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SHARON, PERES STUDY PEACE MOVES

By Mitchell Danow, JTA

Despite a daily drumbeat of terror and death in the Middle East, efforts continue to achieve a diplomatic breakthrough.

During the past week, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat met at a conference hosted in Brussels by the European Union. During the meeting, top E.U. officials gave the two an urgent message:

Arrange a cease-fire, then move on to peace negotiations. Also this week, Peres reportedly presented a peace plan to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

The timing of the diplomatic push may not be coincidental, coming days before the U.N. General Assembly convenes Nov. 10 in New York.

There have been reports for more than a week that Peres was drafting a peace initiative. On Sunday, according to Ha'aretz, he presented it to Sharon.

Two days later, Peres told Israel Radio that he wanted to reach an agreement with Sharon on a common plan to present to the Palestinian Authority.

According to Ha'aretz, the Peres plan includes the following:

"A demilitarized Palestinian state will be created, with its borders determined through negotiations;

"Buffer zones will be created between Israel and the West Bank;

"The plan would be implemented first in the Gaza Strip, later in the West Bank;

"The status quo will remain in Jerusalem, including Palestinian control over the Temple Mount. If it becomes impossible to reach agreement on Jerusalem, the issue will be postponed;

"Palestinian refugees will not return to homes they abandoned in Israel during the 1948 war. An international panel will be created to arrange compensation for Palestinian refugees, as well as for Jewish refugees from Arab countries;

"There will be no Israeli-Palestinian negotiations until there is a complete cessation of violence, a frequent demand of Sharon.

The Peres plan also calls for the United States to guarantee Israel's final borders, Ha'aretz reported, adding that Israel will seek a defense treaty with the United States to accompany any final peace treaty with the Palestinians.

As Sharon studies Peres' proposals, he knows that his unity government could hang in the balance. Avigdor Lieberman, head of the hawkish National Unity bloc, threatened Tuesday to leave the government if Sharon accepts the Peres plan.

On the other hand, Peres is under increasing pressure from his Labor Party to pull out of the government unless Sharon shows he is serious about entering negotiations with the Palestinians.

In the meantime, the violence continues. In the bloodiest such incident this week, a Palestinian gunman opened fire Sunday on a bus in the French Hill neighborhood of northern Jerusalem.

Two people were killed and some 50 injured when the gunman sprayed the No. 25 Egged bus with fire from an M-16 automatic rifle at the afternoon rush hour.

Police identified one of the dead as Shoshana Ben Yishai, a 16-year-old who immigrated to Israel with her parents from Long Island when she was 5 years old.



Coffins set up by peace activists lie in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square in memory of the some 900 Israelis and Palestinians who have lost their lives in more than a year of fighting. Brian Hender/JTA

Three Israelis — a border policeman, a soldier and a civilian — shot and killed the gunman. The gunman was a member of Islamic Jihad from the West Bank city of Hebron, Jerusalem Police Chief Mickey Levy said.

The attack took place hours after Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer said at Israel's weekly Cabinet meeting that Israeli troops would withdraw from the West Bank city of Kalkilya.

Early Monday, Israeli forces indeed withdrew from Kalkilya. The army said it would remain in Israeli-controlled territory nearby "to prevent terror activities launched from" areas under Palestinian control.

Israel troops already had withdrawn from Bethlehem and Beit Jalla.

In its biggest operation in areas under Palestinian control since the two sides signed their first interim peace accords in 1993, Israel took up positions last month in and around the largest Palestinian-controlled cities in the West Bank.

Criticized by the United States and other Western nations, the operation was launched to crack down on terrorism after the Oct. 17 assassination of Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi by a Palestinian squad.

On Tuesday, Ben-Eliezer ordered the Israel Defense Force to prepare to withdraw from Ramallah, while maintaining a tight closure around the city.

That withdrawal took place early Wednesday morning. IDF troops remain in Tulkarm and Jenin, which the Israeli military regards as the most dangerous Palestinian cities.

On Tuesday, in a signal that Israel would change its anti-terror strategy, Sharon spokesman Ra'anana Gissin said Israel plans to rely less on large-scale military operations and more on "guerrilla warfare" tactics against suspected terrorists. "We'll rely more on intelligence" and "pinpointed operations," he said. That same day, an

Israeli soldier, Capt. Eyal Sela, was killed in an ambush by three Palestinian terrorists near Nablus. In an ensuing gun battle, Israeli soldiers killed the three Palestinian gunmen. Israeli officials hotly denied subsequent Palestinian allegations that the soldiers had executed the three after first wounding them.

On Monday, three Israelis were wounded when a bomb exploded in an Israeli settlement near the West Bank city of Jenin. One suffered moderate wounds and the other two light injuries in the blast at a factory in Shaked. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility. Following the bombing, Israeli officials said the attack would delay plans to withdraw troops from Jenin.

In other violence, Palestinian gunmen shot and killed an Israeli soldier, Staff Sgt. Raz Mintz, 19, of Haifa last Friday night. The gunmen also lightly wounded another soldier in the drive-by shooting, which occurred at a roadblock north of Beit El. The Al Aksa Brigade, which is affiliated with Arafat's Fatah movement, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Also this week, the London-based Al-Hayat newspaper reported Tuesday that Arafat may unilaterally declare a Palestinian state at the U.N. General Assembly, believing he will receive wide backing. A day later, however, a



Demonstrators hold banners protesting war as tens of thousands of Israelis gather to commemorate the sixth anniversary of the murder of the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin at Rabin Square in Tel Aviv, Nov. 3. Brian Hender/JTA

Palestinian minister announced that Arafat will not declare an independent Palestinian state when he addresses the General Assembly on Sunday. "The Palestinian leadership shall not take dramatic steps such as the unilateral declaration of a state. We shall not surprise anyone," Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo said. Despite the continued violence, Peres expressed optimism Wednesday about the Israeli-

Palestinian peace process. "There is a good chance of restoring the peace process," he said in Paris after meeting his French counterpart, Hubert Vedrine. Peres also said Israeli troops would continue to withdraw from Palestinian cities they entered nearly three weeks ago. Once the withdrawals are completed, "maybe we can see a cease-fire in the whole of the West Bank," Peres said.

COULD TALIBAN'S TRIBE HAVE JEWISH ROOTS?

The two Jews now living in Afghanistan are heirs to a 2,700-year-old Jewish presence that may include members of the tribe that makes up the ruling Taliban. Jews first came to what is now called Afghanistan in the seventh or eighth centuries BCE following the first biblical exile at the hands of the Assyrians.

According to several researchers—including Israel's second president, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi — the Pashtun believe they are descended from the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, and later were forcibly converted to Islam. The Pashtuns are the main Afghani ethnic group and the main support for the Taliban.

Jewish texts also mention this belief, but there is no conclusive evidence for what happened to the tribes, and they effectively disappeared from history.

Dozens of Pashtun names and customs sound Jewish, from the Pashtun tribe names of Asheri and Naftali to the Pashtun custom of a wedding chupah to the circumcising of sons on the eighth day after their birth.

Several years ago Avihail published a book on the issue in Hebrew, *The Ten Tribes of Israel*, which recently was translated into English. If his thesis

is true, the Taliban—who are seen as anti-Semitic and anti-Israel—would be descended from the lost Hebrew tribes.

"It is very unpleasant, but what can we do?" Avihail says.

Other researchers are less sure. Rashid Kaplanov, a leading Moscow-based researcher of Jewish history, calls the Lost Tribe theory a legend, no matter what the Pashtuns may believe.

The history of proven Jewish life in Afghanistan is easier to document. In the sixth century BCE, Persian Jews who came to this remote part of the Persian empire as exiles, military mercenaries, agricultural colonists or traders enjoyed relative tolerance.

In the common era, that migration picked up steam.

"It is clear that over the centuries lots of Persian Jews came to this territory fleeing the Islamization of the former Persian Empire, which started with the Arab-Muslim conquest" in the seventh and eighth centuries, says Alexej Kornilov, a Moscow-based researcher in the history of Persian Jewry with the Russian Academy of Sciences.

This wave of refugees, according to Kornilov, included Jews forcibly converted to Islam who sought a refuge where they could return to Judaism without fear of persecution.

The last mass immigration was in

1839, when thousands of Persian Jews fleeing forceful conversion in the nearby Persian city of Meshed settled in Afghanistan.

At the time, Afghanistan's Jewish community numbered roughly 40,000, most of whom traded in skins, carpets and antiques.

The decline came in the 1870s, when a number of anti-Jewish measures triggered a mass exodus to Central Asia, Persia and Palestine, eventually reducing the number of Jews in Afghanistan to roughly 5,000 by 1948.

Nearly all the community made aliyah after the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. According to published figures, only 100 to 200 Jews remained in Afghanistan by the mid-1990s.

One of the last Jewish communities in Afghanistan was in the northern city of Mazar-i-sharif, currently the scene of fierce battles between the Pashtun-based Taliban and the Northern Alliance, which is made up mainly of ethnic Tajiks and supported by the United States.

Now, reportedly, only two Jews remain.

In Israel, meanwhile, the number of Jews of Afghani descent is roughly 10,000.

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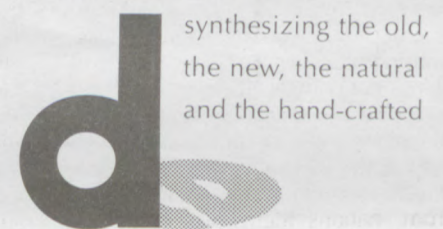
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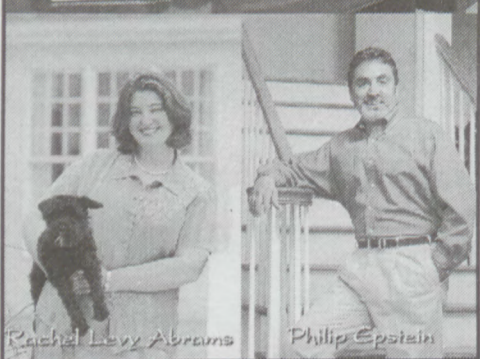
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Double Standard Towards fighting During Ramadan

There seems to be a lot of second-thinking about the wisdom of continuing the bombing raids and possible ground fighting during the upcoming Muslim holy month of Ramadan. As the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, Ramadan this year begins at sunset on November 16 and requires Muslims to fast from sunrise to sunset throughout the month. The proposed fear is that offensive strikes during Ramadan would be "insensitive" to Muslims worldwide. To all of the nay-sayers, I would like to remind them what some of the Islamic world did during Ramadan of 1973.

The Arab countries of Egypt and Syria attacked Israel on October 6, which happened to be Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the calendar year for Jews. As such, much of Israel's Jewish population were in synagogues for prayer and fasting. Israel was then caught by surprise, not that it would be any better if the attack was launched on any other day. During Yom Kippur, observant Jews fast for the entire 25-hour period.

What was not widely reported then or now was that the 1973 attack coincided with the ninth day of Ramadan. Apparently, the insensitivity critics of today now have a double stan-

dard. It was ok for these Arabs, virtually all of whom professed to be Muslims, to attack Israel and by extension, the Jews on their holiest of days. However we are being lectured to by some that it is considered insensitive for us to continue targeted offensive strikes during Ramadan against al-Qaeda and its Taliban landlords, both groups that follow a highly distorted view of Islam. Whether it is one holy day or one holy month, the politically correct sensitivity crowd can't have it both ways.

It is my understanding that the Qur'an allows for war during Ramadan if it is for the purpose of advancing a jihad, an Islamic "holy war." If we are to uphold patriotic mottos like "God Bless America" and in "God We Trust," why aren't we then justified in pursuing our own "holy war" against the Taliban and al-Qaeda during Ramadan. Unfortunately, there are few rules of war and as we have seen the recent past, there is no rule that prohibits fighting on religious holidays. Hesitation and indecision by our nation's politicians has previously doomed us in Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf War. Let's learn from history and not repeat some of the same mistakes.

Howard M. Berlin, Wilmington

Fight For The Rights Of Israel

Sage consumer advice: "If it's too good to be true, it usually is." This applies to politics as well. President George Bush's stirring address to Congress, declaring war on terrorism, was uncompromising.

Then things got complicated.

Fighting such a war seemingly demanded a coalition of nations and could not be perceived as being against Islam. That meant dealing at some level with, and getting at least tacit acquiescence from, nations themselves complicit with terrorism. Overtures even went to the filthy five: Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, and the Palestinian Authority(!). More usual Mideast partner regimes, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, themselves had contributed greatly to the buildup of Al Qaeda and have much to fear from it. Despite it being in their own interest, such little cooperation as they offered came with serious strings.

If Israel's in, they said, we're out. Tilt more towards the Palestinians. Thus U.S. pressure for a Shimon Perez - Yasser Arafat meeting and a predictable ceaseless cease-fire. Hezbollah and Hamas were pointedly left off the terrorist group financial freeze list, sending a strong message that there was "bad" terrorism, i.e. against the U.S., and "good" terrorism, i.e. against Israel. Then President Bush endorsed the concept of a Palestinian state.

Continuing, as well, were heavy pressures

on Israel to inhibit even its tepid responses to the ongoing violence. Very unfortunate steps, needlessly and unwisely rewarding terrorism. Though he took a lot of heat for it, P.M. Sharon was surely right to publicly decry such transparent attempts at appeasement. If India won't stand for this, vis-a-vis Kashmir, why should Israel?

And why should American Jews? Certainly, they strongly support the war against terrorism. So does Israel. Behind the scenes, it has been cooperative fully and supplying absolutely vital intelligence. In the very interest of the integrity of that fight itself, moreover, unreasonable demands from questionable coalition partners should not be taken seriously. Signaled irresolution in the face of such blackmail only fuels contempt. We have been here before. In 1939, Great Britain issued its infamous White Paper, severely restricting Jewish immigration to its Palestine Mandate. Then came the war. Undaunted, Ben-Gurion wisely urged that "We have to fight the war as if there were no White Paper and fight the White Paper as if there were no war." Now we have to fight the war as if there were no anti-Israel White House moves and fight, any anti-Israel White House moves as if there were no war. Israel's security is seriously at stake. No longer is silence an option.

Richard D. Wilkins, Wilmington

EDITORIAL

Peres Has A Plan!

As we go to press, the United Nations General Assembly has convened. Most political analysts believe that this international ingathering has motivated Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to step up his efforts to put a peace plan on the table.

In a week marked by bloodshed in both the Israeli and Palestinian camps, Peres managed to twice sit down with PLO Leader Yasser Arafat to wage peace and set the stage for future negotiations.

Some say that the Peres peace plan is an attempt to steal the thunder from Arafat's alleged intention to unilaterally declare Palestinian statehood during the General Assembly. (A move which Arafat has publicly denied) Others allege that the Foreign

Minister is merely bowing to Labor Party pressure to place an olive branch in Ariel Sharon's hand or step down from the coalition.

Whatever his motivation, Peres should be applauded for his efforts to breakthrough the impasse and lay the groundwork for diplomacy.

Let us pray that one day soon the violence will abate enabling both sides to resume their efforts to live together in peace.

B'Shalom

Lynn Edelman

Editor

PARSHA PLACE

Week of November 10

Chayei Sarah
A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN
by Daniel Lasar

Genesis 23:1-25:18

In life, people often think that events happen because of sheer coincidence. We fail to realize that indeed it is the guiding hand of Hashem that causes things to happen at seemingly inauspicious moments. In this week's Torah portion, we find an excellent example of this phenomenon playing itself out. Eliezer, upon being instructed by Abraham to find a suitable wife for Isaac, prays to Hashem that He guide events so that the proper match would be found. No sooner had he formulated this supplication than Rebecca appeared and proceeded to display the requisite kindness in her beneficent treatment of Eliezer and his camels.

The Torah relates, "And it was when he had not yet finished speaking that suddenly Rebecca was coming out..." (Genesis 24:15). Rabbeinu Bechaya, a 14th century Torah commentator, explains that the Hebrew word for "he" used in the verse is superfluous, and that instead of referring to Eliezer, "he" refers to Hashem. Thus, this verse relates how Hashem interceded to ensure that Eliezer would "chance" upon Rebecca at the opportune moment. Moreover, the commentary Toldot Yitzchak explains that because of Rebecca's modesty, she rarely ventured to the well, and that Hashem caused her to go specifically on that day.

Now, were a similar scene to play itself out today, one would perhaps fail to take note of the Providential direction of the event. Observers may see a meeting between two people as mere happenstance - a casual incidence of "boy meets girl". It is important to realize, however, that in the larger scheme of things, such an incident cannot be viewed as being so simple; Isaac's and Rebecca's shidduch (match) is an excellent example of Hashem working behind the scenes. Perhaps this Torah narrative most effectively represents the Jewish term "basheir", commonly used in reference to one's future spouse who will be met at the "properly ordained" time, and more broadly referring to the concept that everything flows from Hashem's will. Thus, the description of the amazing rendezvous between two of the essential progenitors of the Jewish people should sensitize us to realize that at every turn in life, at every crossroad of uncertainty, and at every moment of interaction, there are events which may not be accidental, but rather examples of Hashem's active participation in our daily lives. Things do happen for a reason; it is just that with our limited spiritual intelligence, we are not always cognizant of their purpose.

Daniel Lasar is a student at Emory Law School in Atlanta. He writes for Torah From Dixie, an on-line resource for Torah study.

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FEDERATION FOCUS

Back By Popular Demand: Freda Keet

By Sue Shaffer
JCRC Director

Internationally known broadcast journalist Freda Keet will speak on "Israel and the Media" on Tuesday, November 19, 7:30 p.m. at the Delaware JCC. This event is co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation of Delaware and the Wilmington Chapter of Hadassah.

Keet is back in Delaware by popular request. She inspired countless members of Delaware's Jewish community who volun-

teered at last year's Super Sunday. On November 19th, Freda will address her concerns about Israel's role in the public relations battleground.

Born in Central Africa, in what is now known as Zimbabwe, Freda grew up in an intensely Jewish and Zionist community, with Israel as the focal point of a vibrant community life. She studied theater and drama in England and graduated with honors from London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, winning special scholarships to study radio journalism at the

famed BBC.

Keet made aliyah to Israel in 1963, fulfilling a life long dream, and immediately began working at Kol Israel, the Israel Broadcasting Authority in Jerusalem, where she had a long career. She has been an anchor-person, interviewer, investigative journalist and war correspondent reporting from the front lines. Deeply concerned at the growing crisis with Israel's public relations and an increasingly hostile world media, Freda undertook an in-depth study of the problem and began lecturing wide-

ly on issues of public relations, analyzing and explaining media attitudes and reactions, and conducting seminars and workshops on ways of combating hostile propaganda.

Freda Keet, in a pre-visit telephone interview, said that, regarding the events of 9-11-01, "if anything, this catastrophe can only further cement the ties and relationships between Israel and the U.S." "America is now facing the challenges and demands that Israel has been living with for the past 53 years."

This event is free and open to the public.

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Todd Polikoff, Associate Director,
Financial Resource Development

Double clicking has become a natural reflex for those of us who use a computer. We double click to learn more about a product, program or service that looks appealing. At the touch of a mouse, we click into a limitless database of information that can broaden our knowledge and significantly enhance our lives.

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The Jewish Federation of Delaware has launched it's new state-of-the art website for the Jewish Community of Delaware. www.shalomdelaware.org utilizes the latest technology to bring our community together. Here are few highlights:

*a comprehensive community calendar filled with events from every Jewish organiza-

tion, agency, and synagogue in Delaware;

*an entire section on Jewish life, learning, and parenting;

*daily news updates from the JTA, Reuters, Associate Press, and other global news resources;

*on-line payment of pledges and payments to the Federation's annual campaign;

*register for an event or program;

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More importantly, when you double click on www.shalomdelaware.org you will broaden your knowledge of what the Delaware Jewish community has to offer you and how the Federation can help you connect to the people, programs and resources that make this community such a special place to live and work. You will also have the opportunity to learn how you

are connected to Jews in Israel and in 59 other countries around the world. After you have learned more about how and what we do, you will have an opportunity to help us make a difference by submitting a pledge on line.

I realize that there are still many people who do not have access to the Internet. The launch of this website will in no way effect our traditional community outreach and involvement. The JFD will maintain a strong presence at community meetings, gatherings and events.

www.shalomdelaware.org should be seen as yet another service that the Jewish Federation of Delaware is providing for our community.

Our vision has always been to bring Jewish people together into a community coalition, grounded in Jewish teaching and heritage, to strengthen the State of Israel, the global Jewish family and local organizations in order to further the survival of the Jewish people. Through www.shalomdelaware.org you have the opportunity to share this vision.

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THE RABBI WRITES

"The Synagogue, Not The Restaurant, Is The Sanctuary Of Israel"

By Rabbi
Peter H. Grumbacher

This is the issue of *The Jewish Voice* which features restaurants in our community. Knowing that this article would appear in this specific issue, I was thinking about a Christmas Eve a few years ago when my family went to a Chinese restaurant. Of course, December 24th is among the most popular days of the year when the Jewish community frequents the gourmet delights of the regions of China. Anyway, when we entered we noticed that virtually

every table was filled with co-religionists; many of the people waved to us, and what I found interesting was that while we knew a whole host of folks, most at one table did not know the Jews at another. How many *minyanim* were gathered in one room at one time! (How many of them would be at synagogue on the next, or previous, Shabbat!?)

Needless to say, we are living in tough times. These times in particular require nourishment of the spirit just as all times require nourishment of the body. In our prayerbook we

read, "The synagogue is the sanctuary of Israel. Born of our longing for the living God, it has been to Israel, throughout our wanderings, a visible token of the presence of God in our people's midst." Now some of you might be thinking, "Oh, Rabbi, of course you would be 'selling' the synagogue!" You bet I am!!

These are the times that we need community, but not just fellow Jews gathered for Chinese food, for a cultural event, for a fund-raising drive, but for the purpose of prayer and meditation, celebrating Shabbat or

worshipping at all of the daily *minyanim* in our synagogues. We have to feel "the presence of God" in the most tangible way that we can. Our sanctuaries were filled during our holidays because we needed that extra jolt immediately after September 11th. All of my colleagues commented on the precipitous decline of worshippers for our Fall Festivals of Sukkot, Sh'mini Atzeret and Simchat Torah. This is the time when everyone should get into the healthy habit of synagogue attendance.

We do not know what tomorrow will bring; few, if any of us, are in a position to do anything substantial to do away with terrorism. But all of us are in a position to gather as a spiritual community and to nurture and sustain each other as a congregation so that whatever that proverbial "tomorrow" brings will be made more bearable. After all, "the synagogue is the sanctuary of Israel," and we are all "Israel" in word and deed.

Rabbi Grumbacher is the spiritual leader of Beth Emeth Congregation in Wilmington.



ENDOWMENT FOR THE FUTURE

"I Am In Debt"

By Rachel A. Gross, Esq.
Endowment Director

An intriguing title, but why would a distinguished professor give a lecture about his sabbatical travels in by announcing that the trip had placed him in debt? Did he plan to take up a collection?

Shortly into the address, his meaning became clear. Instead of talking about the sights and expenses of his trip, he told of the kindnesses people had offered along the way and his sense of indebtedness. When he was lost in Jerusalem, a young man took time to personally lead him to his destination. In Arad, near the Dead Sea, a family invited him to their home for

dinner. He told about the helpfulness of a store clerk, a waitress, a police officer and others.

He said that he returned home with an overflowing sense of gratitude and with a desire to repay his debt by expressing kindness to others — especially strangers.

The professor continued. He spoke of the journey of life and the debt we all owe to parents and loved ones, to teachers and doctors and other professionals, to friends and kind strangers, to organizations and institutions and other positive influences. "In fact," he said, "we are all terribly in debt. Our only reasonable response is to invest in individuals and

organizations that need our help."

One of the reasons people give to the Jewish Federation of Delaware is to express gratitude and to "pay back" for value they have received. Another reason people give is simply to express appreciation for benefits they received elsewhere. They give to the Jewish Federation to say "thank you" for kindnesses that have come to them along their journey of life and they know that their gift to the Jewish Federation is needed and appreciated.

Jewish Federation of Delaware's endowment director, Rachel A. Gross, is ready to talk with you, not only about your reasons for making a gift, but about the various methods of giving. She can provide you with tax-wise gift illustrations and other helpful information. Chatting with Rachel

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Rachel Gross

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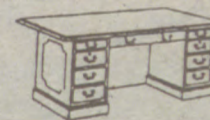
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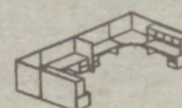
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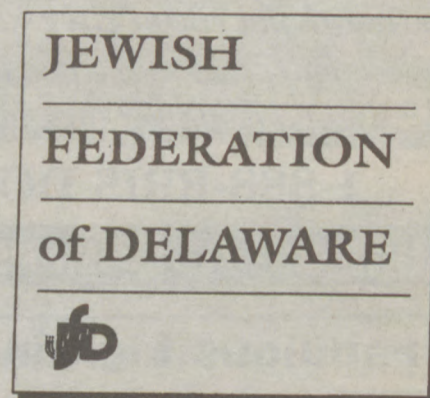
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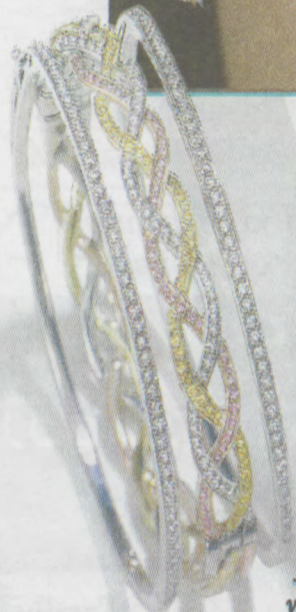
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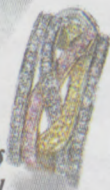
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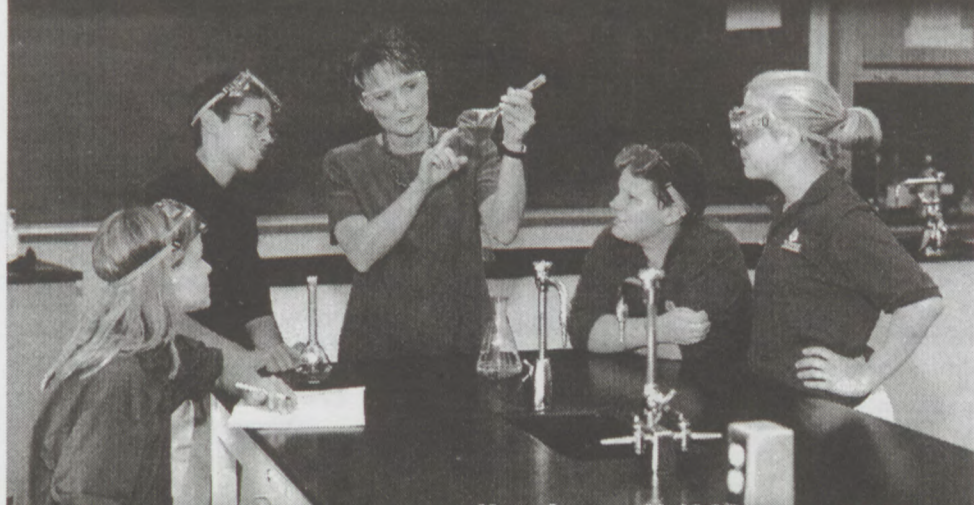
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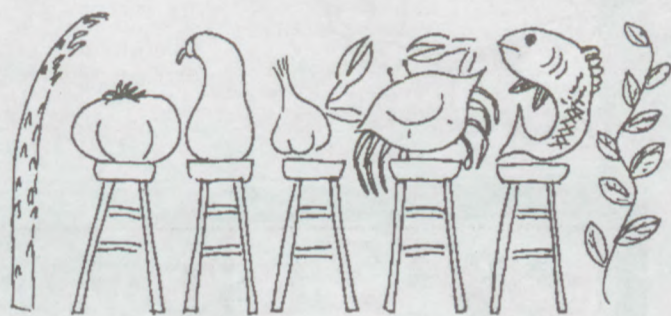
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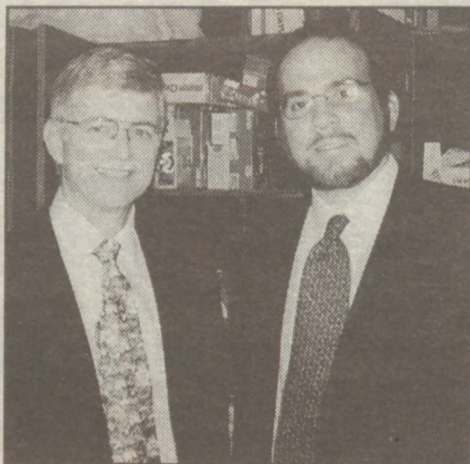
INSIDE DELAWARE

Beth Shalom High Holy Day Food Drive

Members of Congregation Beth Shalom in Wilmington have followed the lesson from Proverbs "Those who are generous to the poor makes a loan to the Lord; He will repay them their due" by conducting a charitable food drive during the recent High Holy Days. Congregants amassed a truckload of non-perishable food for delivery to the food pantry of Hanover Presbyterian Church, the synagogue's neighbor. This year's drive was the largest in recent memory, three times the amount of last year.

The food pantry, established over twenty years ago by the church membership, provides food to the needy throughout the community. On an average week nearly 200 families are provided food items its cupboards. The pantry is unique in allows clients the opportunity to select food items they need. This is in contrast to other food banks that prepackage a selection of foods. "The success and growth of the food pantry depends on our volunteers and we welcome our Beth Shalom neighbors to join us in helping us meet the needs of our less fortunate neighbors" said Peg Showalter, the Food Pantry Coordinator. Synagogue board members Stacy Friedland and Mike Sigman planned this year's drive and, along with Cantor Michael Horwitz, delivered the truckload of food to the church.

The partnership between Hanover Church and Beth Shalom was established several years ago under the guidance of Rabbi Daniel Satlow, the synagogue's spiritual leader. Throughout the year, members of Beth Shalom provide food to the pantry, as well to Hanover's recently established "Clothing Closet" which provides needed clothing. Over the past few years the relationship with Hanover Church has been enhanced with a joint pre-Passover Seder as well as interfaith Thanksgiving eve services with other churches in the area.



Reverend Tom Davis, Pastor, Hanover Presbyterian Church and Beth Shalom Hazzan Michael Horwitz

Rabbis Announce Shabbat Israel Theme

The Rabbinical Association of Delaware formally announced that area synagogues will dedicate several upcoming Friday nights to the theme of Israel. "We feel that our connection with the State of Israel is more important than ever," said Rabbi Dan Satlow, current chair of the RAD. "While we had already chosen this theme before the events of Sept. 11, it has become even more significant now," Satlow asserted. "Our Israeli brothers and sisters live with terrorism all the time; now we can begin to appreciate what that means." The special services are slated for the first Friday nights of December and January, culminating with Federation Shabbat the first weekend of February. Participating synagogues include Beth El in Newark; Adas Kodesh Shel Emeth, Beth Emeth Congregation and Congregation Beth Shalom in Wilmington.

Schafer Makes Shabbat Special At Temple Beth El

Cantorial soloist, composer and musician Beth Schafer will lead Shabbat services on December 15th at 8:00p.m. and December 16th at 9:30 a.m. at Newark's Temple Beth El. The entire community is invited to hear Schafer perform her own music during this program which is co-sponsored by the synagogue and the Newark Branch of the Jewish Community Center.

Schafer has produced two CDs—"May the Words, Music for Shabbat" and "Lev B Lev"-Heart in Heart. She is now recording a third which is scheduled for release next summer.

To make a reservation for the Kiddush lunch on Saturday after services, call Beth El's office at 366-8330. There will be a concert for children in grades kindergarten through second on Saturday afternoon from 12:45 to 1:45. Babysitting for very young children is available for Friday night and Saturday.



Beth Schafer

Beth Emeth Offers December Dilemma Program

The Outreach Committee of Congregation Beth Emeth will sponsor a program about the December Dilemma: "Valuing Family - Valuing Tradition" on Monday, November 12th, 2001 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm.

The program will be facilitated by Ruth Goldberger, who is the Regional Outreach Director for the Mid-Atlantic Council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC). The topic should be of special interest to inter-faith couples and Jews-by-Choice.

The program will be held at Congregation Beth Emeth, 300 Lea Boulevard, Wilmington, Delaware 19802. All are welcome. There is no charge.

Chabad Sponsors Adults Only Evening

Rivka Slonim, an internationally known teacher, lecturer and author, will speak on SPIRITUAL FAMILY PURITY and its impact on marital intimacy. This provocative program will be presented on Wednesday, November 28th, 7:30 p.m. at the Delaware Jewish Community Center.

The author of "Total Immersion-A Mikvah Anthology", Slonim has traveled the globe discussing ways that Jewish observance intersects with contemporary life. Sponsored by Chabad Lubavitch of Delaware, Slonim's presentation is offered with hopes for the speedy recovery of Max Sugarman.

To RSVP, please call 302-598-5003 or email to torahfamily@aol.com.



Rivka Slonim

JFS Program Meets Older Adults Needs

Jewish Family Service (JFS) is launching a four-part presentation discussion series, "Responding to Your Loved One's Changing Needs," designed to help those who care for older adults in residential or home settings. The four sessions focus on how to understand and respond to the effects of aging, how to access services and plan for the future, ways for caregivers to renew energy and creative approaches to sharing time with older adults.

"The JFS series is an innovative program that addresses all the major issues involved in helping families care for older loved ones who may be at home, getting ready for or already living in a senior community," said Kathleen McCall, marketing director, Foulk Manor South, a Marriott Senior Living Community. "The professionals who lead the sessions are knowledgeable about the emotional, physical and spiritual aspects and day-to-day challenges of caring for older adults. The information they share is essential to residents and care givers," said McCall.

JFS series facilitators are Elton G. Grunden, LCSW, Director, Services for Older Adults; Martha C. Frost, LCSW; Rabbi David A. Wortman, Director, JFS Kimmel-Spiller Jewish Healing Center; and MariAnn Fox Wolskee, MS, Community Education and Outreach.

"Our community is aging, and JFS is dedicated to developing and implementing innovative programs that meet the needs of older adults, their loved ones and care givers," said Dory Zatuchni, executive director, JFS. "We are especially pleased that the Marriott organization's support has made it possible for us to open the Foulk Manor South series to the community, free of charge," said Zatuchni.

The four-part series will cycle through summer 2002 at Foulk Manor South, 407 Foulk Road, Wilmington. The next cycle begins Tuesday evening, November 27 and runs through December 18; however, individuals may participate at any time during the cycle and are free to attend one or more of the sessions in the four-part series. Refreshments are provided at 6:30 p.m. with the presentation and discussion following from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

All who are interested in attending are welcome. Registration is encouraged as space is limited. To reserve a space, call 302-655-6249.

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Is Cloning, Permissible, Prohibited, or a Good Deed?

What defines 'humanness'?

This talk will discuss the Halachik (Jewish law) issues raised by cloning, and then focus on the philosophical ramifications of this barrier-breaking, slippery slope phenomenon.

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik was ordained by Yeshiva University, and attends advanced rabbinic classes there. He is also in the doctorate program at Yale Divinity School. He is the rabbinic intern at the prestigious Jewish Center in Manhattan, and was on the editorial staff of Tradition, a Modern Orthodox scholarly journal. He is a popular speaker around the New York area. He can also quote large portions from The Simpsons, and is a semi-permanent inhabitant of Starbucks.

This series is being sponsored by AKSE Adult Education, in conjunction with AKSE Men's Club and Sisterhood. The lectures will be part of the Men's Club Breakfast Series and are being funded by a grant from the AKSE Torah Scroll Endowment Fund.

AKSE Men's Club

Sunday November 18, 2001

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Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

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MATTER OF OPINION

Anti-Semitism Russian Style

by E. E. JAFFE

On September 25, 2001, The News Journal of Wilmington carried a news item from Moscow about vandals who scrawled swastikas and anti-Semitic epithets on Moscow's main synagogue. I visited the synagogue several months ago when preparations were in full swing for the festival of Shavuot. I knew then and it is more apparent now that most Jews are not comfortable in Russia.

This is attested by the massive Jewish emigration to Israel that continues to this day. Alexander Solzhenitsyn the Nobel Prize-winning author and chronicler of Stalinist terror in the Soviet Union has written a book about Russian-Jewish relations, titled "Two Hundred Years Together". The first volume was recently published and is ostensibly an unvarnished account of the troubled history of Jews in the Soviet Union. Solzhenitsyn knows that he has been accused of anti-Semitism. He believes that this book, the first volume of two on this subject, will again spark charges of anti-Semitism. He denies all such accusations.

In an interview published in the Russian weekly paper "Moskovskiy Novosti" ("Moscow News"), he stated that people are simply biased, and he professes to be surprised by the accusations. He said that he worked on this book for ten years,

he is now 82 years old, and tried to record history the way he sees it, without being one-sided in Russian-Jewish relations. He claims that heretofore all literature was one-sided, either the Russians were guilty or the Jews were not favorably treated. Russia has a long history of anti-Semitism. Jews were actually banned from Russia by tsarist decrees. A Jewish community arose only after Russia annexed large parts of Poland in the late 1700s. Thereafter, for a long period of time, most Jews were restricted to the Pale of Settlements in the western part of the Russian Empire. Many pogroms in the late 19th and early 20th century and dismal economic conditions forced many Jews to flee the country, mostly to America. Now, anti-Semitism has abated somewhat, still Jews have left Russia for Israel in droves, and those remaining are skittish because of the work of vandals and anti-Semitic comments by current Russian politicians and nationalist newspapers.

Solzhenitsyn was exiled from Russia for two decades as a consequence of his writings about Soviet labor camps. He was first arrested by the Soviets for criticizing Stalin in 1945 and given a sentence of eight years in prison.

In 1962 he published a book about his experiences in prison titled "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich". Since he was diag-

nosed with cancer while an inmate in a labor camp, his hospital experience resulted in his book "Cancer Ward" that was published in 1968. And in 1974, shortly after the first part of "The Gulag Archipelago" was published, Solzhenitsyn was arrested and tried for treason. He was exiled from the Soviet Union and ultimately settled in the USA. In September 1991 Soviet officials dropped the treason charge lodged against him and allowed him to return from Vermont to Russia in 1994.

In the interview he admitted that he has been accused of anti-Semitic sentiments expressed in his first two novels that dealt with his imprisonment. He took issue with the accusation, stating that he admires the Jewish Diaspora's ability to resist assimilation and that he understood the "subtlety, sensitivity and kind heartedness of the Jewish character".

This is, however, readily overshadowed by his unswerving allegiance to the Russian tsars and the heads of the Orthodox Church.

The first book on the Jewish question covering the period of 1795 to 1916 has done little to soften the allegation of his personal anti-Semitism. Although he quotes many Jewish historical sources, including a Jewish Encyclopedia, his most trusted sources are reports by tsarist ministers. For example, he quotes extensively a tsarist Minister

of Justice by the name of Gavril Derzhavin who at the end of the 19th century blamed the Jews for driving the Russian peasantry to drink and urged that they be moved out of the countryside. Most historians consider Derzhavin to have been an open anti-Semite. Solzhenitsyn, on the other hand, stated that Derzhavin forced urbanization to bring Jews the benefit of modern civilization. Throughout the book the tsars are portrayed as unable to do anything wrong. The author claims that Catholics and Protestants perpetrated all pogroms, yet no mention is made of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" as if this ultimate anti-Semitic publication did not exist. He fails to describe the despair experienced by Jews under Russian oppression and recurring pogroms. Solzhenitsyn's monarchist tendencies and defense of all that the tsars did are all too clearly portrayed. In the interview with Novosti he defends himself by stating that "I wanted to set out exactly how it was! Many of the people who attacked me took advantage of the sensitivity of the issue, knowing that, especially when I lived in America, it was the easiest thing to play on". Nevertheless, significant portions of the book read like a catalogue of descriptive information for anti-Semites.

Much more is expected when the second volume appears, covering the period from the Bolshevik revo-

lution through the fall of the Soviet Union. Solzhenitsyn views the revolution and the ensuing seventy years of Soviet rule as the ultimate treason perpetrated against Russia, stating in the interview that Jews played an integral part in that tragedy.

Now I want to inject a personal note. When the entire Jaffe family and I were exiled from Poland to Siberia by the Soviets, following the German-Soviet pact that partitioned Poland at the end of 1939, prior to WW II, we were settled in a remote area collective farm among Russians who never encountered Jews before. About six years later, following the end of World War II when the family was allowed to return to Poland, anti-Semitism was quite apparent in this village. In part, because the family managed to survive in a very difficult climate and hostile environment and was free to go back to Europe, but mostly because the children, myself included, not having been originally even conversant in Russian, ultimately succeeded extremely well in Russian schools. Apparently envy more than anything else fostered resentment and a hostile attitude. Fortunately, every one of our extended family succeeded in getting out of the Soviet Union. All were ultimately thankful to the Soviet authorities, notwithstanding the very difficult period, because our exile turned out to be an unintended blessing in disguise.

The Controversy Over Open Admissions

Nechemia Meyers

Israeli university presidents are up in arms about a proposal now before the government that would force upon them an open admissions policy akin to the one that failed when it was tried at several American institutions of higher learning. If adopted, this policy would mean that their universities would have to admit any student who had earned a high school matriculation certificate, regardless of how well the applicant had done on the local equivalent of the Scholastic Aptitude Test, hitherto the primary criteria for admission.

Proponents of the change argue that our SAT, called a psychometric examination here, gives an unfair advantage to applicants from privileged families. The reason: they have the time and money required to prepare for the examination, which kids from poor families lack. But the people who run local institutions of higher learning don't trust the results of the matriculation exams.

According to Prof. Itamar Rabinovich, President of Tel Aviv University and head of the Committee of University Presidents, their lack of trust stems from the fact that they have no control over what high schools do in their matriculation programs, and therefore require some more objective way of weeding out unsuitable candidates. "No hocus pocus," he declared, "can resolve the problem if 600 students are interested in 60 places as in medicine and computer engineering. These areas will remain the object of fierce competi-

tion and no populist legislation is going to solve that."

Those not accepted by the top, research-oriented universities will not be denied a post-secondary education says Prof. Haim Harari, outgoing President of the Weizmann Institute of Science. "The Government of Israel," he notes, "has invested billions in establishing a successful system of regional and community colleges which, while not doing research, provide an adequate academic education in the fields needed by the Israeli economy."

Harari goes on to declare that an open admissions policy would deprive the colleges of their students and, at the same time, impose an enormous economic burden on the financially troubled universities. For even though the less qualified students would drop out after their first year, the universities would have to hire a large number of otherwise unnecessary faculty to teach them, he said.

While the university heads are united on this issue, some faculty disagree. Take, for example, Dr. Yossi Yonah, who teaches political and educational philosophy at Ben-Gurion University in Beersheba. He charges that the presidents of institutions of higher learning are only interested in meeting the needs of the Israeli elite and therefore aren't concerned with the fact that the present system serves to widen the social and economic gap in Israel. One possible solution, says Yonah, would be to adopt the approach followed in Texas whereby the top 10% of every high school graduat-

ing class are automatically admitted to universities, whether their schools are in wealthy or deprived areas.

In a last minute attempt to stave off the new initiative, the university presidents are now mooting the

possibility of more flexible admission standards, based primarily on matriculation results. But this is contingent upon the institutions of higher learning being given a major role in determining the character, grading and administration of these

exams.

The universities opened last week, attended by students chosen mainly on the basis of their psychometric scores. How they will be chosen next year remains to be seen.



New academic year brings students back to the campus of Tel Aviv University.

Half and Half

When the academic year began recently, some 213,000 students were enrolled, with roughly the same number at colleges as at universities. Their ethnic makeup, however, differed markedly. Over 50% of those studying at the colleges have roots in Asian and African lands, as opposed to 27% in the universities. There are also more Arabs in the colleges: 11%

in contrast to 75% in the universities.

This disparity stems from the fact that Arabs and Sephardic Jews - both relatively disadvantaged groups - find it easier to get into colleges than into universities. For the former, unlike the latter, have flexible entrance requirements and don't require applicants to take psychometric exams.

JEWISH PERSPECTIVES

Huge U.S. Muslim Population Is A Myth

By Michael J. Jordan
JTA

In the run-up to the 2000 presidential elections, Jewish leaders fretted about the perceived surge in influence of American Muslims — both politically and numerically — and how it might affect U.S. support for Israel.

Now Jewish leaders have statistics contradicting earlier claims that said Muslims make up more than 2 percent of the American population.

The American Jewish Committee this week released a new survey, commissioned soon after the Sept. 11 terror attacks, that its author describes as the most credible estimate to date of the size of America's Muslim community.

While the media routinely cites a population of 6 million to 7 million U.S. Muslims — in the wake of the Sept. 11 terror attacks, estimates have been as high as 10 million — University of Chicago researcher Tom Smith says the real number is anywhere from 1.9 million to 2.8 million.

The Muslim community is an important part of the American mosaic, but they are not as large a part as the figures cited in the media and by others would lead some to believe," said Smith, who directs the General Social Survey at the univer-

sity's National Opinion Research Center.

It's quite common that groups overestimate the size of their community since they are very involved with the community, and tend to see themselves as larger than an objective standard can verify," he said.

An American Muslim leader immediately denounced the survey as inaccurate and the AJCommittee as politically motivated.

"The report is a desperate attempt to discount the role of American Muslims," Ibrahim Hooper of the Council on American-Islamic Relations told the Associated Press.

Very often the representatives of the extremist wing of the pro-Israel lobby, such as the American Jewish Committee, seek to block Muslim political participation," Hooper reportedly said.

The AJCommittee denied the charge. Spokesman Kenneth Bandler said his organization instead is working to advance Muslim-Jewish relations.

We're not seeking to diminish their influence in this country, but it's important to know accurately what their population is," Bandler said. We're anxious to develop ties with Muslim groups with whom we can seriously have a relationship, meaning groups that don't endorse terror-

ism."

The AJCommittee also was eager to give guidance to media that it believes unwittingly publish dramatically inflated population figures.

When the report was completed late last week, the AJCommittee passed it along to both The New York Times and The Associated Press.

The 6-7 million figure appears as an established fact, even in the pages of The New York Times," Bandler said. We wanted to set the record straight on these numbers, and that's it. People in the newsrooms, in political offices and the general reader can draw their own conclusions."

Smith, for his part, said he is not concerned about rising Muslim political influence.

I'm only interested in scientifically bad numbers," said Smith, who is not Jewish. If one is given wrong information, one will be guided inappropriately."

For the past decade, Smith said, he has read publications that printed Muslim population estimates that didn't jive with his research.

He said he wrote to the editors of USA Today and American Demographer, a trade journal, contesting their population estimates, but neither letter was published.

The U.S. census tabulates national

origin and language use, but not religious affiliation. Without it, a range of faulty methods have been used to calculate the Muslim population, Smith said.

For example, one researcher figured that an immigrant group from a given country would accurately mirror the ethnic and religious composition of the home country, discounting persecution as a motivation for emigration, Smith said.

Smith poked holes in that method with two examples: Lebanon is a Muslim-majority state, but most Lebanese emigres over the years have been Christians. And immigrants from Russia a century ago overwhelmingly were Jewish — though the vast majority of Russians belonged to the Russian Orthodox Church.

In other cases, Smith said researchers have overestimated several numbers:

*Muslims with limited English who would have been deterred from participating in surveys;

*Muslims reluctant to identify their religion;

*Muslim African-Americans;

*Islamic sects not immediately recognizable as Muslim;

*Islamic centers, schools and mosques;

*Muslims affiliated per mosque;

and

*Muslims not affiliated with mosques.

In contrast, Smith states in his report that he took several population surveys and found that 0.2 to 0.6 percent of households had at least one Muslim adult.

He then considered estimates of Muslim immigrants with limited English skills — who would be less likely to participate in surveys — since figures indicate that a sizeable majority of Muslims in America are foreign-born.

Taking this into account, Smith estimated that Muslims make up 0.7 percent of the adult population. Extrapolating that out to the general population produced a range of 1.9 million to 2.8 million.

As the quote variously attributed to British politician Benjamin Disraeli and novelist Mark Twain goes, there are lies, damned lies and statistics."

When reading population studies, Smith says it always critical to consider the source.

When there aren't scientifically credible numbers, someone supplies those numbers and they usually represent an advocacy group," he said. Many counts are not actually counts. It's based on someone saying, 'Oh, there's that many.' And those numbers could be wildly inaccurate."

New Study Shows Inter-marriage Still Rising

By Julie Wiener
JTA

An increasing number of Americans raised as Jews are marrying non-Jews and identifying with other religions, according to a new study.

In addition, even Jews who identify Judaism as their religion — not simply their ethnic background — are much less likely to believe in God or describe themselves as religious than are other Americans.

The new study, which followed the methodology and many of the questions of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, aims to provide a "second opinion" for that survey's official update, National Jewish Population Survey 2000, which is being conducted under the auspices of the federation system's United Jewish Communities.

Among the findings:

*There are approximately 5.5 million American adults who are either Jewish by religion or of Jewish parentage and/or upbringing, the same number found in 1990. However, 2.8 million, or 51 percent, say their religion is Jewish, compared with 58 percent in the 1990 survey.

*Among adults of Jewish parentage and/or upbringing, nearly 1.4 million say they are members of a non-Jewish religion or profess a different religion. That number has more than doubled since 1990, a change researchers attribute to the "coming of age of the children of intermarried families and the unfolding religious decisions of interfaith couples."

*Thirty-three percent of Jews — defined as people either raised Jewish or who say Judaism is their religion — are married to non-Jews, compared with 28 percent in

1990. The 1990 study is famous for finding that 52 percent of Jews who married in the previous five years had married a non-Jew; the new study has not yet determined statistics for newlyweds, but researchers say logic dictates that the intermarriage rate has increased for this group.

*Forty-two percent of Jews who say Judaism is their religion, not simply their ethnicity or heritage, describe their outlook as secular, while 14 percent say they do not believe in God. In contrast, just 15 percent of adults nationally describe their outlook as secular, and 4 percent of adults nationally say they do not believe in God. There is no 1990 data on this question.

The new study was conducted by Egon Mayer, director of the Center for Jewish Studies at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, Ariela Keysar, also of the Center for Jewish Studies, and Barry Kosmin, who oversaw the 1990 study and currently is director of the Institute for Jewish Policy Research in London. All three were involved in the 1990 study.

The official update of the National Jewish Population Survey is larger in scope than Mayer, Keysar and Kosmin's study, but has not yet been released. Based on interviews with 4,500 Jews and originally slated to be released early this year, the UJC study now will not be available until summer of 2002.

The delays are due to a combination of reasons, ranging from debates over methodology to the difficulty of finding enough people willing to be interviewed.

"When we started out we never imagined that our study would be completed before the National

Jewish Population Survey 2000 findings were released," Mayer said. "We never intended this as a substitute for NJPS 2000, but rather as a test of or verification of its findings."

The new study is under the auspices of the Center for Jewish Studies at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York and was funded by the Posen Foundation, a British family foundation. It has a smaller Jewish sample — 1,668 people — and asks fewer questions than NJPS 2000.

It also repeats methodology that was used in the 1990 study, including screening participants through a marketing firm survey that makes some of its calls on Shabbat. That methodology, which was modified

for NJPS 2000, has been criticized for potentially undercounting observant Jews.

However, Mayer said it repeated the 1990 methodology to compare current findings to those from 10 years ago.

Asked what the policy implications of the new study are, Mayer said it indicates that religion may not be "the best methodology for attracting the hearts and minds of the masses of American Jews," Mayer said.

"Whether it's trips to Israel, summer camping, the day school movement and so forth, we have to address how to deal with that segment of the population that doesn't see in the religious section of Judaism the path to their Jewish

future," he said.

The new study was smaller, cheaper and conducted in a much shorter time period than NJPS 2000. It also was conducted so quietly that only a handful of people knew about its existence.

Even though Mayer and Keysar are on the National Technical Advisory Committee for NJPS 2000, their study has come as a surprise to most of the people involved with NJPS 2000.

Jim Schwartz, UJC's research director and the staff person overseeing NJPS 2000, said he had not yet seen Mayer, Keysar and Kosmin's study and could not comment on it, other than to say that "the researchers are all good researchers."

Mayer said he and his colleagues "conducted this study very quietly because we didn't want to stir up any of the controversies that frankly can be very time consuming to deal with when you're trying to get a job done."

Privately, some of the members of the advisory committee are annoyed that they were kept out of the loop and that scarce philanthropic dollars had been spent on two similar projects.

But Steven M. Cohen, a professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem who is a consultant to the NJPS 2000, called the new study a "great data source" that "provides another benchmark against which to judge" the accuracy of NJPS 2000.

Asked about the secret nature of the study, Cohen said, "We all go about and do our research, then release results."

Researchers, he said, have "no obligation to announce that there's a study on the way."



Outreach efforts to intermarried Jews, such as this Chanukah program at a N.Y. mall, increase Jewish involvement and synagogue affiliation rates, according to a new study by the Jewish Outreach Institute. JOI looked at 735 participants in 11 outreach programs throughout North America.

JEWISH LIFESTYLES

A Sephardic Mix In The Heart Of Dixie

By Joel F. Glazier

Montgomery Alabama is the state capital that entered the nation's consciousness in the 1960's when its governor, George Wallace declared from its Capitol Building, "Segregation now segregation tomorrow, segregation forever." This was 7 years after the 10 month long bus boycott which was led by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Today, blocks from that same Capitol Building where Confederate President Jefferson Davis was inaugurated, on the city's south side, is the intersection of Jefferson Davis Road and Rosa Parks Drive, the latter named for the woman who refused to give up her seat which led to the bus boycott. Near that ironically named intersection is the modern building housing Agudath Israel/Etz Ahayem Synagogue, a congregation formed by the recent merger of two 90 year old congregations.

Sephardic Immigrants in Alabama

In 1908 a group of Jewish families who had settled in Montgomery from Greece and Rhodes began holding services. This Sephardic colony received a charter for Aish Achayim in 1912 and through several homes flourished as more Greek Jewish immigrants joined their extended families in the southern state. Their first own Torah

scroll was presented in 1918 by the rabbi of Montgomery's Beth Or, today the large Reform Congregation in town. In 1954 a second Torah Scroll was presented that had been buried for safety during the German occupation of Rhodes.

In 1962 when the Sephardic Etz Ahayem's building was dedicated, keys to it were presented to the Reform Beth Or and Conservative Agudath Israel Congregations, with an invitation to use the building whenever they wished. By 2001, the Sephardic congregation's membership had dwindled and a merger was undertaken with the nearby Conservative Agudath Israel. The 40 year old Sephardic building has been sold to an African-American Church.

Conservative Shul in The Capitol's Shadow

In 1902 Agudath Israel was organized and a beautiful shul was used near the Alabama State Capitol. In the 1950's as members moved away from the city center southward, their round sanctuary was sold to an African American Church (where the beautiful Jewish theme stained glass windows still remain). A larger modern home was built with an adjacent Hebrew School. Today the newly formed Agudath Israel/Etz Ahayem Congregation is housed in this building. At the merger, the current rabbi of the Reform Beth Or congrega-

tion led the procession of Torahs from the Sephardic shul to the Conservative shul, in recognition of the first Torah presented back in 1918.

The young Conservative Rabbi Shalom Plotkin now leads the congregation and the Torah reader is Sephardic. The services are a nice blend of Ashkenazic melodies and Sephardic chanting. One challenge for this enlarged congregation was how to accommodate the many High Holiday honors as each congregation has had active, willing and numerous participants, as well as twice as many past presidents who usually are seated on the *bimah*.

Both Ashkenazic and Sephardic customs and traditions are followed in the merged congregation. Etz Ahayem had conducted its services in Hebrew and Ladino until 1951 and the monthly shul newsletter prints Ladino-English lessons so all congregants can now learn this old Sephardic language. Ashkenazic members also acknowledge that the additional phrases and words in Sephardic prayers keep them on their toes during services.

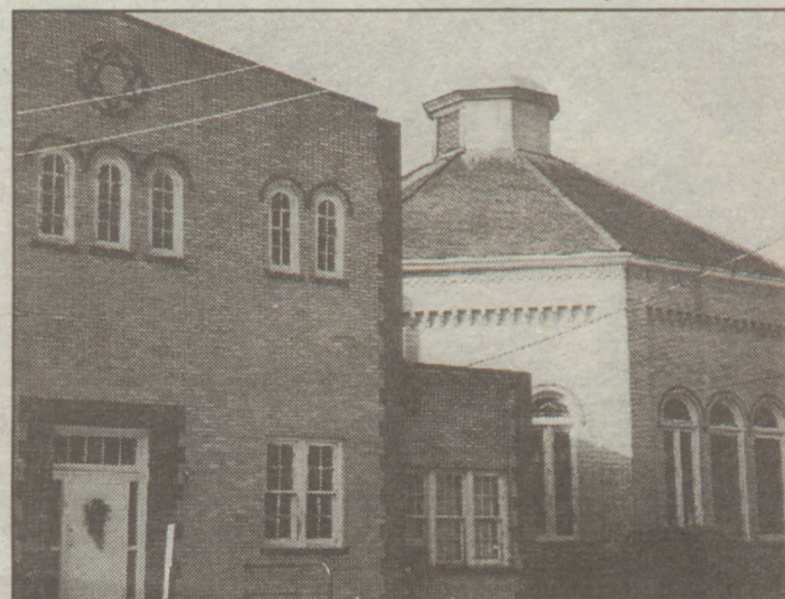
Rabbi and Mrs. Shalom Plotkin, whose home is adjacent to the shul in this leafy part of town, welcome visitors and are glad to be part of a congregation where members proudly see themselves as one people. If visiting this capital city of Alabama, which once had seceded from the United States, attendance

at a service at this uniquely united shul provides a nice complement to the landmarks of the civil rights movement which struggled to unite peoples of all backgrounds.

Throughout Alabama close to a dozen cities and towns have had or still have Jewish congregations. A visit to Selma, the sight of Civil Rights marchers beaten by the police in 1965, reveals a large red brick Temple Mishkan Israel and a few Jewish owned businesses. In the 1930's the Jewish-only Harmony Club was active and its 3 story build-

ing is being redone in the heart of this historical town. The state's largest city, Birmingham, has the historically noted Emanuel-El, now being renovated and also a Levi Campus of a large JCC and Hebrew Day School.

While Alabama may be part of our country's history of separatism, today, the state's small Jewish population exemplifies unity and cooperation. While the accents may sound Southern, the Hebrew prayers at the state's shuls sound comfortably familiar.



Temple Mishkan Israel in Selma, Alabama

Popular Storyteller To Appear At Beth Shalom



Peninnah Schram

Peninnah Schram, storyteller, teacher, recording artist will present the program "Tales for 8 Nights," an evening of Hanukkah stories, at Congregation Beth Shalom on Sunday, December 9, 2001. Ms. Schram inaugurates the Winter-Spring 2001-2002 programming of the Rabbi Jacob Kraft Educational Foundation. Peninnah first heard stories from her parents in New London, Connecticut. Her father, a cantor, told her biblical and Midrashic tales, while her mother shared the proverbs and folktales of the Jewish people. She is Associate Professor of Speech and Drama at Stern College of Yeshiva University. She is the Founding Director of the

Jewish Storytelling Center at the 92nd Street Y, NYC and is the recipient of numerous awards including the prestigious 1995 Covenant Award for Outstanding Jewish Educators. An author of several books including, *Jewish Stories One Generation Tells Another*, *Tales of Elijah the Prophet* and *Chosen Tales*, she has also received a CD, *the Minstrel and the Storyteller* with singer/guitarist Gerard Edery. She travels extensively throughout the country enchanting audiences with stories of celebration, the oral tradition, Elijah the Prophet, personal and family stories. "Peninnah Schram has enchanted audiences young and old

with her stories told with humor and depth," said famed author Elie Wiesel.

The Rabbi Jacob Kraft Educational Foundation was established in 1988 in memory of Rabbi Kraft who served as Rabbi of Congregation Beth Shalom from 1930-1987. The foundation is governed by an independent rotating board, and furthers Rabbi Kraft's lifelong devotion to learning by funding educational programs to enrich the congregation and community. "Rabbi Kraft was a man of righteousness, wisdom and love. He was a magnificent spiritual leader of Beth Shalom and the community and through this foundation Rabbi

Kraft's influence continues to be felt by present and future generations," said Stuart B. Young, Chairman of the Foundation.

A family spaghetti dinner will be served beginning at 5:30 p.m. cost is \$2.50 for adults, \$1.00 for children. Reservations must be made by 2:00 p.m., Friday, November 30 by calling the synagogue office, (302) 654-4462. Peninnah Schram's story time will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the synagogue, 1801 Baynard Boulevard, a reception will follow the evening program. There is no charge for the presentation and the community is cordially invited. For further information contact the synagogue office.

A Klezmer Nutcracker for Chanukah

WHYY presents public radio host Ellen Kushner of Sound & Spirit and the Shirim Klezmer Orchestra in a live performance of their Chanukah classic, "The Golden Dreydl: A Klezmer Nutcracker", at the Keswick Theatre, Easton Road and Keswick Avenue, Glenside, Pennsylvania on Sunday, December 9, 3 p.m.

Tickets are \$22.50 and \$14.50 and can be ordered by calling 215-572-7650.

Program For Seniors And Boomers: Exploring Tampa Bay

Senior Summer School, an education program for seniors, announces their first winter program in Tampa, Florida. Located on the Gulf Coast of Florida, Tampa, is home to the University of South Florida, and other institutions of higher learning. The vibrant waterfront city has an eclectic history, and offers cultural attractions to visitors. The *Exploring Tampa Bay* session will be offered from December 27 to January 5. Senior Summer School has been offering educational travel programs to college campuses for senior citizens for over 16 years. This session will continue the experience of their unique learning vacations for seniors and

boomers during winter months.

Terry and Jim Willard, co-hosts of the PBS series *Ancestors*, will be the program directors for this session. They will engage the group with their extensive knowledge of Genealogy, Computers, and France. In addition, topics are planned on Theatre, Politics, and History for this session. There will be included tours to explore Tampa Bay, the USF campus, the Henry B. Plant Museum, Ybor City, and the Florida Holocaust Museum. This area is rich in history and offers many cultural attractions. There will be optional sightseeing tours to Bok Tower and Chalet Suzanne in Lake Wales, the Tampa

Museum of Arts, and the Florida Aquarium.

Accommodations will be at College Park Fontana Hall which serves the students of the University of South Florida, and is adjacent to the USF campus, and the USF Golf Course. On site there are television lounges, a fitness room, a computer center, and a swimming pool. An all you can eat meal plan included with the package.

An exciting part of the program will be spending New Year's Eve with the Senior Summer School. Make your plans today to ring in the New Year with Senior Summer School, by calling at 1-800-847-2466.



MILESTONES

In Memoriam

GOODMAN

Mark Lewis Goodman, 55, of Newark, DE, died October 27th. A native Delawarean, he was a Vietnam veteran and a member of the Selective Board of Appeals of Delaware. He was the first recipient of the Board's 20 Year Service Medal. Professionally, he served as a salesman for Restaurant Equipment Sales, as a ticket taker at the University of Delaware Stadium and as an usher at the Bob Carpenter Center. He was a member of the Brandywiners.

Survivors include his wife, Karen Weaver Goodman and his children, Ronald Girotti, Jr. of Vale, CO and Nicholas Girotti of Newark. Graveside services were held on October 29 at the Beth Emeth Memorial Park on Faulkland Road. Contributions in his memory may be made to the American Cancer Society, 92 Reads Way, New Castle, DE 19720.

LEVY

Aaron Levy, 81, died November 5th in Buffalo, New York where he lived with his daughter, Ronnie. A former resident of Delaware, he was interred on Friday in the

Jewish Community Cemetery on Foulk Road.

Mr. Levy retired after 28 years from Electric Hose & Rubber Company.

He was predeceased by his wife, Miriam Rose, who died in 1980. Survivors include his children: Maxine McHugh of Bartlett, TN; Linda Jadick of Middletown, DE; Rhonda Levy of Irving, NY and Marc Levy of Middletown, DE; a sister, Shirley Levy of Claymont; six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

The family would appreciate contributions in his memory to the Hamburg Adult Day services, 353 Pleasant Avenue, Hamburg, NY 14075.

POLLAK

Perry P. Pollak, 90, widow of Dr. Otakar J. Pollak, died October 27. She is survived by her son, Tim; daughter, Eve Steinberg; brother, Arno Lamm; five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held October 29 in the Schoenberg Memorial Chapel on Philadelphia Pike. Interment was in the Jewish Community Cemetery on Foulk

Road. Contributions in her memory may be made to Hadassah, c/o Eva Weissman, 9 Devon Court, Wilmington, DE 19810 or to a charity of the donor's choice.

PORCELLI

Evelyn F. Porcelli, 89 of Cooper Farm, Wilmington, died October 29th after a brief illness. She was born in Bayonne, NJ to Nathan Feingold and Fannie Eichner Feingold. Both of her parents hailed from Krakow, Austria/Poland. She moved to the Wilmington area and graduated from Wilmington High School.

A familiar face at her father's clothing store "Feingold the Family Outfitter" on Seventh Street, she married Attilio F. "Henry" Porcelli in 1946. They were married for more than 50 years. He preceded her in death in 1997.

Mrs. Porcelli was a long-term member of Congregation Beth Emeth in Wilmington.

Survivors include her sister, Helen Goldberg of Wilmington; sons, Frank Porcelli of Belmont, MA and Thomas Porcelli of Wilmington;

and her grandchildren. Regan Porcelli, Erik Porcelli and Ryan Porcelli, all of Belmont, MA.

Funeral services were held on October 30th at the Chandler Funeral Home on Concord Pike, Wilmington. Interment was at Beth Emeth Memorial Park.

RIFKIN

Sylvia Rifkin, formerly of Newark and Wilmington, DE, died October 25th in the Potomac Valley Nursing Home in Rockville, MD.

Mrs. Rifkin was the widow of Meyer Rifkin who died in 1976 and was the sister of the late Beatrice Cohen and Jack and Edward Bell. She is survived by a sister, Anna Kesselman of CA; four nephews and two nieces.

Graveside services were held on Sunday, October 28 in the Jewish Community Cemetery on Foulk Road.

SCHWARTZ

Eve Schwartz, 86, of 8202 Society Drive, Claymont, died October 26th. She was a long-time member of Machzikey Hadas Congregation and was a past presi-

dent of its Sisterhood. Mrs. Schwartz was also a past president of B'nai B'rith Women and was an active member of Deborah Heart and Lung Foundation.

She is survived by her son, Jeffrey and his wife, Denise; daughters, Sheila Krinsky and her husband, Burt and Marsha Levy and her husband, Mel; eight grandchildren, Jay (Penny) Krinsky, Lori Krinsky, Inez Levy (Barney) Linn, Marla Levy (Mark) Moses, Elyse Krinsky (Frank) Vincent, Eric (Vickie) Levy, Stacey Schwartz, and Melissa Schwartz; and 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held on Sunday, October 28th at Schoenberg Memorial Chapel. Interment was in the Machzikey Hadas Cemetery in Minquadales.

The family requests that contributions in her memory be made to either Deborah Heart and Lung Foundation, c/o Mary Weinstein, 8602 Society Drive, Claymont, DE 19703 or to Heartland Hospice, 431 South Walnut Street, Kennett Square, PA 19348.

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NACHAS NOOK

Neipris Receives Scholastic Recognition

Rebecca Neipris, daughter of Jonathan Neipris and Myrna Ryder of Wilmington, has been named a semi-finalist in the 2001 National Merit program. Rebecca is a senior at Akiba Hebrew Academy in Merion, PA.



Rebecca Neipris

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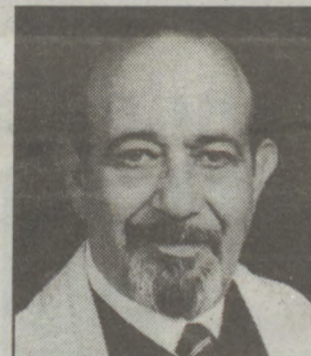
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The Delaware Jewish community recently lost a man who touched thousands of lives, Cantor Norman Swerling. Cantor Swerling the beloved Hazzan for many years at Congregation Beth Shalom, died October 17th at the age of 70. Among other congregations blessed by his musical talents are: the North Shore Synagogue in Syosset, NY; the Community Synagogue of Ryé, NY; Congregation Mikve Israel Emanuel, Curacao, Netherlands Antilles; and Temple B'nai Israel, Oklahoma City, OK. He also served as the Director of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations Eisner Camp Institute for Living Judaism in Great Barrington, MA.



Cantor Norman Swerling

Cantor was an accomplished actor who combined his love for Judaism and musical theatre by writing and performing in such original programs as "The World of the Shetl", "Uptown Downtown", "The Heart of the Musical Comedy" and "Judaism and the Arts".

As testament to his deep love of Sephardic liturgical music, he produced, edited and recorded a compact disc and book set, "Romemu", highlighting the music of the 350 year old Jewish community of Curacao.

He also served as Chaplain for The Jewish War Veterans in Wilmington and was a popular teacher in the Jewish Elder Hostel program.

Cantor Swerling is survived by his wife, Naomi; his sister, Beverly Martin; his daughter, Danielle Einsohn; his son, Jeremy Swerling; and his beloved five grandsons, Benjamin, David and Samuel Einsohn, Ari and Solomon Swerling.

Contributions in his memory may be made to either:

Pancreatic Cancer Research Program, Johns Hopkins University, 1620 McEldery Street, Room 2201, Baltimore, MD 21205, or The American Conference of Cantors, 591 Chamblee, Dunwoody Road, Bldg. 1360, Suite 200 Atlanta, GA 30338

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Entries for the Calendar of Events are due on the Thursday deadline published in *The Jewish Voice*. Please provide entries in the same format as seen on this page. *The Jewish Voice* fax number is 427-2438.

GRATZ PRESENTS CREATIVE MAGIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Seymour Rossel will teach the wizardry of teaching and managing classrooms in a day of workshops for Jewish Studies teachers on Sunday, November 18 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Delaware Jewish Community Center. This program is presented by Delaware Gratz Hebrew High School and is sponsored by the Leah and Jacob Kraft Educational Foundation. A light lunch is available. The program is open to all Jewish Studies teachers in the state of Delaware. Reservations are required. Please call Delaware Gratz to RSVP at 478-8100.

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE PARENTING SERIES CONTINUES

Discover new pathways to parenting at the Jewish Family Service Relationship Center, 288 East Main Street, Newark. All sessions are \$15.00 each and will be held on Tuesday mornings from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Register by calling 286-1402, ext. 2. Raising Children in an Interfaith Marriage,

December 4; Handling Overwhelming Responsibilities, Nov. 13 and December 11; Taking a "Time Out" from a Hectic Schedule, Nov. 20 and December 18

DELAWARE GRATZ WELCOMES COMMUNITY TO OPEN SCHOOL WEEK

Delaware Gratz Hebrew High School invites parents to participate in its three upcoming Open School Week class days. Come and attend classes with your children on Tuesday, December 4th and Thursday, December 6th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:05 p.m. or Sunday, December 9th from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. For additional information, please call Marlene Milunsky, Principal, at 478-8100.

JOIN THE YOUNG JEWISH ADULTS OF DELAWARE

Join an active group of Jewish professionals in their 20s and 30s. For the following fun-filled activities:

*Potluck Havdallah and Games Night is Sat., Nov. 17, at 5:30 p.m. RSVP to Lynn Cherrin at 478-7779.

*Travel to Hawk Mountain on Sun., Nov. 18. Meet at the JCC at 8:30 a.m. RSVP to David Friedman at 478-8480. Volleyball every Wednesday, 6 p.m. at the Delaware JCC. Join members for dinner after the game.

SPIRITUAL HEALING AFTER LOSS

This group, sponsored by Jewish

Family Service of Delaware, augments bereavement groups by adding a religious healing component. It helps mourners find

answers to such questions as "What do we do after Shiva?" and "How does Judaism respond to the end of mourning?" The group

meets Mondays from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. beginning November 12th. Please call JFS at 478-9411 to register.



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Hillel at the University of Delaware is searching for an Executive Director. Position entails creating opportunities for Jewish life and expression, interacting with university community, fundraising, supervision of staff, building and budget, working with the Board and serving as liaison with various agencies and organizations. Please visit us at <http://copland.udel.edu/stu-org/hillel/index.html>. We will begin reviewing applications on December 1, 2001 and continue until the position is filled. Salary and benefits are competitive. Position begins in August 2002. Forward resumes, references and salary requirements to Robert Denmark c/o Hillel Student Center, 47 West Delaware Avenue, Newark, DE 19711. (Fax 302-453-0629).

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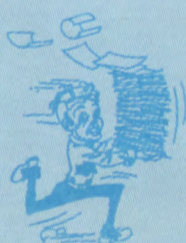
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