annette Keen and photographer Harvey Mendelson, and over 150 congregant volunteers.

Manishevitz launches kosher cook-off

Manishevitz is holding a cook-off. U.S. residents age 18 and older can submit an original kosher recipe that includes at least one Manishevitz product. Entries can be submitted online at <http://www.manishevitz.com>, by Sept. 15 or to Simply Manishevitz Cook-Off, c/o Cooking Light, Time & Life Building, 20th Floor, 1271 Ave. of the Americas, New York, N.Y., 10020, by Sept. 20.

Thirty semifinalists will receive \$50 in prizes and a chance to win one of six free trips to New York City, where they can compete for a \$20,000 grand prize package.

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Community

As We Grow Older
Games of chance

By Tema Gouse

Among the by-products of my contract with The Voice & Herald is that once a year (or preferably less frequently) I can rant about a subject that may bore or antagonize some readers. The headline above correctly implies that my tirade this year is about gambling and its impact on individuals, families, and the greater community.

By my unscientific estimate, on any day in any week in the year, about 20-30 percent of the morning newspaper is devoted to promoting or opposing casino construction in Rhode Island—and promotion is beating out the opposition.

I do not understand why Rhode Island has won the dubious honor of being seen as a desirable location for helping people part with their money. The population is small, the average income is hardly wealthy, and we are within driving distance of the largest gambling racetrack in the region. But Harahs, Trump, and Native Americans drool over the possibil-

ity of bringing casinos to our parts. Not everyone who tries cocaine or heroin becomes addicted, but most do. Not everyone who tries the "slots" becomes an addicted gambler, but many do.

In many ways addiction to gambling is more treacherous than drug addiction because it is easier to disguise. Gambling is often regarded as entertainment of choice and carries little or no stigma. It is only when the gambling activity negatively impacts on the lives of the gambler, his family or his financial status that the shame emerges and the bubble bursts. That occurs frequently.

Have you ever known an addicted gambler? You probably do not think you have. But chances are you have, without realizing their problem. He may be the vacationer who loves cruises and the shows at Las Vegas. Not everyone who plays the "slots" or the lottery is addicted. Mostly we hear when they have won money. No one brags about losses.

in Attleboro Falls showed appreciation in a letter to the editor of the local newspaper, for the rabbi's time, effort and knowledge he gave to the entire community in the Attleboro Mental Health Association, where he was president; Massachusetts Ministerial Association, also as president; and president of the Big Brothers of Attleboro. He also served as chaplain for 20 years of the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Providence and at the Walpole (Mass.) prison.

But with all these honors and accomplishments, possibly the most rewarding event of his life was the 85th birthday party with his wife, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren present to celebrate with him.

To contribute to the July 9th occasion, send check payable to: Congregation Ohavah Sholam, Torah Fund, c/o Linda Kessler, treasurer, at 9 Blodgett Ave., Pawtucket, RI 02860.

His reputation for judgment and wisdom led him to be called as an associate justice at Beth Din (Rabbinical court) not just in Boston but in locations as far afield as Omaha, Nebraska.

In 1975 he was honored for 25 years of promoting Israel bonds, a work he continued throughout his life.

In 1978, St. Mark's Church

of Attleboro Falls showed appreciation in a letter to the editor of the local newspaper, for the rabbi's time, effort and knowledge he gave to the entire community in the Attleboro Mental Health Association, where he was president; Massachusetts Ministerial Association, also as president; and president of the Big Brothers of Attleboro. He also served as chaplain for 20 years of the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Providence and at the Walpole (Mass.) prison.

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Let's examine the by-products of gambling. I have a friend who did not go to college because her father left her tuition money at a roulette wheel. There are numerous home foreclosures because someone in the family left the mortgage money in a casino.

Women gamble as often as men do. The concealing of gambling excesses is hidden in topped-out credit cards, failed marriages and poor parenting.

What is really happening in our community? Are we about to become the casino destination of choice? Where are our politicians on these issues? Are they unaware of the potential negatives casino development here can create? Are they so indifferent to what changes could occur here? Do lobbyists easily buy approvals of gambling projects?

Defenses of gambling expansion are:

(1) "Why should R.I. dollars go to Connecticut?"

(2) "Casinos can reduce our tax burden."

(3) "Casinos can bring in out-of-state dollars."

No one considers present Massachusetts and Vermont politicians, noting the same arguments under the same pressures from the same gambling interests. There are a very few elected officials who realize the immorality of lauding easy money to a naive citizenry.

We erred in allowing the lottery to begin. The law that legitimized the lottery scammed the public by saying that its proceeds would all be used to advance education in the state. Instead, the proceeds have all gone into the state's general funds, in which projects are approved that cover special interests (usually corporate) and our schools remain among the worst in the nation.

Equally sad is that we have allowed State House powers put slot machines in other gambling institutions and made them a necessary source of revenue to meet the budgetary needs of the state. A pathetic sight is watching a senior citizen, obviously of modest means, throwing his or her Social Security dollars into the quarter slot machine, dreaming of, this time, finally striking it rich. I saw an old man buy food in the supermarket with Food Stamps. He then went to the service desk and bought five dollars worth of lottery tickets.

Consider all of my preaching when you talk to your elected officials, your contemporaries, and your children. There must be healthier ways to spend your time and money.

Borrow line is: the machine, never the gambler, comes out on top!

Tema Gouse writes a regular column for the Jewish Voice & Herald.



Photo by Crossroads

JCDS students help collect for homeless

HELPING HANDS—Greg Harlam, Sophie Harlam, Nili Levine and Jeremy Harlam of the Jewish Community Day School drop off sandwiches, snacks and gifts for the homeless clients served by Crossroads Rhode Island. Children at the school collected the items as part of a class project. Crossroads is the state's largest non-profit provider of services to the homeless and disconnected.

Memories of Rabbi Kaplan sought for celebration

PAWTUCKET—On July 9, the late Rabbi Philip Kaplan, who passed away at the age of 87 after a long illness, will be honored at Congregation Ohavah Sholam for 35 years of spiritual leadership and service to the Jewish community.

If anyone would like to share

a special remembrance of Rabbi Kaplan, send to: Nita Piskin, 77 Blodgett Ave., Pawtucket, RI 02860, npiskin@aol.com; or Leslie Marks-Hershey, 15 Paris St., Pawtucket, RI 02860, flunden52@yahoo.com.

In his early years, he served as a rabbi in the Jewish congrega-

tion of Sarnia, Ont., Canada — he and Mrs. Kaplan were invited to a reception to meet Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip of England on one of their tours. The entire community of Sarnia honored him as he left for a new congregation in the United States.

He also met President Jimmy Carter in Washington on Israel's 30th anniversary.

Rabbi Kaplan's many accomplishments included serving for 40 years, eight of them as president, on the Rabbinical Council of Massachusetts.

His reputation for judgment and wisdom led him to be called as an associate justice at Beth Din (Rabbinical court) not just in Boston but in locations as far afield as Omaha, Nebraska.

In 1975 he was honored for 25 years of promoting Israel bonds, a work he continued throughout his life.

In 1978, St. Mark's Church

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Community

Jewish War Veterans honor 83 this year

WARWICK — On Memorial Day weekend, the Jewish War Veterans (JWV) honored 83 of their own in an emotional ceremony attended by over 200 fellow veterans, friends and family on Sunday, May 28.

Each year the group, the state chapter of the national JWV, honors those who have died since April 1 of the previous year.

"They answered the call of duty. They did so without reservation, without hesitation, and without trepidation. We owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude," Gov. Donald Carcieri said.

This year, 37 names were also added to the Jewish War Veterans (JWV) Memorial Wall. There are several thousand names on the wall, located at the entrance to the Lincoln Park Cemetery on Post Rd.

The names are engraved at the request of the survivor, who completes an application — not all choose to do so. At the conclusion of the tribute, many family members made rubbings of the engraved names of their loved ones.

"We make every effort to manage this project with sensitivity and compassion," said Commander Sanford H. Gorodetsky.



A memorial bench was dedicated to the late commander of the JWV, Irving Levin.

detsky.

The ceremony itself incorporated religious ritual and military tributes. The R.I. National Guard presented Colors, followed by a moment of silence for those who "have made the supreme sacrifice in the Middle East."

The invocation was given by JWV chaplain, Rabbi George J. Astrachan, rabbi emeritus, Temple Sinai, Cranston.

Max Miller led the Pledge of the Allegiance.

The national anthem was

sung by Cantor Rennie J. Brown, Temple Sinai.

Speakers included Sen. Jack Reed, Lt. Gov. Charles J. Fogarty, and Warwick Mayor Scott Avedisian.

There was also a bench dedication to the late past commander Irving Levin, wreath laying, taps and a rifle volley.



JEWISH WAR VETERANS TRIBUTE — The Jewish War Veterans commemorated their own on Memorial Day Weekend with a ceremony to honor those who have died in the past year. Standing in front of the Memorial Wall of Honor are, from left, Cantor Rennie Brown, Dr. Cantor Ivan Perlman, and Dept. Commander Sanford H. Gorodetsky.

'No Way Out,' drama, workshop planned for Aug.

PROVIDENCE — The Rhode Island Holocaust Museum will present a repeat performance of the play, "No Way Out" on Aug. 16 at 1:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the Providence Hebrew Day School, 450 Elmgrove Ave.

The play is based on family letters telling the story of the plight of the Jews in Germany during the 1930s. Over the past few years, "No Way Out" has been staged in various formats throughout the country.

In April 2006 the R. I. Holocaust Memorial Museum mounted a production of the play as the feature of its annual Holocaust Through the Arts program.

Using a cast of professional actors, the readers' theatre was staged three times for students and once for adults. Because of the positive response to those performances, the museum decided to bring the play back. There is no admittance fee, but reserved seats will be provided for people who call the museum in advance, 453-7860 or emailing rhodeislandhmm@aol.com. The play will be preceded and followed by a workshop for teachers. These sessions will be part of the Rhode Island Holocaust Memorial Museum's annual full-day summer teacher workshop. For more information, call the museum at 453-7860.

The names of Jewish veterans engraved on the wall this year are:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Elijah Koppelman | 24. Oscar A. Dressler | 31. Milton J. Miller |
| 2. Peter Traugott | 25. Norman Tilles PNC | 32. Bernard Zisman |
| 3. Jack Till | 26. Louis Goldman | 33. George Idles |
| 4. Irving H. Levin | 27. Burton E. Reffkin | 34. Irving H. Adler |
| 5. Melvin Donald Harriet | 28. Seymour H. Golden | 35. David Kopech |
| 6. Jerome M. Winoker | 29. Justin L. BenHarris | 36. Carl Adler |
| 7. Alfred J. Abrams | 30. Eugene Eckoff | 37. M. Leonard Engle |
| 8. Melvin S. Frank | | |
| 9. Isadore A. Nachbar | | |
| 10. Charles Snell | | |
| 11. Munro Abowitz | | |
| 12. Elliot F. Slack | | |
| 13. Joel M. Pressman | | |
| 14. Edwin David Wells | | |
| 15. Samuel H. Wilk | | |
| 16. Arthur Rosenweet | | |
| 17. Sheldon S. Blustein | | |
| 18. Harry Goldstein | | |
| 19. Joseph A. Weisman | | |
| 20. Jerome Harvey Freiberg | | |
| 21. Ellis M. Flink | | |
| 22. Dr. Bernard Weiser | | |
| 23. Philip Rosenfeld | | |

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Community

NCJW: 100 years of 'Goodly Heritage'

By Mary Korr
mkorr@jfri.org

PROVIDENCE — The Rhode Island Section of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) celebrated its Centennial on June 8 at the Providence Marriott. The R.I. Section is among the 20 oldest nationwide.

Marion L. Misch, the first president of the R.I. Section (1905-'07), would have been proud of her legacy. In a letter from 1905, Mrs. Misch noted that the first members seemed to be "driven by a mission to serve

the community." In 1908, she became the third president of the national organization, which was founded by social activist Hannah Solomon at the 1893 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago.

Phyllis Snyder, current NCJW national president, was the keynote speaker. "For 113 years, NCJW has been the address for Jewish women who want to make their voices heard," she said. "Real change occurs when public policy happens. Our progressive ideals put into action can make the world a better

place."

Snyder was introduced as one of the Jewish Forward newspaper's "top 50 influential Jewish women for 2005," by outgoing co-president Renee Vogel.

Her work on Benchmark: NCJW's Campaign to Save Roe was cited.

Snyder had just returned from Israel, where the organization has founded innovative programs such as the Gender Studies Program at Tel Aviv University in Israel.

Vogel noted NCJW's "100 years of social activism, which I know will continue for another 100 years, until we are no longer needed."

She acknowledged the group's work in addressing the issue of domestic violence within the Jewish community, with a task force led by Judy Robbins and Roberta Segal.

"They exhorted the community to take responsibility," she said, and cited their accomplishments over a five-year period: creating a network of synagogues to offer resources and referrals to those seeking help; an anti-violence program geared to teens and offered to synagogue schools, and another program for Hillels, just to name a few.

Programs such as these represent "our belief in action and our progressive stance on issues," Vogel said. "As Jews we are committed to do this work; we are 'nudniks,' fighters for justice."

Today, the issues grow more and more complex, and NCJW's state public affairs committee under Carol Brooklyn, has worked to keep funding in place for the poor, advocated against the Supreme Court nominations of John Roberts and Samuel Alito, and petitioned the Israeli



Phyllis Snyder, president of NCJW, was the keynote speaker.

government to protect *agunot*, women chained to dead marriages, by facilitating their ability to get divorces.

At the event NCJW was presented with a citation for 100 years of service by Gov. Donald Carcieri.

"When I think of the Jewish faith, it is rich in tradition and people who have made enormous contributions despite having lost so much as a nation—I credit you with keeping this organization alive for over 100 years. I have enormous respect and admiration for your work."

The group also received recognition from the office of Sen. Lincoln Chafee and the day was named by the R.I. Senate as NCJW day. Mayor David Cicilline also presented the group with a proclamation from the City of Providence. He lauded NCJW for their work on reproductive freedom, child welfare and women's rights.

A highlight of the evening was the distribution of the publication "A Goodly Heritage: A History of the Rhode Island Section of NCJW." (See accompanying excerpts.)

Ellie Elbaum and Nan Levine co-chaired the event.



Photos by Paul Darling

Nan Levine welcomes Mayor David Cicilline to the National Council of Jewish Women's centennial celebration held June 8.

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Guests Anne Berkehammer Krause and Lila Sapinsley.

The following is an excerpt from "A Goodly Heritage," compiled by NCJW member Toby Rosner.

Humanitarian Efforts During World War II

NCJW programs have always evolved and developed in accordance with the needs of the times. In 1941 R.I. Section President Caroline Brunshwig reported that in recent years much of the work of the Section "sprang directly from the results of Hitlerism...As a result of European conditions refugees were coming to our community.

Both directly and in conjunction with the Rhode Island Refugee Service we aided these people in finding homes, met trains, and established a committee to help them to help themselves by finding a market for some of the things they were able to make, such as knitted sweaters or baby clothes or cookies.

The Rhode Island Section also formed English and Americanization classes. Money was raised for the National Children's Aid Project, which was dedicated to finding adoptive homes for refugee children.

Nationally, the NCJW's port-and-dock work grew from serving two thousand refugees a year in the early 1930s to over four thousand in 1942. Every refugee arriving in this country was met at the dock by a Council member, who facilitated every aspect of resettlement, including locating resettlement opportunities in cities around the country.

At the end of the war representatives of Council traveled to Germany, Belgium, and Holland to assist displaced persons and to help set up homes for Jewish girls in Athens and Paris. Rhode Island Council members actively participated in this program.

Community

Hebrew classes to be taught by Israelis

PROVIDENCE—Summer Hebrew classes will be held in Rhode Island again this year. The Bureau of Jewish Education has held a series of Hebrew lessons for two weeks during the summer in previous years.

Simcha Pe'er and Rachel Ziv, from the Partnership 2000 sister region of Afula and the Gilboa region, are returning to conduct classes at four levels of Hebrew ability for about two hours on weekdays.

Both women are well-known teachers, active in their

communities. Pe'er, who lives in the Gilboa, has been a teacher of English and other subjects for 20 years. Ziv, a resident of Afula, is a retired teacher (now in the restaurant business). Both will bring the culture of their Israeli communities to the classes.

Mondays through Thursdays, from July 10—13 and 17—20, classes for beginner's conversational Hebrew and advanced conversational Hebrew will be held from 9:45 a.m. to noon.

Classes in two levels of intermediate conversational Hebrew

will be held from 2 to 4:15 p.m.

The charge for participation is \$50.

Classes will be held in the offices of the Bureau, 130 Sessions St., Providence.

The Perelman Family Fund will subsidize teachers in Bureau-affiliated schools.

Those who have an interest in attending, or who want more information, should contact the bureau's temporary telephone number at: 228-3770 or E-mail bjeri@bjeri.org.

Hill to leave Emanu-El

PROVIDENCE—Robert Hill, executive director of Temple Emanu-El for the past six years, will retire at the end of June. Hill has served various congregations in this capacity for a total of 23 years.

During Hill's tenure Temple Emanu-El carried out several major renovation and construction programs.

He recently completed a term as president of the North American Association of Synagogue Executives, and is currently a member of the Leadership Council of Conservative Judaism, representing the execu-

tive directors.

Before his career as a Jewish professional, Hill was in teaching and higher education administration for 15 years. He served in the Army during the Vietnam War.

"I am very grateful to Temple Emanu-El for the opportunity to have served here," Hill said. "There is no more critical Jewish institution for the health of Judaism than the synagogue; and this is an astonishing congregation in a wonderful community."

A search process is underway to name a successor.



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Q&A with Hadassah's nat'l head

By Nancy Kirsch

The Jewish Voice & Herald caught up with June Walker, a petite woman, whose energy and drive belie her 72 years. The national president of Hadassah, women's Zionist organization, Walker spoke to the Rhode Island chapter on May 16.

An active Hadassah member since she was 18, Walker has juggled a full-time career as a

cell research, and we don't focus our efforts only on diseases particular to the Jewish community, such as Tay-Sachs.

The HMO was nominated in 2005 for a Nobel Peace Prize for its role as a bridge to peace. The hospitals—one in West Jerusalem and one on Mt. Scopus—treat everyone who comes through the doors. In addition, the HMO pioneered the world's first minimally invasive



June Walker

professor of respiratory therapy (from which she retired about seven years ago), wife and mother, and 54 years of Hadassah service. Elected president in 2003, her term expires in July, 2007.

The interview ranged from family histories to the State of Israel, and, of course, Hadassah's contributions over its 94-year history.

Q: What inspired your interest in Hadassah?

A: My mother! When I was 18, my mother, who was very active in Hadassah, couldn't find anyone to be the education chair of the Queens Hillside Hadassah chapter. So, she appointed me to that position, and I've been active ever since.

Q: What has Hadassah accomplished that gives you the greatest satisfaction?
A: There are so many things, I'd not be able to name them all, so I'll talk about a few that come to mind.

Q: Our commitment to promoting stem-cell research is key. We've advocated for it at the national level and with every state, as well. We've helped raise money for stem-cell researchers, and, in fact, the three leading research sites are the Hadassah Medical Organization ("HMO") in Israel, and universities in Melbourne, Australia and Singapore.

On June 9, Hadassah received the National Advocacy Award from the Genetics Policy Institute at Stanford University, for our commitment to stem-cell research. We advocate for therapeutic, not reproductive stem-

hip replacement surgery, and it developed a vaccine for melanoma that offers a 42 percent survival rate, compared to the U.S. vaccine's 20 percent survival rate. Its dentistry school has a wonderful program called "SMILES" where dentistry students go and take care of the children's teeth.

Hadassah runs three youth villages in Israel for children who we take from the gutters and prisons of Israel. We provide them with shelter, food, clothing, education and opportunities for hope.

Q: You've been involved with Hadassah for so many years. Do you see commitments to underwriting waning or changing in any way?

A: Yes, volunteering for its own sake and reward is not valued so much any more... people are

valued by what they earn, not by who they are. I am starting, though, to see a turn-around. Young people—teenagers and those in their 20s—want to do community service differently. They want more hands-on, more tangible and more time-limited activity.

Q: Can you describe the Young Judaea Program?

A Young Judaea is a great program—we have 400 kids living in Israel for an 11-month period the year after they graduate high school. It's mostly U.S. students, though some from Britain attend, too. During their time in Israel, they study, tour the country, perform community service and, if kibbutzim have the available space, they enjoy some time living on a kibbutz.

For more information on Hadassah, visit www.hadassah.org.

Nancy Kirsch is a freelance writer from Providence.

Our commitment to promoting stem-cell research is key!

—June Walker

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South County briefs



Pictured atop Masada, URI Hillel students Jessica Wolchok, Greg Bruno, Caitlin Mackenzie, Rebecca Edelsberg, Josh Feinberg and Elissa Weinstein recently participated in Hillel's birthright Israel trip.

URI Hillel had active year

PROVIDENCE — The new executive director, Amy Olson, came to Hillel last August after 16 years spent at Hillel at the University of Minnesota.

The organization moved to better quarters, with more office, social, kitchen and dining space, in the former Alpha Xi Delta house at 12 Fraternity Circle. The group's new home was able to provide students with services and special holiday meals.

The Hillel students organized a Save Darfur campaign and a Holocaust memorial service.

25 students were inspired to join the birthright Israel program, with Hillel providing orientation and follow-up for each student participant.

Future synagogue for Collaborative

NARRAGANSETT — The Jewish community in the "Dixie" of Rhode Island is making its presence felt more and more with its plans for a new synagogue building, large enough for the growing Jewish population.

Richard Winkler, president of the Jewish Collaborative, presided at a well-attended meeting in May at which he explained in detail the steps involved in planning for the site and the building. He showed architectural drawings of the proposed structure, to be located on Perry's Pond in Narragansett / So. Kingstown.

The president of Congregation Beth David, and program director Joanne Malise also spoke.

The future synagogue has been the beneficiary of the past, having been given 26 solid mahogany curved pews, one of which was on display at the meeting, and a large marble Ten Commandments plaque from the former Congregation Shaare Zedek, which have been built into the drawings.

S. County Hebrew school event

South County Hebrew School completed its year on Sunday, May 14 with a program of certificate and prize-giving, and consecration of the second graders, at which each child received a prayer book. The "Kids Koor" performed.

JFS receives nutrition grant of \$25,000

PROVIDENCE — The United Way of Rhode Island has awarded a \$25,000 grant to Jewish Family Service of Rhode Island for an elderly nutrition program.

"We're excited to be funding this program," said Anthony Maione, president and CEO of the United Way of Rhode Island. "We are helping seniors maintain independence by improving their awareness of nutrition and the nutritional quality of the food they are buying and preparing."

There are many reasons that the elderly have difficulty preparing healthy meals and making healthy food choices. The goal of this program is to help seniors make the right choices in order

to better their health and remain independent for as long as possible.

Jewish Family Service has engaged Phyllis Freedman, a licensed and registered dietitian and certified diabetes outpatient educator, to work with not only JFS clients, but also individuals at senior meal sites, centers or residences throughout Rhode Island. She will be offering programs on subjects such as how to understand food labels, getting enough water and the importance of food groups such as whole grains and fruits and vegetables. In addition, she will work with the JFS home care and kosher meal site programs.

Erin Minior, interim execu-

tive director of JFS, said, "We are thrilled to be able to offer this service to our elderly clients and to the community. We thank the United Way for helping us enhance our services to this population."

Many of the clients at the Jewish Family Service are over the age of 65. Jewish Family Service provides services to people of all ages such as counseling, adoption options, child and adolescent therapy, home care for the elderly and disabled, Lifeline emergency response and a kosher meal/meals on wheels program for the elderly.

For more information, call Jewish Family Service at 331-1244.

Redwood Lodge installs new officers

EAST PROVIDENCE — Andrew H. Kaplan was elected and installed Master of Redwood Lodge No. 35 at their 128th annual meeting held recently at Grand Lodge Freemasons Hall. He was a member of the Redwood Class of 2001 and belongs to the Scottish Rite Valley of Providence, the Tall Cedars and Swords of Bunker Hill.

Also installed were Right Worshipful Donovan J. Lewis as senior warden, Worshipful James D. Hodges as junior warden, Worshipful Andrew H. Sholes as treasurer and Right Worship-

ful Gerald P. Cohen as secretary. Other appointed officers were also installed.

Installing officer Right Worshipful District Deputy Grand Master Richard Ault, Jr., was assisted by his Master of Ceremonies Joseph McGrath, Jr.

The new Master is a graduate of Albright College, received a master's degree from Providence College and certification as a network engineer from Roger Williams University. He is presently employed as systems administrator for the department of radiation oncology at Massachusetts



Andrew H. Kaplan

General Hospital.

He and his wife, Naomi, are residents of West Warwick.

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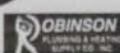
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Obituaries

Harvey Barron Berman, 82

PORTLAND, Conn. — Harvey Barron Berman, 82, formerly of Florida and Rhode Island, died June 8.

Born in Providence, he was a son of the late Louis and Ida Berman. He was married to Anne (Nussenbaum) Berman for 55 years.

Mr. Berman retired several years ago after having worked in a number of businesses as a salesman. He was an avid sports fan, especially of the Boston Red Sox. He enjoyed playing bridge and tennis, and was a devoted husband and father.

In addition to his wife, he leaves a son, Peter Berman of Chicago, Ill.; two daughters, Susan and her husband, Michael Devin, of Swampscott, Mass.; and Wendy and her husband, Stephen Salisbury, of Lebanon, Conn.; a sister, Rita Zamil of Newport; and four grandchildren, Matthew, Corey, Tracy and Sarah.

Burial was in the New Lebanon Cemetery, Waterman Rd., Lebanon, Conn. Contributions may be made to The National Alzheimer's Foundation, "We Care Program", 61 General Early Drive, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425.

Morris Feldman, 83

CRANSTON — Morris Feldman, 83, died June 3. He was the husband of Charlotte (Mazo) Feldman. Born in Providence, a son of the late Hyman and Miriam (Katz) Feldman, he had lived in Cranston for 53 years.

Mr. Feldman was the co-owner of "Coffee An' Service."

He leaves a son, David Feldman of Sparta, N.J.; a daughter, Joanne Feldman of Clarkburg, W. Va.; a sister, Lillian Gladstone of Providence; a granddaughter, Jessica; and a great-grandson, Max. He was the brother of the late Irving and Cy Feldman and Bessie Solkoff.

Contributions may be made to a favorite charity.

Sidney Weinstein, 93

PROVIDENCE — Sidney Weinstein, 93, a retired business executive, died June 13. He was the husband of

Isabelle (Weinstein) Weinstein. Born in Providence, a son of the late Phillip and Rose (Ziserman) Weinstein, he was a lifelong resident of the city.

Mr. Weinstein was the co-owner of Atlantic Tubing and Rubber Co. of Cranston until his retirement.

He was a member of Temple Beth-El.

He leaves a son, Phillip Weinstein of Westport, Mass., and his wife, Janice Raphael; a daughter, Jackie Brooker of New York City; and two grandsons, Noah and Benjamin. He was the brother of the late Harold Weinstein, William Weinstein and Betty Bolotow.

Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

Contributions may be made to The National Alzheimer's Center, 225 No. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60601.

William Fellner, 91

SARASOTA, Fla. — William Fellner, 91, of Sarasota, formerly of Pawtucket and East Providence, died May 19. He was the husband of the late Lillian (Cokin) Fellner. They were married for 63 years.

Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., Mr. Fellner lived in Rhode Island for 53 years before moving to Sarasota in 1999.

He attended Brooklyn College and received his LL.B. and LL.M. degrees from St. John's University.

After serving in the U.S. Army during World War II, he and his family settled in Rhode Island where he was an independent insurance agent for Shore Insurance and the Guardian Life Insurance Company for 44 years.

He was a part-time instructor of business law at Bryant College and then for three years at Providence College.

He was a past master of Roosevelt Masonic Lodge #42 and a past president of Congregation Ohaveth Shalom in Pawtucket. He was a volunteer at the United Jewish Appeal, Bnai Brith, Hadassah, and Meals on Wheels in Providence; and Anchin Assisted Living Pavilion in Sarasota, and remained an active volunteer until his death. His hobbies included golf

B'haalot'cha, Numbers 8:1-12:6

The Torah: A Modern Commentary pp. 1,075-1,100

The way we were, are, and hope to be

Mark L. Winer

When we remember the past, we so often forget the worst and recall only the best: "When I was a boy..." "Once upon a time..." Americans was rhapsodic about the frontier values of the Old West. Israelis love to recall the idealism and enthusiasm of the *ahluzeitim*, the pioneering kibbutzniks of the early twentieth century.

At synagogue meetings throughout the world, someone almost invariably compares today's difficulties unfavorably with the way "we used to do things here." In retrospect, we long for the simpler Jewish identity of our immigrant antecedents and old-country ancestors. Shetl life was poor in material comforts but rich in family strength and religious tradition. In so remembering the past, we forget the negative aspects of the way it was. We so easily forget the anti-Semitism that was so much worse years ago. We forget the insecurity of being a Jew before World War II. We forget the fears for Israel's survival before the Six-Day War in 1967. The theme song from the film "The Way We Were" says, "Memories may be beautiful but yet, what's too painful to remember, we simply choose to forget."

In this week's Torah por-

tion, B'haalot'cha, our ancestors in the desert voiced similar nostalgia: Zachamu et hadagah asher nochal b'mitzrayim, "We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt." (Numbers 11:5) They forgot the lashes and oppression, the humiliation and the slavery. But, oh, the fish!

I cannot count the times I have heard people talk about the good old days when there were real Jewish neighborhoods; when there was a true and vital Jewish community; when Jews were real Jews; when there was not so much assimilation, not so much intermarriage; when families were truly committed to Jewish practices and observance.

Such Jewish nostalgia for the olden days remembers the "gefille fish" and forgets the "horseshadish." Things may have been simpler from a Jewish perspective, but they were by no means better. With all of our problems, I still choose today. The difficulties we contemporary Jews encounter in building as vibrant a Jewish community as we would like are our problems. They are not the problems imposed upon us by an anti-Semitic world or by the poverty and poor education of our fellow Jews. Almost no Jews in the world today live under totalitarian regimes, unable to move to Israel or to America or to Great

Britain or to other places that grant Jews freedom.

As a Jew, I choose today. I have always been a Reform Jew. Reform Judaism is so much more vibrant today than it was when I was a child growing up in the 40s and 50s in Utah, Indiana, and Texas. So many more Reform Jews know much more about Judaism and practice Judaism much more seriously and read Hebrew far more fluently. In my view, we are, frankly, more authentically Jewish, even as we are better integrated into modern life, without compromise or apology.

As good as today is, I deeply believe that tomorrow will be even better. Since I like today far more than yesterday, I choose tomorrow for my children and grandchildren. I'm not sure how we will solve today's problems, but we will solve them. That is my faith. And that is my trust in Jewish destiny and in the covenant established by our ancestors with God at Sinai. Just as they had to overcome their nostalgia for the past to move on toward tomorrow, the dynamism of our Jewish covenant with God demands no less of our generation.

Mark L. Winer is the senior rabbi of the West London Synagogue of British Jews.

and photography.

He leaves two daughters Arlene and her husband, Henry Winkelman of Brookline, formerly of Sharon, Mass.; and Barbara and her husband, Harold Shlevin of Atlanta, Ga.; two grandchildren, Sara Winkelman Greene of Los Angeles, Calif., and Adam Win-

kelman of Somerville, Mass. and two great-granddaughters, Elisheva and Shoshana Greene. He was the grandfather of the late Diane and Annie

Shlevin.

Burial was in Pinckney, Long Island Memorial donations may be made to Hadassah.

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Weddings



Elimelech Berlin and Elisheva Diamond

SPRING VALLEY, N.Y. — Elimelech Pinchas "Pinny" Berlin, son of Yitzchok and Annette Berlin of Ramat Bet Shemesh, Israel, and Elisheva Diamond (now Berlin) daughter of Dr. Marc Diamond and Dr. Cheryl Gottesman of Providence, were married on May 16 in New Square, Spring Valley, N.Y.

The Rosh Yeshiva of the New England Rabbinical College, Rabbi Eliezer Gibber, officiated at the ceremony.

The bridegroom's paternal grandfather, Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu Berlin, lives in Neve Yaakov Mizrach, Israel. His maternal grandmother, Mrs. Beth Wiseman, is a resident of Baltimore, Md.

The bride's paternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. David Diamond, reside in Sharon, Mass.; and her maternal grandmother, Mrs. Sandra Gottesman, lives in Toms River, N.J.

The bride currently teaches junior high school math enrichment and English in Baltimore, Md. The bridegroom attends the New England Rabbinical College and is taking courses at Providence College towards a degree in accounting. The couple plans to reside in Rhode Island.

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Simchas

Births

Marc and Stacy (Corin) Olswang of West Rogers Park, Chicago, announce the birth of their daughter, **Hadassah Bayla**, on Aug. 19, 2005. She is named after both paternal and maternal great-grandmothers. Esther Bayla Olswang and Bella (Hinda Bayla) Corin.

Grandparents are Richard and Hene Olswang of Glenview, Ill., and Bob and Janet Corin, formerly of Warwick, now roaming the U.S. in their RV.



Hadassah Bayla Olswang



Shayna Sophia Vanderhoff

Earl Vanderhoff and Sharon Schwartz-Vanderhoff of Cranston announce the birth of a daughter, their second child, **Shayna Sophia Vanderhoff**, on May 8, weighing 7 lbs. 4 oz. and 19 1/2 inches long. She was welcomed home by her big brother, Zachary Noah Vanderhoff.

Maternal grandparents are David and Marilyn Schwartz of West Warwick. She is also the granddaughter of the late Melvin and Lottie Vanderhoff.

Engagement



Leslie Greenfield Barrow Robert Young

CRANSTON—Joseph and Eunice Greenfield Barrow of Cranston announce the engagement of their daughter, and Leslie Greenfield Barrow of Cranston, to Robert Young of Cranston, Mass., to

Robert Young of Johnston.

Mr. Barrow graduated from Bryant College and is employed as an office manager at J.K. Kearney, Ltd., in Framingham, Mass.

Mr. Young is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island and is a copy editor at the Providence Journal.

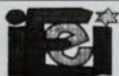
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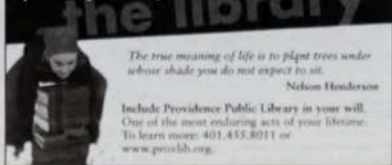
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Molly Hope Daniels

Molly Hope Daniels, daughter of Meredith and Bradford Daniels of Cranston, celebrated her first birthday on May 25th. Molly is the granddaughter of Judy and Norman Tobin of Warwick and Esther and Steve Daniels of Cranston. Molly is named after both of her great-grandmothers.



Melissa Kornasky received home and community care award from Gov. Donald A. Carcieri.

Home care worker award

Melissa Kornasky, a home care worker at the Comprehensive Adult Day Center and Jewish Seniors Agency, has been selected as the winner of the 2006, Department of Elderly Affairs, Home and Community Care "Worker of the Year Award" for the entire adult day services industry in Rhode Island. On Thursday, May 25, Gov. Donald A. Carcieri and Corinne Russo, the director of the R.I. Dept. of Elderly Affairs, presented the annual DEA awards to the state's leaders in elder care in a ceremony at the Rhode Island State House.

Social worker award

The R.I. chapter of the National Association of Social Workers has awarded Tom Broffman, Ph.D., the LICSW "Social Worker of the Year in Addictions" award to be presented on June 21.

He is an assistant professor at Eastern Conn. State University in Willimantic, and a consultant at the Eleanor Slater Hospital in Cranston.

He is a member of Temple Beth-El.

Afterschool Alliance honors Cicilline

WASHINGTON, D.C.—On May 24, the Afterschool Alliance honored Providence Mayor David Cicilline for his support for after-school programs, at its annual Breakfast of Champions in Washington, D.C. The event honored a dozen mayors for their ongoing work on behalf of after-school programs in their communities.

Graduations



Elana Michele Riffle

PROVIDENCE — Elana Michele Riffle, daughter of Samuel and Nancy Riffle, graduated from Oberlin College, in Oberlin, Ohio, with a bachelor of arts in religion and geology. She is now attending Lesley University, working on a master's degree in elementary education.



Tara Sousa

EAST GREENWICH — Tara Sousa, daughter of Mindy and Michael Isaacs, graduated summa cum laude from Connecticut College with a degree in biochemistry, and cellular and molecular biology. Tara was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa on May 20th at a ceremony at Connecticut College. She will be pursuing a master's degree in genetic counseling at Boston University School of Medicine in the fall. She is the granddaughter of Evelyn and Seymour Gersten of Narragansett.

CORAL SPRINGS, Fla. — **Arielle H. Denny**, daughter of Steven and Deborah Denny, received her law degree from Florida State University in Tallahassee. She is also a graduate of the University of Florida with a degree in criminology. She will begin her career with the state attorney's office of Broward County, Fla.

WARWICK — **Marco Newman** has graduated summa cum laude from Johnson and Wales University with an MBA in global international management and a minor in marketing.

Mrs. Newman is director and merchandise manager of



Rachel Cooper

NORTH KINGSTOWN — Rachel Cooper, daughter of Martin and Betsy Cooper, graduated cum laude with a bachelor of fine arts degree from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Purchase. Her major was in dramatic writing/screenwriting.



Marc Michael Bochner

CRANSTON — Marc Michael Bochner, son of Gail and Morris Bochner of Cranston, received his bachelor of science in kinesiology, from the University of Rhode Island, on May 21st, 2006.

Marc has been accepted into the doctorate program at URI and will continue his studies to complete his doctorate of physical therapy. He will graduate with his DPT in 2009. Marc is planning to use his education to practice sports medicine.

Marc is the grandson of Evelyn Palazzo of Cranston and the late Celia and Sam Bochner.

retail operations at Foxwoods Resort and Casino.

WARWICK — **Janna M. Newman**, daughter of Barry and Mary Newman, graduated magna cum laude from Syracuse University with a double major in policy and environmental geography and minors in management and marketing.

She received the George B. Cressy Award for excellence in geography and is a member of the Gamma Theta Upsilon Honor Society for Geography. She also attended the University of New South Wales and worked at the Great Barrier Reef, Fiji, Tasmania and New Zealand.

If life is a stage, this is the opener

(This is the second installment of Ari Alexander's commencement address to the graduating class of the Harry Elkin Midrasha.)

By Ari Alexander



Let me tell you a little bit about my Jewish story. I'll tell you that I was on the international board of USY and a long-time camper at

Camp Ramah.

I graduated from high school and Midrasha in 1997. During the nine years between where you are now and where I am now, Judaism has featured in my life very differently in each of three completely different stages.

Post-Midrasha: Stage 1 (College)

In the first post-Midrasha stages, I went on NATIV — spending my first year of college in Israel. I was very religiously observant — keeping strictly kosher and observing the laws of Shabbat. I wore a kippah and tzitzit. I prayed three times a day. In college, I joined mostly Orthodox Jews in daily prayer at the University of Pennsylvania and later established a Carlebach minyan on Friday nights that brought Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist Jews together to sing and dance.

But I would guess that I was not asked to speak here tonight simply because of my Jewish observance in those of my first few years at high school.

Stage 2 (In Europe, Mideast)

The next stage of my journey felt about as far away from Judaism as you could imagine. I lived in Belfast in Northern Ireland for a year, where I was most people's first Jew. I went to Beirut, Lebanon in March and April of 2002 when you were in 8th Grade, I guess I would have been in...17th grade. While the Jewish world was in shock over the disgusting bombing on Passover in Netanya that year, and my family was together for seder in Providence, I was in Beirut surrounded by people in shock over what happened in Jenin in the days that followed. I was not open about the fact that I was Jewish when I was in Lebanon. I blended in. I people simply didn't know who I really was.

More importantly, I had no idea what being Jewish meant to me as I listened to Israel's warplanes break the sound barrier simply, according to my heart, to intimidate the Lebanese civilian population. My Jewish identity at that time was infused with anger and shame. Twelve months later I was studying Arabic intensively in Syria, and chose to teach English to a handful of the 400,000 Palestinians living near Damascus.

My Voice

Stage 3 (NYC)

The third stage since high school came when I moved to New York two years ago. And Schechter, Ramah, USY, Midrasha, my year in Israel, UPenn and my experiences in the Arab world are all in the past — and all of them set the stage to inform who I am today. I am spending my career building bridges between the Muslim world and the Jewish world — a direct result of all of the pieces of my Jewish story that came before. I also regularly read Torah at a friend's synagogue, use my Torah tutoring skills taught to me by Cantor Mayer to help kids prepare to become Bnei Mitzvah, and live on the Lower East Side of Manhattan — a neighborhood in which some of your grandparents or great-grandparents probably spent part of their lives.

There are a few lessons I want you to take from my personal story. First of all, a piece of your Jewish journey has come to an end tonight and you are about to embark on new adventures. No matter where you are today, there is no predicting where you are going. I felt when I was 18 like I was likely to eventually become a rabbi. And I certainly never in a million years thought I would spend years of my life in Europe or the Arab world. The second point of my story is that there is no one way to be a Jew. At every point of my story, I was and am Jewish — with thoughts, emotions and perspectives that were and are framed in the context of my Jewish identity — however near or far from Judaism and Jewish community I may have been or am. Thirdly, don't be afraid to do things a little differently than others around you. It's often those unpopular choices that most inspire you AND others.

We are Jewish in a time of unprecedented prosperity and opportunity for Jews. For me, and according to Jewish values I learned at Midrasha and elsewhere, this kind of privilege comes with a responsibility to do our part in tikkun olam — the repairing of the world. Unfortunately, there are a lot of problems in need of fixing, a broken world very much in need of repair. My very small contribution to the healing is in the field of Muslim-Jewish dialogue for an organization I founded called Children of Abraham — to facilitate dialogue for Muslim teenagers in Indonesia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Syria and Jewish teenagers in the US, Israel, Russia and France. Students interact with each other entirely on the Internet via password-protected discussion boards and Wikis pages.

It is no coincidence that I work with students your age every single day of my life. You have energy, hope,

honesty, and curiosity. Most adults over time lose some of that energy, lose some of that hope, lose some of that honesty, lose some of that curiosity. Ask your teachers why they teach you. Ask your parents why it's so much fun to be around you. Ask your friends why they admire you. Ask the government why they're afraid of you.

You are wonderful and powerful. You possess traits that most other things wish they had more of in themselves.

But in the spirit of honesty, let's talk about the flip side of this power. It is people your age who are the greatest forces of destruction in our world as well. Your peers are today's terrorists and soldiers. 17, 18, 19-year-olds are fighting wars and committing acts of terrorism on a daily basis. This is the dark side of that power. Their your age have.

So in simple terms — each of you just like each of your peers around the world — has a choice: to be part of the repairing of the world, part of its destruction or to pretend that you can't make a difference. I would argue that the only Jewishly informed choice here is the first one.

The challenge for us as Jews is not whether to repair the world, but how best to do it.

So since 17, 18, 19 year-olds have an abundance of energy, hope, honesty and curiosity, and since 17, 18, 19 year-olds have an abundance of destructive weapons — do not let anyone dismiss you as irrelevant. Do not let people condescend you by telling you that your ideas are sweet. You are not the future. You are the now. You matter right now. And you should feel empowered by the fact that you're smarter and have better ideas than the most powerful man in the world today.

Many of you are probably starting to ask yourselves: what opportunities do I want to create for myself? What's important to me? What do I want to do as I grow up?

As far as I'm concerned there is only one right answer to these questions. And that is whatever the voice inside of you is telling you. It's going to be hard to hear that voice sometimes — because of a world of distractions, a nagging mother, peer pressure, or even your own expectations. But if you make it a priority in your life to listen to your own distinct voice and what it wants and what it needs — you will likely find that happiness and meaning fill your life.

You don't need to be in a rush to figure out what your inner voice is telling you — about your Jewishness, your career or anything else. It will happen naturally.

Maya Lot, and have fun becoming you.

An Alexander is the co-creative director of Children of Abraham, a center for interfaith education, in Brooklyn.