

THE Jewish Georgian

Happy Chanukah



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FREE

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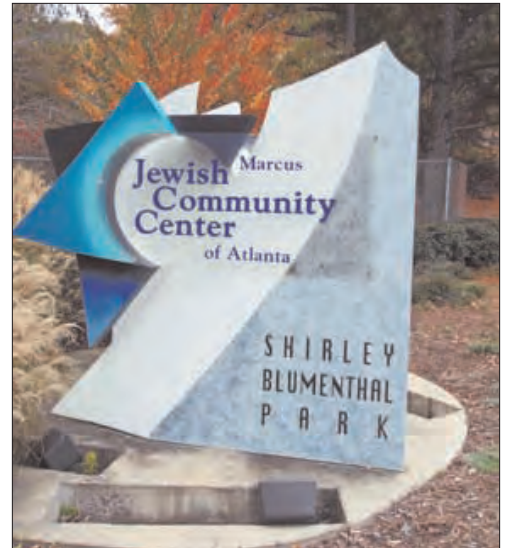
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MJCCA implements strategic changes at Shirley Blumenthal Park

Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta (MJCCA) leadership has announced that its facility in East Cobb, Shirley Blumenthal Park (SBP), is not closing, but is transitioning to a community-based service model for the best delivery of programs and services.

As part of this shift, The Sunshine School will complete the 2009-10 school year at SBP and will then relocate to East Cobb's Temple Kol Emeth (TKE) in August 2010. The Sunshine School, which has been in existence for 60 years, is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). It features full- and half-day programs for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and "An Ethical Start," a nationally acclaimed pluralistic Jewish values curriculum.

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Shirley Blumenthal Park (photo courtesy of MJCCA)

Atlanta Jewish Film Festival celebrates a decade of excellence



AJFF film buffs (photo: Traci Gingold)

has inspired other cities around the world to emulate its success.

A decade ago, American Jewish Committee member Cookie Shapiro heard about the film festival concept and suggested it as a way to bring people together to explore issues facing the Jewish community—Israel, anti-Semitism, and more. It

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FAMILY FUN. Ari Miller plays Winthrop Paroo in Center Theatre's community production of the beloved Broadway hit *The Music Man*. (photo: Dina Shadwell) See page 16.

By Suzi Brozman

year.

Atlanta audiences have grown so used to seeing the Jewish world's best films crammed into a marathon of screenings that hardly anyone realizes that the prestigious Atlanta Jewish Film Festival (AJFF) is celebrating "only" its 10th anniversary this

The AJFF, now recognized as one of North America's best Jewish film festivals, was certainly not the first, nor is it quite the largest. Of the over sixty Jewish film festivals in North America, the oldest and largest is San Francisco's, which had grown in its 30+ years to a three-week affair that

Judaism: Righteousness, justice, and kindness

Sometimes we fail to recognize the subtlety in the meanings of words and the underlying message that is imported. I have thought long about the fact that there is no word in Hebrew that, in English, literally translates into the word "charity." Is there something about the Jewish concept of helping the needy that differs from the concept projected by the use of the word "charity"?

In Mark R. Cohen's book *Poverty and Charity in the Jewish Community of Medieval Egypt*, he says, "Pre-Christian Greek and Roman philanthropy had little to do with pity for the poor—with charity as we know it. Rather, people, or the state, made gifts to cities or its citizens, built buildings, or provided shelter for wayfarers in order to gain prestige as benefactors." He goes on to say, "But there was no ethos of pity, of helping these people just because they were indigent. Things changed, however, with the coming of Christianity and especially the Christianization of the pagan Roman Empire beginning in the fourth century. Drawing upon its Jewish roots but carrying the legacy in new directions, the Church and the Christian Empire constructed charity as a response to pity for the poor."

Charity, which, among other things,



BY **Marvin Botnick**

means "benevolence for the poor," is derived through Old French from the Latin *caritas*. In Vulgate, the fourth-century Latin translation of the Christian Bible, which served as the authorized version of the Roman Catholic Church, *caritas* was used as a translation of the Greek word *agape*. The Greek word meant "love," and it was pointed towards the Christian concept of love of one's fellow human.

But Judaism has a different concept. In our tradition and teachings, we most commonly refer to the requirement of helping the less fortunate with the word *tzedakah*, "righteousness" and "justice." This is directly commanded of us in numerous passages of our Bible; it is not a voluntary custom. It is incumbent on us to act in an upright and just manner with *chesed* (kindness), not for any other reason than it is our obligation, period.

Need can result from different circumstances, and how we are to address these is handled with different solutions. But what did evolve was that concept that dependency on public welfare was to be avoided. Whatever is done is to be accomplished in such a way that the result should not create in the recipient a feeling of shame associated with dependency. It is understandable, therefore, that attendant to the concept of *tzedakah* is the preservation of anonymity

of both the donor and the recipient.

As a nation and with the building of the Temple, authority for the nation and the religion was centered in Jerusalem. This did not preclude communal organizations outside of Jerusalem within the national borders, and it certainly did not conflict with such governance outside of the country, particularly after the exile following the destruction of the First Temple. At this period, the function of spiritual as well as community leader was combined in a single individual who served as *parnas*. Later these duties were separated with the religious responsibility assigned to the rabbi and the communal governing vested in the *parnas* or a council serving in this capacity.

After the destruction of the Second Temple and the resulting exile, we were no longer a self-governing people. Nevertheless, we did, in fact, operate in a semi-autonomous structure. We were answerable to the rulers of the countries in which we dwelt; however, in many cases, subject to the dictates of these rulers, we were charged by them with promulgating and enforcing the governing rules of the populace within the community.

In Judaism, pity has no place, but rather the concept of *chesed*, acts of kindness and compassion, is required. We are directed to deal justly with the poor and needy. For those who are unable to provide for themselves, we must share our bounties; for those who are able and capable, we should provide the wherewithal for them to become self-sufficient, and this should be done gladly. Maimonides is quoted as saying, "Whoever gives *tzedakah* to the poor with a sour expression and in a surly man-

ner, even if he gives a thousand gold pieces, loses his merit. One should instead give cheerfully and joyfully, and emphasize with him in his sorrow."

Through the centuries, this precept has survived. While the function of religious leader and the secular responsibility for caring for the needed have been assigned to different bodies, they are inseparable. Both are part of the Jewish community, a joint responsibility that must work hand-in-hand. The agencies dealing with financial help primarily are operated by secular individuals who function within the social structure of the community, but the rabbis are the source of the moral and religious dictates of our responsibilities. Strong fulfillment of both functions is necessary.

Jewish tradition does not favor the able-bodied individual depending on others, but rather advocates the concept of aiding the poor to rescue themselves from dependency through self-help. Many of us are from families who came to this country with little more than a dream and a hope of a better life, and, with the help of others in our community, were able to become self-sufficient. We walk with our heads held high because of the successes that were achieved. We can be proud of our ancestors who seized on what was afforded to them and on the Jewish teachings that helped them achieve this independence.

Let us continue to follow these dictates. Let us continue these just and righteous teachings. Let us remember that Judaism is more than using some Jewish sayings. Let us remember that Judaism is knowing and practicing our teachings. Let us continue to practice *tzedakah*.

THE Jewish Georgian

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Israel Democracy Institute invites public to learn about and debate critical issues

Over the course of the coming year, IDI (Israel Democracy Institute) is inviting Atlantans to the "Israel as a Democracy" series, to debate some of the most critical domestic challenges facing Israel today. This community-wide forum will allow participants to explore issues of governance, politics, religion and state, minority-majority relations, and the fight against terrorism with some of Israel's leading schol-

ars. Each session will consist of a presentation by an IDI senior fellow, followed by small-group discussions on the evening's topic.

The sessions, which begin at 6:30 p.m., are sponsored by the American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta.

Sessions are:

- Monday, November 2, 2009, at The Temple
"Israel's Arabs: On Majority-Minority Relations in the State of Israel," with Prof. Mordechai Kremnitzer
- Wednesday, January 6, 2010, at The Weber School
"Dilemmas of a Young Democracy in the War on Terror: Can Israel Win and Preserve Her Soul?" with Prof. Yuval Shany
- Wednesday, March 3, 2010, location TBD
"Both Jewish and Democratic: Toward a Resolution of Israel's Identity Crisis," with Prof. Yedidia Stern
- Thursday, May 6, 2010, at the Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta
"Israel between External Threat and Domestic Instability: The Imperative of Political Reform," with Dr. Arye Carmon

For biographical information on IDI scholars, visit www.idi.org.il. To find out more or to register, contact Peggy Ann Soileau at pasoileau@idi.org.il or 404-240-7719.

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What's HAPPENING

EDGEWISE AT THE MJCCA. You know, it's a funny thing about Our People—Jews never stop learning, seeking knowledge, and teaching others what they know. It's been like this for almost four thousand years, since the Torah began to be handed down from generation to generation.

A great example of this Jewish love of learning is EdgeWise, the Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta program run by Eddie Ullman. Three Thursday mornings out of every month, seniors ranging in age from the mid-60s to the 90s gather to hear invited speakers address a variety of topics. It is one of the longest-running and most successful programs at the center, and, under Eddie's leadership, it has thrived.

Eddie got the job of "facilitator" when his predecessor, Cole Mandelblit, asked for a volunteer to help line up speakers. Eddie stepped forward, and, before he knew it, Cole moved on, and Eddie took over the operation—which he says he could not do without the invaluable help of retired salesman Mel Gorowitz. We know of no complaints about the new management.

Some of the speakers—and audience members—are real experts in their fields. They include mayors, sheriffs, county CEOs, comedians, journalists, Holocaust survivors, rabbis, doctors, and lawyers, speaking on such topics as The Temple bombing and the Leo Frank lynching. Eddie says he feels as if he's back at school.

Eddie cannot think of any one speaker who was the best. "There have been so many outstanding ones," he says.

If you're not attending EdgeWise on Thursdays, you're really missing out on some interesting and valuable lectures. Best of all, there's no homework. Call the MJCCA (770-396-3250) or Eddie himself (404-634-9037), and get involved. And be careful about volunteering for anything, or you might end up running the program!

BOBI DIMOND'S AMAZING TORAH PHOTO. Renowned Atlanta photographess Bobi Dimond told us an amazing story: One day, she was passing a Judaica store in San Francisco, when she noticed a sofer repairing an old Torah. She quickly and unobtrusively shot a few photos of the opened scrolls with her favorite film, black-and-white infrared. She says it is the grainiest film ever made, and it prints "like a pencil drawing, with soft auras around anything emitting heat. The photos are very sensual and spiritual." Bobi printed the photo and titled it *Heritage*.

Recently, *Heritage* was on display at Decatur location of Worthmore, Harris Botnick's jewelry store and art gallery. A customer contacted Harris to find out what



BY Reg Regenstein



Photographer Bobi Dimond (photo credit: Duane Stork)

When the rabbi opened the gift and everyone was ooing and ahing, he said, "You won't believe this, but that was my Torah portion when I got bar mitzvah."

"The sad part to this story," Bobi says, "is that infrared film has been discontinued. My heart is broken, as it has been my specialty and favorite for 35 years."

To memorialize any of your life events, contact Bobi at Bobidimond@aol.com.

GALA FOR THE ANIMALS. If you wanna throw a successful charity fundraiser in the midst of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, here's how to do it: get some of Atlanta's smartest and hardest working women to organize it. That's what the nation's largest animal protection group, The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), did, with great results.

Debbie Berger and her corps of volunteers (PR whiz Judy Landey, National Council of Jewish Women staffer Joanie Siegel, Renaissance Woman Ann Titleman, Atlanta Dog Spa's Sarah Segal, and Andrea Appel), plus entrepreneur Craig Taylor and a bunch of their friends and colleagues, devoted several months to working on HSUS' October gala celebrating Georgia's new law banning dogfighting and the people working to stamp out this shameful practice.

Over 200 people turned out for the affair, including some top government and law enforcement officials who are leading the fight against cruelty to animals: Fulton County prosecutors Paul Howard and Laura Jansson, Fulton County Sheriff Theodore "Ted" Jackson, DeKalb County Sheriff

he had that would be an appropriate 75th birthday gift for a rabbi. When the customer was shown the photograph, he immediately knew that it would be the proper gift. A week later, says Bobi, she got "the most amazing phone call from Harris."



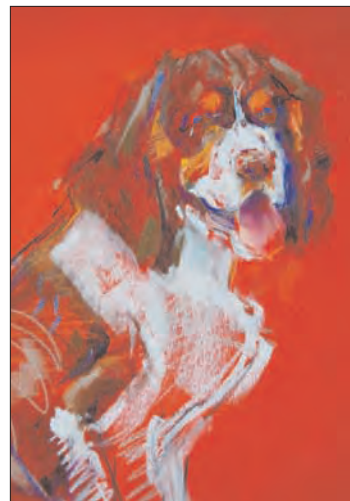
Debbie Berger, winner of HSUS' volunteer award, with Fulton County Commissioner Robb Pitts (left) and HSUS President Wayne Pacelle. (photo credit: Pat Thomas)

Thomas E. Brown, Fulton County Commissioner Robb Pitts, Georgia's Inspector General Shawn Ellen LaGrue, and House Democratic Leader Dubose Porter.

In just one year, after passing strong laws outlawing cruelty to animals—and dogfighting specifically—Georgia has gone from being one of the worst states in animal abuse laws to one of the best. Thanks to all our dedicated animal protectionists and law enforcement officials for making this happen.

MITZI'S MASTERPIECES. Among the best items in the HSUS silent auction was a pet portrait donated by the wonderfully talented artist native Atlantian Mitzi Rothman. We grew up with Mitzi, but she does not seem to have aged at all over the years. Everyone liked the lovely and delightful Mitzi Canter (as she was known then), but no one knew how truly brilliant she was. Anyway, so many people wanted to get a deal on one of her portraits that we were outbid, but there's always next year.

Mitzi does beautiful pastel-on-paper portraits of dogs, cats, and other pets, capturing the unique qualities that make them so special to us. A perfect gift for any animal lover—or yourself. Check out her work at www.mitzirothman.com, or e-mail her at mitzirothman@msn.com.



Millie, pastel on paper portrait by Mitzi Rothman

ANIMAL CRACKERS. We loved the gift bag that HSUS gave to all its guests, full of wonderful goodies like T-shirts and dog treats. There was also a package of free-range animal crackers that were vegan, organic, whole grain, non-trans-fat, sugar-free, wheat-free, gluten-free, rainforest- and free-trade-certified, and shade-grown.

We noticed a warning on the box, saying, "Do not consume if seal is broken." So we opened it up and inspected the crackers. The elephant was fine, trunk intact, the camel was OK, too, but then we picked up the seal, and you guessed it...the seal was broken! What a bummer!

HERMI'S BRIDGE. The historic pedestrian bridge over the Chattahoochee River at Vinings, next to Paces Ferry Road at The Lovett School, was built in 1903, the same year that the Wright Brothers made their first airplane flight. After a replacement bridge was installed in the 1970s, alongside the original structure, renowned architect Cecil Alexander and his late wife, Hermi, led the fight to save the old bridge from destruction. Cecil, now 91 but sharp as ever, bemoans the fact that in Atlanta, "We've been too fast to tear down our monuments and our past."

Now, the bridge, with its rusting steel and rotting planks, is being renovated and will soon be better than ever, with a new slate-blue lead-free paint job and new wooden decking. Fortunately, it survived—barely—the recent flooding, with the river rising to within a foot of the support beams. Soon, it will again be, as Cecil puts it, "a worthy memorial to Hermi."



Hermi and Cecil Alexander, the morning after their wedding at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, January 21, 1943. For their 40th anniversary, Hermi wore the same dress without having to alter it.

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Happening

From page 3

AMERICA'S WORST ACT OF ANTI-SEMITISM. A new book devotes several pages to recounting the worst official act of anti-Semitism in America's history—the expulsion during the Civil War of “all Jews as a class” from Southern territory captured by Union forces under General Ulysses S. Grant.

Abraham Lincoln is invariably described in the hundreds of books, movies, TV documentaries, and articles as our greatest president ever, the man who freed the slaves and preserved the Union. Lincoln is especially revered by Jewish historians, who portray him as kind, compassionate, and wise.

But John Avery Emison's new book, *Lincoln Uber Alles: Dictatorship Comes to America* (published by Pelican) provides a critical perspective on some of the wartime actions of the Lincoln administration. Newspapers were closed down, editors jailed, and 630,000 Americans were killed.

Among the Lincoln government's war crimes Emison discusses and documents is General Grant's infamous general Order #11 of December 17, 1862, ordering the expulsion, on 24 hours' notice, of all Jews in the conquered states of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi. He describes Grant's troops going door-to-door, searching for Jews to round up, and the persecution these Jews endured.

As Bertram W. Korn writes in his classic work, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (1951), “They still tell stories of the expulsion in Paducah, Kentucky: of the hurried departure by riverboat up the Ohio to Cincinnati; of a baby almost left behind in the haste and confusion and tossed bodily into the boat; of two dying women permitted to remain behind in neighbors' care....”

On January 4, 1863, Lincoln had Grant's odious order rescinded, but by then, Jewish families in the area had been expelled, humiliated, terrified, and jailed, and some stripped of their possessions. The officials responsible for the United States government's most vicious anti-Jewish actions ever were never dismissed, admonished or, apparently, even officially criti-

cized for the religious persecution they inflicted on innocent citizens.

If you wonder why so little is known about this incident, it is because it is simply not discussed or written about in history books and is ignored by historians. But Emison has done us a great service by reminding us of one of the most shameful incidents in the history of America.

COMEDIAN JOSH HARRIS. Oglethorpe senior and stand-up comedian Josh Harris made his national television comedy debut October 17 with a killer performance on the syndicated comedy competition, “Who's Got Jokes,” hosted by Bill Bellamy on TV One.

After being “discovered” at the Uptown Comedy Club, Josh was flown to Las Vegas in April, where the show was taped at the Luxor Hotel in front of a panel of celebrity judges. He won a standing ovation the first night.

After Josh's performance, the executive producer, who had been Chris Rock's producer for five years, told Josh that his talent reminded him of Rock's when he was the same age, 24.

Jerry Farber gave Josh his start in stand-up two years ago, when he invited the unknown, untested, inexperienced kid onstage at The Punchline. Josh “knocked a five-minute repertoire out of the park,” as his dad, journalist Art Harris puts it. “But



Comedian
Josh Harris

since then, he's also learned you can't always hit home runs.” “I've tanked plenty,” Josh says, “and it feels awful. But that's where you learn the most, trying out new material and daring to fail. Jerry and all the other comics I've met have been so encouraging. It really is a passion. A famous artist, the late Paul Chelko, once told me before he died, ‘Josh, do what you love and you won't regret it. It's what you were meant to do.’ I've never been happier in my life than when I'm writing comedy,

or on stage.”

Breaking news! Josh just got called in to audition for a Tyler Perry movie and said it went great.

Multi-talented Josh also plays drums and piano in a jam band with brother Adam, a guitarist, singer, and varsity runner at Presbyterian College. Josh interned as a writer in the Atlanta marketing department at The Cartoon Network last summer. “Imagine a 9-to-5 job writing promos for cartoons I grew up watching,” he says, comparing it to eating “ice cream for breakfast. I loved it.”

Josh can be reached at Myspace.com/funnyjoshharris, 404-310-2039, or aharris1@oglethorpe.edu.

ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A 5TH GRADER? We wish we were, but after speaking to Dara Davis' and Michele Kaplan's classes at the renowned Davis Academy, we're not so sure.

We had the great honor of being invited to the prestigious school to talk about the Civil War and Jews who lived in the South and fought for the Confederacy. We always get nervous when we realize that the audience is a lot smarter than we are, but we should have expected that from the kids at such a great school as Davis.



Davis Academy teachers Dara Davis and Michele Kaplan, with some of their 5th-grade students

The class included the grandson of United States Senator Joe Lieberman, one of the nation's most respected public servants and one of



Davis Academy
Benefactor Jay
Davis

our favorite leaders. We even had the honor of having the son of the academy's namesakes, the much beloved Adele and Al Davis, and one of school's most generous endowors, Jay Davis, who was visiting his granddaughter, sit in on part of our discussion.

We tried to defend the South, but these persistent kids kept asking us such tough questions as, “Didn't the South start the war by firing the first shots, at Fort Sumter?” We had to admit it was true, especially since one of our ances-

tors, Joshua Lazarus Moses, was there at the time, firing away at the Damn Yankees.

Anyway, they were great kids, it was a terrific experience, no one fell asleep, and we are glad to see that the next generation of our community is so smart. No one will be able to put anything over on these kids.

ISRAEL'S WATER CRISIS. Marietta's Congregation Etz Chaim held a fascinating program on what may be Israel's greatest long-term problem—prolonged water shortages that could threaten the nation's very survival.

Ultimately, if Israel ran out of water for farming and human consumption, much of the state would have to be abandoned, unless it could find ways to import the increasingly scarce but vital commodity.

Sponsored by the Jewish National Fund and the Ketura Group of Greater Atlanta Hadassah, the program examined how Israel and the state of Georgia have been coping with their respective water crises.

Speakers included Sam Olens, chairman of the Cobb County commission and the Atlanta Regional Commission; Col. Sharon Davidovich, who spent 23 years in the Israel Defense Forces and is now focusing on water issues in Israel; and Mort Mower, inventor of the implantable cardioverter defibrillator and chair of the Jewish National Fund's Parsons Water Fund, which is trying to raise \$100 million to find new water sources in Israel.

Israel is facing its worst water shortage in decades, and the Sea of Galilee, the country's main source of fresh water, is experiencing record low levels. The construction of new desalination plants will help, but other measures are desperately needed, including conservation, reservoirs, and, most of all, rain.

When Governor Perdue prayed for rain last year during Georgia's severe drought, it appeared to work. Maybe Israel's rabbis can do the same for it.



At the Israel water crisis conference: (from left) Lauren Mescon, Col. Sharon Davidovich, Dr. Mort Mower, Cobb Commissioner Sam Olens, and Sue Rothstein (photo credit: Daniel Regenstein)

GAY MARRIAGE. Comic Gary Shandling says he's not against gay marriage, except in the case of two Jewish women: it would be unfair to raise a child with two Jewish mothers!

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MJCCA

From page 1

The partnership with TKE will enable the MJCCA to serve more Jewish children throughout the community at a more convenient location. Planned enhancements to TKE's facility include painting, an upgraded playground, and new technology in the classrooms.

According to TKE President Dave Mayer, "We are excited about the opportunity to work with the MJCCA and look forward to a long and meaningful relationship. It's a perfect fit with our preschool and facilities. Education of our children has always been fundamental to TKE's mission, and this partnership will benefit children throughout the community for years to come."

Raye Lynn Banks, The Sunshine's School's director for 25 years, also looks forward to the impending changes. "Our preschool family is so important to us, and they can be assured that we will continue to deliver the quality early childhood services they have come to expect. We look forward to our partnership with TKE and are excited that The Sunshine School, with our dedicated staff and outstanding program, will continue for all the children in East Cobb."

Effective November 25, the MJCCA will discontinue some services at SBP,

including the fitness center, group fitness classes, and youth sports. The men's basketball league will continue.

According to Michael D. Wise, executive director and CEO of the MJCCA, demographic shifts in the East Cobb Jewish

Michael D. Wise
(Photo courtesy of MJCCA)

population, geographic challenges, and a faltering economy have reduced the ability of a central facility in Marietta to serve an increasingly dispersed Jewish community. "We are not closing Shirley Blumenthal Park," Wise said. "Rather, we are exploring a number of innovative partnerships and opportunities in order to re-imagine and revitalize this valuable facility for the benefit of our Jewish community."

Summer day camp, one of SBP's most popular and enduring programs, will remain at the East Cobb location. Both the Barbara & Sanford Orkin Camp Chai and the Billi Marcus Preschool Camp will kick off the summer 2010 season with the annual Camp/Preschool Registration Day on January 10, 2010, at both MJCCA facilities and other East Cobb satellite locations.

Beginning with the 2010 camp season, membership will no longer be required for participation in MJCCA's East Cobb programs, including day camp and preschool; however, substantial discounts for those programs will be extended to all MJCCA and synagogue partner members.

These strategic changes come after many months of extensive study led by an SBP Task Force of some of East Cobb's most dynamic community, religious, and business leaders, including founding members of SBP.

Task Force Chair Steven Cadranell, an MJCCA Executive Committee vice president and community business leader, said, "I am genuinely excited about the direction we are now moving in and the new partnerships and initiatives we're pursuing. Modifying our membership requirements to make participation more affordable was a giant step. Then, joining together to leverage the combined strength of our Jewish partners instead of continuing to fracture our limited resources really brought it all together."

Cadranell continued, "Change, no matter why or how, can be difficult, but sometimes, not changing can be terminal. Now, we are able to better serve our East Cobb families for a long time to come. I am very proud that the MJCCA and Temple Kol Emeth are paving the way, and I am sure others will want to follow. Very few facilities enjoy the amenities available at Shirley Blumenthal, and we see tremendous potential for other creative opportunities to reinvigorate our park."

"The committee had to make difficult and fiscally responsible recommendations," said Congregation Etz Chaim Rabbi Paul D. Kerbel, who is also president of the Atlanta Rabbinical Association and member of the SBP lay committee. "What has come out of the process is a strong desire for partnership and collaboration between the synagogues, Jewish organizations, and the MJCCA. In the end, our desire to provide significant programs and work together to utilize existing physical space in our synagogues will have an impact on both the MJCCA and the East Cobb Jewish community."

Many community leaders have voiced their support for the changes at SBP. Steven Rakitt, president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta, said, "The Federation respects the deliberate, thoughtful and thorough volunteer committee process undertaken by the MJCCA regarding the changes at Shirley Blumenthal Park. It was a difficult decision, made necessary by underutilization and ongoing and significant financial losses at SBP. The changes, coupled with creative new ideas to deliver efficient and high quality services to the most people, are supported by JFGA."



Temple Kol Emeth (photo courtesy of TKE)



Playground at Temple Kol Emeth (photo courtesy of TKE)

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Have it...

1 in 15

Carry it...

1 in 1

Should know about it.

Type 1 Gaucher disease (pronounced Go-Shay) is the most common Jewish genetic disease, and among the least well known. In fact, it is much more common than Tay-Sachs disease. The symptoms of Gaucher disease are progressive and often debilitating. Symptoms can begin at any age.

Fortunately, Gaucher disease is treatable, and the earlier the diagnosis the better, because irreversible problems or premature death can occur if left untreated. If you or your family members are experiencing any of the following symptoms, ask your doctor if a Gaucher blood test is right for you.

— GAUCHER DISEASE SIGNS & SYMPTOMS —

- FATIGUE (ANEMIA) • BONE PAIN
- EASY BRUISING AND/OR BLEEDING
- ENLARGED ABDOMEN (SPLEEN AND/OR LIVER)

If you are Jewish and of Eastern European ancestry, and would like more information, call Genzyme Medical Information at 1-800-745-4447 (option 2) or visit www.genzyme.com.

genzyme

Not Me is a Holocaust survivor novel with a twist

Not Me

By Michael Lavigne
Random House, 2007
320 pages, \$13.95



BY Carolyn Gold

This is a very surprising and inventive story by Michael Lavigne. A son, Michael Rosenheim, comes to see his father, who is dying of Alzheimer's in a Palm Beach County nursing home. The father slips in and out of consciousness. In one of his good moments, he pushes a box of 24 journals to his son and says, "Take them."

The journals reveal a secret that makes the son question everything about his father's life and his own. They tell the story of a former Nazi SS officer who has passed himself off as a pious Jew.

Heshel Rosenheim, formerly Heinrich Mueller, is stationed in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp when he realizes the Allied troops are advancing. He starves himself for three weeks, shaves his head, puts on rags, tattoos a number on his arm, and crawls out from among the dead bodies. He takes a Jewish name and is saved by the British.

Not Me continues as a book within a book: first, there is Michael's experience in the very Jewish and often hilarious South Florida (or "Mall Country," as he calls it); then, there is his father's journal, in italics, describing his experiences in a displaced persons camp, then in an Israeli kibbutz, and as a recruit in the Haganah. The journal catalogs the history of the young Jewish

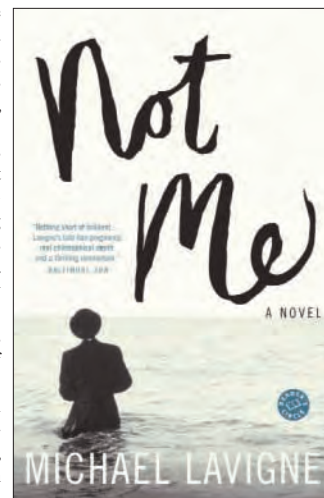
state and the battles in which Heshel takes part. Michael's story recalls his family's life in New Jersey (where his father wound up in the wallpaper business), the death of his young sister, and his own troubled marriage.

The father's journal explains how he has tried to reinvent himself, how he has sought redemption. The son, staying in his father's Florida apartment, is surrounded by Heshel's awards from B'nai B'rith, the Anti-Defamation League, the Zionist Organization of America, AIPAC, the Jewish Federation, Hadassah Hospital, the Holocaust Museums, Israel Bonds, and countless other organizations for which he raised money. He fed the homeless, marched for civil rights, worked to free

Soviet Jews, and, the son learns, brought Jewish orphans to families in this country.

Michael struggles with the new information about his father's true identity, his double life, his present illness, and, finally, his death. He finds an unsent letter among his mother's things and discovers how she learned the truth and married Heshel anyway. This brings him a final reconciliation with the family secret.

Not Me is a book that raises questions about morality, inhumanity, guilt, and virtue. Lavigne has written a book that paints vivid historical events as it plumbs deep human emotions.



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AJFF

From page 1

made sense, and AJC made the commitment to the project, a role it has nurtured through the years. Today, the AJFF is proud to be the nation's second largest Jewish film festival, a 12-day (and evening) affair presenting over 50 films in three major venues.

AJFF Executive Director Kenny Blank began working on the film selection committee over five years ago. Over the years, he took on the managerial role, and today



Kenny Blank

he speaks for the festival and its success. "We continue to be a trendsetter among festivals. We are proud to be presenting world premieres, Oscar contenders, something for everyone. There are

documentaries, narrative films, foreign-language movies, and more. We're all about freedom of expression, exploring all aspects of Jewish life, raising fascinating questions for the Jewish community. We want to move people out of their comfort zones, to ask tough questions, to put on screen the full spectrum of the Jewish experience. We choose films that not only celebrate the sweetness and light but also confront difficult and unpleasant realities."

But it's not one-sided, says Blank. Even though this year's lineup won't be announced until December 8, he promises a wide array of films dealing with both serious and light topics to entice any viewer. "We've had to educate our audience about what a film festival is. Patrons can indulge in nonstop movie watching—make a day of it, camp out with us, see two or three or four movies. Attend a discussion group, interact with filmmakers and artists. You don't have to just go home after a film. Enjoy our guest speakers and take advantage of a rare opportunity to talk with film professionals, actors, producers, directors, and academics. Learn to understand the filmmaking process and the topics in new and fascinating ways."

Blank is often asked, "What makes a film eligible for inclusion in the festival?" He responds, "What makes a film Jewish? I've tried to set out to broaden the definition—to include many types of films in order to explore the full range of Jewish life. Not just what you'd expect, but we want to surprise people, pick fringe subjects that have a quintessential Jewish theme but may not be obviously Jewish. A publication did a survey recently...what do you think ranks as one of the top Jewish films? *Blazing Saddles!* If you look at it through a certain perspective, it certainly is Jewish. It's filled with Jewish themes seen through-

out Jewish literature—the outsider, alienation. So you see, there is no hard-and-fast definition. Any film that explores Jewish life, heritage, history, current events, or presents a view of Israeli life is a candidate. And, of course, we're looking for films with excellence."

And look they do. A committee of screeners has been hard at work for months, viewing and rating many more films than could be shown in a year of festival dates.

Volunteers are now being sought to work at the three venues—Lefont Sandy Springs, Regal Cinemas Atlantic Station Stadium 16, and Regal Medlock Crossing 18. To volunteer, visit www.ajff.org, or e-mail info@ajff.org for information.

More than 130 corporate and individual sponsors have come forward to support the upcoming festival. While sponsorships are closed for the 2010 AJFF, anyone wishing to offer support in the future can contact Staci Brill at sbrill@ajff.org.

A special feature of this year's film festival celebrates one of the most important aspect of film—the one that sets the tone, moves the action along, and often is the most memorable element—the music. On January 4, 2010, the Atlanta Jewish Film Festival will partner with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra to bring some of film-dom's most loved and memorable film scores to the community in a one-time-only live concert. Sponsored by Turner Classic Movies and Comcast, the concert will be the first time a program of Jewish-themed film scores has been presented anywhere in the world by a major orchestra.



Turner Classic Movies host Ben Mankiewicz will serve as master of ceremonies for the January 4th AJFF Gala Concert

This concert also marks the first collaboration between the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the Atlanta Jewish Film Festival. Films represented in the program include *Schindler's List*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Yentl*, *Life is Beautiful*, *The Ten Commandments*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Producers*, *Gentlemen's Agreement*, *I Have Never Forgotten You*, *Masada*, and *Exodus*. The lush and lovely music will be accompanied by a montage of still images from these films.



Richard Kaufman directs the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

The guest conductor for this special concert will be Richard Kaufman, a long-time music coordinator at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, who has been performing and

supervising film and classical music on stage and in recordings throughout the United States for many years.

Tickets for this very special event range from \$18-\$75, with a Red Carpet VIP reception for \$250. Visit www.ajff.org or www.atlantasymphony.org.

So, mark your calendar for the big concert January 4, and reserve January 13-24, 2010, to feast on popcorn while you satisfy your craving for great Jewish films. General admission is \$10 per film, \$9 for seniors and students, and \$8 for matinees.

You can also follow AJFF on Twitter at www.twitter.com/atljewishfilm and become a fan of the festival on Facebook at <http://bit.ly/atljewishfilm>.

The American Jewish Committee, parent of the film festival, is an international advocacy organization that works to build bridges of understanding with ethnic, religious, national, and international leadership. Believing that stories told on film are one of the best ways to share experiences, AJC looks at the film festival as an important tool for effective dialogue.

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MJCCA NEWS

BOOK FESTIVAL CONTINUES TO DELIGHT. The 18th annual Book Festival of the MJCCA continues through November 22 at the Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta-Zaban Park, 5342 Tilly Mill Road, in Dunwoody. A highlight of Atlanta's literary calendar, the Book Festival of the MJCCA presents dozens of authors in a variety of forums. Festival-goers enjoy engaging speaker programs, author meet-and-greets, book signings, panel discussions, the annual Esther G. Levine Community Read, movie screenings, and more.

This year's lineup features Pulitzer Prize-winners, bestselling authors, rising literary voices, television and film stars, humorists, journalists, historians, novelists, and scholars.



Author Peter Manseau will appear at the 18th annual Book Festival of the MJCCA where he will discuss his book, *Songs for the Butcher's Daughter*.

In addition, local book clubs are invited to register at atlantajcc.org, receive discounts on Book Festival Book Club Selections from the festival's official bookseller, Barnes & Noble, and meet and have their books autographed at the author event.

In honor of the Book Festival's 18th anniversary, festival-goers are asked to bring new or gently used large-print or audio books for donation to local assisted living facilities.

The festival's remaining events, listed below, will be held at the MJCCA-Zaban Park.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16

12:00 noon
Francine Prose, *Anne Frank: The Book, The Life, The After Life*
\$12/non-members, \$7/members

4:00-6:00 p.m.
Jacqueline Greene, *American Girl: Meet Rebecca*
\$12/non-members, \$7/members (Adults free; children must be accompanied by an adult.)

6:30 p.m.
Daniel Levin, *The Last Ember*
S. J. Rozan, *The Shanghai Moon*

\$15/non-members, \$10/members (2-for-1 with event at 8:00 p.m.)

8:00 p.m.
Dan Senor, *Start-up Nation: The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle*
\$15/non-members, \$10/members (2-for-1 with event at 6:30 p.m.)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

12:00 noon
Dara Horn, *All Other Nights: A Novel*
\$12/non-members, \$7/members

7:30 p.m.
Stern Family Lecture: Anita Diamant, *Day After Night*
\$15/non-members, \$10/members

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18

12:00 noon
Nancy Bachrach, *The Center of the Universe*
Jessica Grose, *Love, Mom: Poignant, Goofy, Brilliant Messages from Home*
Free Community Event

7:30 p.m.
Bob Morris, *Assisted Loving: True Tales of Double Dating with My Dad*
Benjamin Nugent, *American Nerd: The Story of My People*
Carol Leifer, *When You Lie About Your Age, the Terrorists Win: Reflections On Looking in the Mirror*
\$15/non-members, \$10/members

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19

10:00 & 11:00 a.m.
Matthew Bernstein, *Screening a Lynching: The Leo Frank Case on Film and Television*
Judge Aaron Cohn, *Memoirs of a First Generation American*
Free Community Event

12:00 noon
Peter Manseau, *Songs for the Butcher's Daughter: A Novel*
\$12/non-members, \$7/members

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21

7:30 p.m.
Norman Podhoretz, *Why Are Jews Liberals?*
\$15/non-members, \$10/members

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22

(all-day passes for this date are available for \$25/non-members, \$15/members)

10:00 a.m.
Ernest Adams, *From Ghetto to Ghetto: An African American Journey to Judaism*
Sally Srok Friedes, *The New Jew: An Unexpected Conversion*
\$12/non-members, \$7/members

12:00 noon
Film Screening: *The Rape of Europa* (Atlanta Jewish Film Festival Audience Award Winner)
Free Community Event

2:30 p.m.
Sara Houghteling, *Pictures at an Exhibition*
\$12/non-members, \$7/members

4:30 p.m.
Kati Marton, *Enemies of the People: A Family's Escape to America*
Neal Bascomb, *Hunting Eichmann: How a Band of Survivors and a Young Spy Agency Chased Down the World's Most Notorious Nazi*
Bryan Mark Rigg, *Lives of Hitler's Jewish Soldiers: Untold Tales of Men of Jewish Descent Who Fought for the Third Reich*
\$12/non-members, \$7/members

6:30 p.m.
Jeffrey Zaslow, *The Girls from Ames: A Story of Women and a Forty-Year Friendship*
\$15/non-members, \$10/members

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit atlantajcc.org/bookfestival, or contact Amy Schaaf at amy.schaaf@atlantajcc.org or 678-812-4005. Read the blog at mjccabookfest.wordpress.com, and follow the festival on Twitter @mjccabookfest.

TWO EXHIBITIONS NOW ON VIEW. The MJCCA is currently presenting exhibitions by two nationally acclaimed artists. "Excellent Hostess: Paintings and Works on Paper," featuring work by Lorraine Peltz, runs through December 28 at the Fine Family Art Gallery.



Lorraine Peltz, *Remembered Conversation* (photo courtesy of the artist)

Lorraine Peltz's paintings employ imagery culled from both personal history and the contemporary moment. Her most recent series of paintings include chandeliers and serve as an homage to her mother's survival of the Nazi invasion of Eastern Europe. These chandeliers evoke the remembered interiors of a lost home. Peltz's works offer metaphors of the exterior world and an interior space of dream, desire, and memory.

The Fine Family Art Gallery is open Tuesday-Thursday, 1:00-9:00 p.m., and Sunday, 1:00-6:00 p.m. Admission is free.

Judy Greenberg's "Reflection: Impressions in Watermedia" runs through January 30, 2010, at the Katz Family Mainstreet Gallery.

Greenberg, who moved to Atlanta from California three years ago, is an award-winning painter, juror, and demonstrator. She is currently a signature member of the Georgia Watercolor Society, serving as outreach director of the High School Scholarship Exhibition. Greenberg is a member of the National Association of Women Artists and master signature member of the California Watercolor Association. She is listed in *Who's Who in the 21st Century*.



Judy Greenberg, *Bathing Beauties* (photo courtesy of the artist)

Greenberg will teach a 3-day watercolor workshop for adults, November 30, December 7, and December 14, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. To register, contact Dina Shadwell at 678-812-4072 or dina.shadwell@atlantajcc.org.

The Katz Family Mainstreet Gallery is open Monday-Thursday, 5:30 a.m.-10:00 p.m., Friday, 5:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Saturday, 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., and Sunday, 8:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.

For more information, contact Emily Stemer, 678-812-3982 or emily.stemer@atlantajcc.org.

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A Jewish mother is a force of nature and nurture

Who wouldn't want to be a Jewish mother?—a fabulous cook who receives compliments like, "Props to the chef"; a teacher of Jewish traditions; and a yenta who knows everyone. Although there are negative stereotypes sometimes associated with Jewish mothers, the good qualities override them. I come from a long line of Jewish mothers and bubbies who have doted on me, cooked me mouthwatering meals, and volunteered numerous hours at my school and in the community.

"You have to clean your plate," is what is heard in a Jewish household every night. The typical Jewish mother spends hours in the kitchen, cooking from passed-down recipes to satisfy and fill the stomachs of everyone at the table. You don't dare criticize your mother's food, as not only does it taste good, but also there is a lot of love poured into the creation of it.

My favorite evenings are when I come home from school, and I can smell dinner from the street. The sweet aroma of onions, brown sugar, and beef waft through the air as I enter the door. In the wintertime, after running in from the cold, I am welcomed with hot, delicious potato latkes and brisket, and, although it may sound strange to some, my mother always tops the latkes off with a huge spoonful of applesauce. The flavorful potato latke, a crispy, fried delicacy, slides down my throat to my happy stomach. I have to learn how to make these wonderful shared recipes.



BY **Lindsey Rosenberg**

And I haven't even described the best one yet: matzoh ball soup. Whenever anybody is sick, a Jewish mother jumps to attention and whips up a batch of delicious matzoh ball soup. The salty broth and the big tasty matzoh balls heal your throat like medicine. After your first experience, you will be craving this magical food for years to come.

Not only are Jewish mothers perfect at cooking dinner, they always top it off with some kind of homemade dessert. Rugulah ends the meal with chocolatey sweet happiness. I am so full after eating an entire meal, but I always find a way to eat more than one piece of rugulah. Who wouldn't want a Jewish mother? Otherwise, you would miss out on all this appetizing food.

A yenta, a busybody, a know-it-all—these would typically be considered negative qualities, but in the Jewish world, these are loving, caring, and kind attributes. I am often bombarded with a multitude of questions, like: "Do you have a lot of homework?" "How much more do you have?" "Did you get any grades back?" To some, these questions are annoying, but to me, it shows that my mother cares and that she is

involved with the life of my sister, my brother, and me. She is very overprotective, but that makes me feel comfortable in today's world.

My Jewish mother is involved in my school, day in and day out. Whenever there is an opportunity in the community to volunteer, my mother jumps on it immediately. For example, when my 3rd-grade class needed a helper for a couple of hours here and there, my mother would be the first one my teacher called.

Being involved and doing hands-on activities with us kids helps my mother know many people. She is always setting up friends or taking a couple out to eat. Who wouldn't want a Jewish mother? You always have dates lined up.

To obtain these wonderful and heartwarming qualities, you have to marry a nice Jewish doctor—or at least a kind and gentle Jewish man.

The religious holidays come and go, but my mother prepares for them weeks in advance. She volunteers our house for celebrations with the entire family. My Jewish mother helps the family keep up with household traditions. You have to know what you are wearing the night before services, and it must be lying on the end of your bed for the morning, or my mother will pick something out for you. I would rather wear a cute dress than a long, old-fashioned skirt picked out at the last minute by my mother.

When we go to the synagogue, it seems

as if an announcement has been sent out letting everyone know the moment my mother will arrive. Once we walk through those doors, you hear, "Hey, good looking, what's cooking?" "Hey, Beth Ann, are these your kids? I haven't seen them since they were yea tall." "How's the family and your husband?" "What's on the menu tonight?" Everyone seems to know my siblings and me, although I often don't remember meeting them. I know them through my mother. At temple, I can always say, "Who doesn't that women know?"

After getting my cheeks pinched because my mother is bragging about her wonderful kids, we sit down for services. "I am bored," or "When is this over?" is never said to a Jewish mother. I am always told to slip something in my purse to keep myself occupied. Who wouldn't want a Jewish mother, someone who knows everything about you?

A wonderful cook, an involved matriarch, a teacher of religious traditions.... Who wouldn't want a Jewish mother?

Lindsey Rosenberg, a 6th-generation Atlantan, is a graduate of The Davis Academy, a junior at Centennial High School in Roswell, a member of the National Honor Society, and a member of the varsity basketball and track teams. Her parents are I.J. and Beth Ann Rosenberg.

Thought You'd Like to Know

By Jonathan Barach

A CARING COMMUNITY. The 2009 Abe Goldstein Community of Respect Dinner is November 19, 6:00 p.m., at the St. Regis Hotel, 88 West Paces Ferry Road. The Anti-Defamation League will present the Abe Goldstein Human Relations Award to Lila and Doug Hertz and the Stuart Lewengrub Torch of Liberty Award to Ada Lee & A.D. "Pete" Correll. The evening will include a special performance by Rolling Stones keyboardist Chuck Leavell. Tickets are \$300 each (\$200 for those under age 35). For more information and ticket purchase, visit <http://regions.adl.org/southeast/events/2009dinner.html>, or contact the ADL at 404-262-3470.

TEACHER'S KALLAH. On November 22, over 350 religious school teachers, lay leaders, and madrichim (student assistants) will convene at The Temple for the 5th Annual Teachers' Kallah. Sponsored by the Greater Atlanta Synagogue Education Directors' Council (EDC), this day-long program of shared learning offers sessions focusing of topics ranging from "Putting the Hebrew back into Religious School" to "Purple Hippo Art." In addition to members of the EDC, the Kallah is open to anyone in

Jewish education; there is a \$50 non-member fee. For complete information and registration materials, visit <http://atlantaedc.org/kallah/>.

GETTING IN ON THE ACT. Center Theatre at the Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta (MJCCA) is offering a variety of acting workshops for children and teens: *Improvise with Props* (ages 8-12), November 22, 1:00-3:00 p.m.; *Movement for Theatre* (ages 10-14), November 22, 3:30-5:30 p.m.; *Use your Senses!* (ages 3-5), December 6, 1:00-3:00 p.m.; *Introduction to Puppetry Techniques* (ages 8-12), December 6, 2:00-4:00 p.m.; and *Partner Scene Study* (ages 14-18), Dec 6, 3:30-5:30 p.m. All workshops are \$35 for non-members and \$25 for members, except for *Puppetry Techniques*, which is \$45 non-members, \$35/members. For information, contact Dina Shadwell, Dina.Shadwell@atlantajcc.org.

SAYING THANKS. The ORT Annual Tribute Event is December 3, 6:30 p.m., at Au Pied de Cochon at the InterContinental Buckhead. The event kicks off ORT's 130th Anniversary Celebration and will feature numerous special award recipients, including both donors and longtime ORT volun-

teers. Tickets are \$130 each, \$50 for donors under age 35. Donors contributing \$5,000+ will receive four tickets; those contributing \$2,500+ will receive two tickets. Visit www.ortatlanta.org, or call 404-327-5266 for details.

GET STUFFED. Or VeShalom's 34th Annual Hanukah Bazaar is December 6, 11:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. The day features Sephardic treats, including Old World pastries; handcrafted jewelry, pottery, art, gifts, and Judaica; a moonwalk for the kids; a raffle; and, new this year, a gold-buying booth. Congregation Or VeShalom is located at 1681 North Druid Hills Road, just minutes from Lenox Square. Free overflow parking is available across the street at Cross Keys High School. For more information, visit www.orpheshalom.org, or call 404-633-1737.

ARTISTS AT THE TOWER. The Open Studio Art Group's Annual Art Show is December 8, 7:00-9:00 p.m., at The Jewish Tower Recreation Room, 3150 Howell Mill Road, NW. All work is original and for sale; the event also includes a free raffle. Refreshments will be served. Contact Lauren Harris, 404-441-4549 or laurharris@gmail.com for additional information.

AUGUSTA ART AUCTION AND WINE TASTING. The Augusta Jewish Community Center's Art Auction and Wine

Tasting is December 12. Enter to win a Chagall painting valued at \$4,000. Admission is \$25 per person. For additional information, call 706-228-3636.

DON'T STAY HOME. December 24 can be an empty day for Jewish singles, especially those who are 40+. But this year, the National Council of Jewish Women, which years ago sponsored the Bachelor and Bachelorette Auctions, is presenting the First Annual Santa Klutz Ball, an interactive event for 40+ singles, December 24, 7:30 p.m., at Fano's Restaurant. The evening will include speed dating, dancing, a silent auction, drink specials, Persian appetizers, and much more. Admission is \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. For more information, e-mail Santaklutzbball@gmail.com.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE HOLOCAUST. From June 12-24, 2010, experience Berlin, Warsaw, Prague, Treblinka, Auschwitz-Birkenau, and many other sites where Jews were persecuted during the Holocaust. This trip is presented by the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust and the Tolerance Program of North Atlanta. The cost is \$3,999 from Atlanta and includes airfare, hotel, guides, and two meals a day. Prospective participants should contact Kim Brown,

See THOUGHT, page 18

Just give me a chance

We live longer today but grow up slower.

Just imagine what it must have been like to leave your family, friends, and familiar surroundings, travel across the ocean by yourself, and land in a country unable to speak or understand the language. And do all of this when you are sixteen years old, three years after your bar mitzvah, the same age as a tenth-grader in school.

Unique – no; amazing – yes.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the 16-year-old Bennie Shemaria's journey from his native Isle of Rhodes in the Mediterranean Sea to the United States. The family had some friends in Atlanta, so, not speaking English, he landed at Ellis Island with a tag attached with Atlanta, Georgia, written on it. That is how he came to Georgia.

Bennie, like many other Americans then and now, left the known to seek a better life and opportunity. After spending his first night in Atlanta in a stable, Bennie set out to find work. He had apprenticed in his native country with a shoemaker, so he had a trade. All he needed was a place to ply this training.

He came upon a shoemaker's shop and went in seeking employment. With gestures, he indicated to the proprietor why he was there, but the owner indicated that there were no openings. He left, but the story is that he came back four times with the same goal, and on the fourth time he found a vacant bench, sat down, and began sewing. When the owner realized what Bennie had done and saw the work that he had produced, Bennie had a job. Without the ability to speak in English, he took the initiative to show what he could do as a way of asking that he be given a chance.

Four years later, Bennie opened his own shop at 175 Marietta Street. This site was so small that there was room inside only for the sewing machines. Customers had to sit on chairs on the sidewalk while the work was being done. In 1916, the shop was moved to 32 Broad Street, where it



BY Marvin Botnick

remained until the late 1950s when the building was demolished for the construction of the Commerce Building.

Bennie found the opportunity he was looking for, and he stepped up to take advantage of it. He and his family are better off for his adventuresome spirit, and America is better off for having attracted hard-working, honest, and responsible individuals into our citizenship. The picture of Bennie in his shop in 1938 could be a poster for what made the United States great.

Now, 100 years later, Bennie's children and grandchildren carry on the tradition. He taught his sons, Jack, Hymie, and Louie, how to repair shoes, but that is not all. He taught them to work hard, to respect their employees, to value their customers as friends, and to be honorable and responsible citizens. They, in turn, have passed on to Mark and Brian, Bennie's grandchildren who are now running the business, these same attributes.

Unique – no; amazing – yes. From the closet of a shop on Marietta Street, the business has grown into a multi-location operation. The repair operation continues, but they have added an extensive shoe-retailing business. In addition to a wide selection of new shoes, you get the added element of as much conversation as you want, smiles galore, and the knowledge that the old-country dedication to quality and service has not been compromised. You can actually talk to someone who knows about the product, and you can do it without having to push a bunch of numbers on a telephone system or search a web site. And you can do all this while making your purchase at a discount.

No fancy name or slick advertising campaign – just good old Bennie's.



▲ Bennie's shop sign (left) at 32 Broad Street, 1926

► Bennie and his employee, Mr. Singer, in his shop at 32 Broad Street, 1938



◀ Bennie's sons, Hymie and Louie, (front) with the third generation of Shemarias in the business, Mark and Brian (back)

Thank you, everyone

The July 4 *Parade* magazine cover story—"What Makes America Great"—quoted such notables as Arnold Schwarzenegger, Colin Powell, Rachael Ray, and Derek Jeter.

If they had asked me, an ordinary, non-famous person, I might have given my two cents' worth....

I'd have thanked our local police and fire crews, who lay down their lives every day to keep us out of harm's way.

I'd have prayed for the safety of our troops, especially those now in Iraq and



BY Balfoura Friend Levine

Afghanistan.

And call me silly—I'm happy to pay taxes to my local and federal governments. In turn, they govern schools and universities for our children, run our health departments and clinics,

oversee our hospitals, and keep an eagle eye over medical supplies and drugs, providing safety for all of us.

I left my land of birth, China, at the age of 22, to come to America. In China, I don't recall ever having taxes deducted from my paycheck while working in the private sector or later with the 14th Air Force's Flying Tigers. Nor was there a sales tax anywhere. Conversely, there was no welfare for the poor. Many were the dead Chinese babies left on the streets or the homeless people who froze to death overnight during the severe winters.

Even today, I send the Salvation Army a Christmas check, remembering their kindness in serving hot rice soup

to the starving Chinese people, with their red trucks rolling all night, just stopping to serve that hot soup to those in need. God bless their good works everywhere in the world, including Atlanta.

Now that I'm retired after years of working in the U.S.A., I thank you, Uncle Sam, for my monthly Social Security check and Medicare. Yes, I know that for years I paid into these funds, but I'm grateful for the checks anyhow. I will celebrate Thanksgiving for all my blessings, not only on July 4 or on turkey day but every day. I live in the land of plenty, good family, good friends, a good home, and good food.

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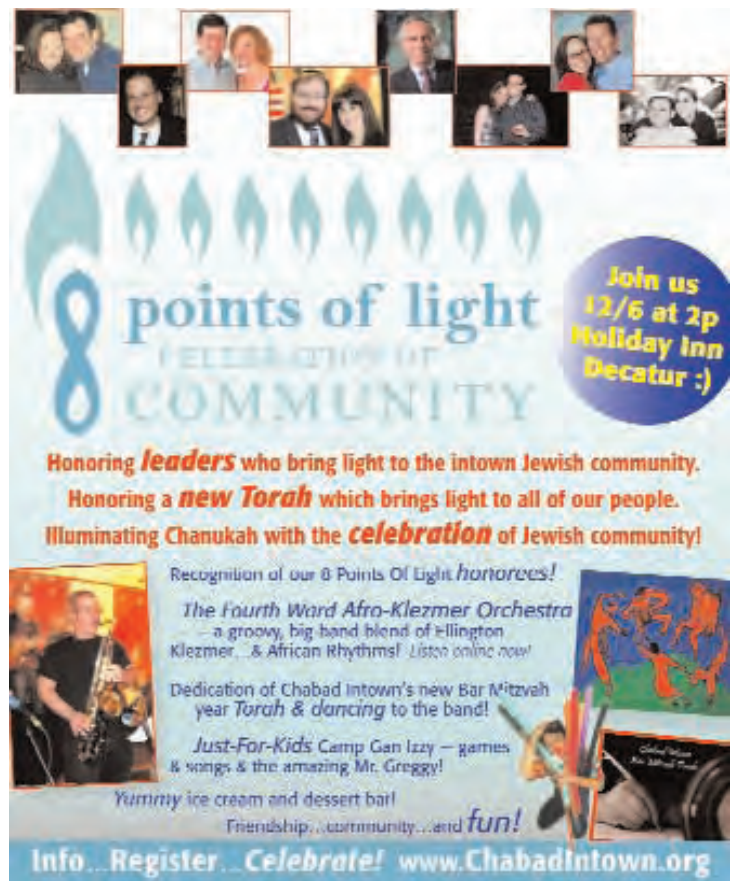
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The Sunday night dances at the Jewish Educational Alliance were fundraising events sponsored by the various clubs. At the end of one Yom Kippur, when the fast had been broken and one could again enjoy oneself, the lack of an interesting place to go led our club—the Herzlites—to sponsor a dance on the night of Yom Kippur Day.

The desire to go out and do something after the day of fasting and shul attendance was so great that the dance was an overwhelming success, and it became our custom to sponsor such an event every year. Consequently, shul on Yom Kippur was rife with exits to the lobby or porch, where dates were made, discussed, dissected, and fantasized.

We caught a lot of flak, however, from adults, who objected to our ads and posters that were headed “Yom Kippur Dance.” Although one could explain and explain that it took place after Yom Kippur, it was still deemed not proper to juxtapose the words Yom Kippur and dance. One year, we called it the “After the Fast Dance,” but that didn’t have the same oomph, so, despite adult objections (including those of the rabbi), we went back to “Yom Kippur Dance.”

Where the dances themselves were concerned, a male could go stag, but most people came in couples—and girls who had no date stayed home, since girls could not go stag (or doe?). Males came alone for various reasons: some didn’t want to be responsible for a date; others didn’t have a car or couldn’t find a double date with a car; some didn’t want the expense of a couple’s ticket and the mandatory camellia corsage—but there were also stags who couldn’t get a girl to go with them. While the latter tried to give the impression of being the former, it never worked the other way around.

Looking back on it, these dances involved a good deal of cruelty for the girls, but much choice and liberty for the boys. A boy danced with his date until someone—usually a stag—cut. (Incidentally, we didn’t call it “cutting in”—it was simply “cutting.”) This gave the lucky boy a chance to cut on someone else whom he admired—or whose admira-

tion he desired—until someone else again cut on him. Boys cut with abandon, sometimes hanging around a popular girl or a particularly good dancer, cutting one after the other. There consequently grew up the convention that the last person to cut should be able to take at least three dance steps before being cut on again. The males were thus able to make a selection, enjoy the good dancers, and flirt with whom they chose, while the girl was at the mercy of whoever cut on her—she had no choice.

However, the boy was under an obligation to make sure that his date didn’t get stuck with the same boy for an inordinately long time. Either he suggested, cajoled, or coerced someone to cut on his date, or he did it himself. The nightmare of every girl was that she would spend the entire evening dancing only with her date or, perhaps even more terrible, that she would be stuck for dance after dance with the pimply-faced, sweaty-palmed, bad-breathed isolate, while her date didn’t notice, didn’t care, or couldn’t get away from his dancing partner.

An even worse nightmare involved the girl taking the risk of excusing herself from the stuck role by feigning fatigue and sitting down for a moment on the sidelines. After a decent interval, her partner could excuse himself and go back to the dance floor, while she might sit for the rest of the evening, pretending to be so absorbed in the music that she didn’t notice where she was. A long visit to the restroom was another way to get out of the stuck role—but to come out of the restroom and find no one waiting was just another version of the same nightmare.

The very popular girls, however, had the reverse situation—they were cut on every few moments. The number of times they were cut on was a measure of their popularity.

A personal memoir, part 3: rules of the dance

By David Macarov

These rules were broken only once a year. Long before Sadie Hawkins was even a gleam in Al Capp’s eye (and maybe before he was born), one of the girls’ Young Judean clubs would give a Leap Year’s Dance, when girls invited and cut on boys. Some boys would refuse to go to this dance unless they were absolutely sure of their girlfriends’ regard for them. Others went and, depending upon how the night worked out, were pleased or miserable.

Ordinarily, however, the boys were free creatures, except for having to show a gentlemanly regard for their dates. Consequently, because of the rigidly adhered-to customs, boys might seek coalitions or make agreements — “I’ll dance with your date if you’ll dance with mine, or “Cut on my date, and, if nobody cuts on you, I will.” Although cartoonists and even the movies had fun with it, I’ve never actually seen anyone dancing while holding out money behind his partner’s back for anyone who will cut on him.

One of our friends was an oddity—he made it a practice to dance at least once with every girl present. To the unpopular girls, he was Sir Galahad; to our parents, he was a gentleman; to us, he was a masochist.

We actually respected him for his ideals and his courage but had no desire to emulate him.

During every evening, there were certain dances announced by the orchestra leader as “no-breaks.” This meant there would be no cutting. Boys often tried to line up partners in advance for these dances. (“Save me the first no-break,” or “Can I have the third no-break?”) A measure of a girl’s popularity was the number of times she was able to reply: “I’m sorry. All my no-breaks are taken.” (This involved a certain amount of gambling—if a girl didn’t like a prospective partner, she might refuse him in hopes that someone more presentable would ask; if no one did, she would have to visibly sit the dance out. Or she could accept and be seen as someone who wasn’t asked by someone more popular.)

The last no-break before the interval and the last no-break of the evening were always saved for one’s date. The first was almost invariably “Deep Purple,” while the last no-break—the end of the dance, the end of the evening, the remembrances, the nostalgia, the sweet pain, the hopes—was always “Stardust.” “Sometimes I wonder why I spend those lonely nights....” To this day, I get misty-eyed when I hear that tune. At conventions and conclaves, however, the final song was always, “For All We Know (We May Never Meet Again).” What tears, what sadness, and, in many cases, what truth.

New beginnings

The High Holidays have come and gone, and, hopefully, we are all inscribed for a good and healthy year. Now, December 31 is, shall I say, around the corner...the time when lots of people make New Year’s resolutions and drink lots of wine.

All this is to say it seems a good time for new beginnings. And I have started just that since I retired on October 1. I have been very busy. That is good, because I don’t have too much time to think of all the people I am missing—people I saw every day. I am happy with retirement. I loved my business, and I worked for many, many years. Now, I feel



BY **Marice Katz**

a certain amount of freedom and am at peace with this major change in my life.

In my last article, I mentioned I would be cozy and warm under my comforter and awakening late in the morning. However, guess what? You don’t need to be jealous any more. My internal alarm clock is still going off at 6:30 a.m.

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Manuela Bornstein, survivor from France

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A guided tour of the Holocaust Gallery will follow each talk.

Program made possible through the generosity of Eternal-Life Hemlock, organization of Holocaust survivors, their descendants and those dedicated to commemorating the Six Million victims of the Nazi Holocaust.

Free to Breman members and free with museum admission:
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RSVP a must by December 10! **\$3 per child for Breman members at the Family Level or above. \$5 per child for non-members.**

To RSVP or for more information on all events, contact Phyllis at plazarus@thebremen.org or 404-670-7604 or visit www.thebremen.org.

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Center Theatre presents the Broadway classic *The Music Man*

Center Theatre at the MJCCA will present a community production of *The Music Man*, directed by Dina Shadwell, December 10-20. Based on a story by Meredith Willson and Franklin Lacey, the stage production of *The Music Man* will be brought to life at the Morris & Rae Frank Theatre, located at the MJCCA, 5342 Tilly Mill Road, Dunwoody.

The Music Man tells the story of con man Harold Hill, who poses as a boys' band organizer and leader, sells band instruments and uniforms to naive townsfolk, and then skips town with the cash. But in River City, Iowa, things go awry when he falls for Marian, a librarian he tries to divert from exposing him while he inadvertently enriches

the town with a love of music.

The show's one-of-a-kind nostalgic score includes rousing marches ("Seventy-Six Trombones"), barber-shop quartets ("Lida Rose"), and sentimental ballads ("Till There Was You"), which became popular standards.

Performances are 7:30 p.m., on December 10, 12, 16, 17, and 19, with Sunday matinees at 2:30 p.m., on December 13 and 20.

Tickets (reserved seating) are \$12-20, with discounts for MJCCA members, seniors, students, and children under 12. To purchase tickets, call Center Theatre's Box Office at 678-812-4002, or visit www.CenterTheatreAtlanta.org.



Davis Academy expands Kindergarten prep program



Davis Academy's Mechina (Kindergarten Prep) students do paper cutouts during art class.

In response to community interest, The Alfred & Adele Davis Academy is expanding Mechina, its unique kindergarten prep program. The school is now accepting applications for the 2010-2011 school year from both Davis Academy and community families who have children who will turn 5 by December 31.

"This outstanding full-day academic program incorporates an accelerated and enriched curriculum," said Davis Head of School Sid Kirschner. "The program differs from most preschools, in that it is designed to allow those students who are ready to move forward from their preschool experience into a full-day academic program in a full elementary school setting."

Mechina offers a stimulating curriculum that engages children across the intellectual, emotional, physical, and social levels of development. With a curriculum that includes language, math, science, social studies and Hebrew, music, art, and physical education, it builds and reinforces the foundation skills and concepts that will allow the child to transition readily to The Davis Academy or any kindergarten setting. Mechina students receive a long-term advantage at an early age, laying the foundation for future academic success.

Parents can begin the application process by contacting Carolyn Berk, director of admission, at cberk@davisacademy.org or 678-527-3300.

A Jewish American in Rome

SEPTEMBER 19—I just returned home from my second Rosh Hashanah service in Rome, and I have had the most unreligious yet connected New Year yet.

The synagogue was unassuming, tucked away down a back street between a government building and a hotel about a mile from the heart of the Jewish Ghetto. The only sign that this building holds anything special is the Star of David above the door and the Carabinieri (military police) across the street. Then you step inside. The most beautiful sanctuary I have ever seen sat behind three sets of glass doors to my left with a marble staircase directly in front of me. To fully describe the sanctuary would take a year, but picture a beautiful room with six large, stained-glass windows and art covering every portico and niche. The walls are of beautiful carved stone bordered by gold leaf and marble. It is beautiful. The congregation is Orthodox, so women head upstairs to a balcony, overlooking the men in their tallit.

The synagogue is not just a sanctuary. However, it houses three different denominations of Judaism simultaneously under



BY Stacy Perlis

one roof.

On the top floor are the Sephardic services, which I attended on Friday night. Women are separated from the men by a half wall. The prayers were the fastest I have ever heard; it was impossible to keep up. So, this morning, we went to the basement for the Ashkenazi service. I sat through about an hour of this. The melodies were more familiar, but because it is simply a basement room, the women are separated from the men by a sheet. I could not see a thing, and I didn't have a book, so I headed to the balcony of the main sanctuary.

The main sanctuary houses the Roman services. Roman services, you say? Yes, Roman Judaism is the oldest religion in Rome (behind Paganism, which no longer exists) dating back to 400 BCE, before the

Sephardic-Ashkenazi split, thus; it has its own unique traditions and rituals.

I seated myself upstairs at about 10:00 a.m. There were only two other women, one of whom was a friend of mine from school. The rabbi and hasans were praying quickly in Hebrew as we watched from above. All of the men followed the service meticulously, davening and reciting perfect Hebrew. The service moved without stopping as I sat and listened to the murmurs below.

It was in these moments upstairs that my wheels began turning. I was sitting in a synagogue over 100 years old, listening to a type of service that does not exist anywhere else in the world. I could not follow the service at all. I had no book; I could not follow their tunes or understand the dialect. I even said the bracha and shema to myself, by myself, because I did not know when they had or would occur. Yet, sitting in this service, which was beyond lost in translation, I had never felt as connected to my Judaism—strictly because I was there. Maybe it was the beautiful sanctuary or the Hebrew words inscribed above the ark or simply the odd headdress that the rabbi wore, but I was thousands of miles away from home and still able to be a Jew.

By this time, women were filling the balcony, and the noise level upstairs contin-

ued to rise exponentially. These Italian women entered wearing everything from the hottest fashions to jeans and sneakers. They greeted each other with laughter and kisses, all while the Torah was being beautifully read below. A chorus of "shhhh!" came from below, but the women continued to gossip and chatter, as if they were sitting around the corner drinking cappuccino, and the rabbi chanted on. Children were running up and down the stairs, a young boy was seated on the bima with a Torah in his lap as a congregant stood up to chant Haftarah, and an old man walked around shaking everyone's hands. It was in that moment that I understood Judaism.

For our entire lives, we have been told that Judaism is unlike any other religion, because you can walk into any synagogue in the world and follow the service. In theory, this is true, but today I realized that this connection of Judaism goes far beyond the simple prayers and the common language—it is in our community. What makes us special is not that the religion is uniform, because it is not—but because no matter where you are in the world, you can walk in.

Shana Tova—may you have a happy and peaceful New Year!

JF&CS NEWS

GIVE THE GIFT OF A SMILE. The Ben Massell Dental Clinic (BMDC) has inaugurated its Pay A Smile Forward (PASF) campaign to raise funds for this one-of-a-kind clinic, whose volunteer dentists provide comprehensive dental care for more than 9,000 indigent individuals each year in Metro Atlanta.

Pay A Smile Forward is incredibly simple. Dental professionals place the PASF display or collection box in their offices and, at checkout time, ask their patients if they would like to donate \$1 to the BMDC. There also are PASF buttons for staff members to wear and stickers to hand out.

"So many low-income people in the metro area don't have enough money for necessities, much less dental work," said Susan Feingold, who recently joined the century-old BMDC as the Pay A Smile Forward program manager. Before coming to the clinic, she spent more than ten years working and volunteering in the nonprofit sector, including five years running the Southern Hope Humane Society.

An Atlanta native, Susan grew up hearing about the BMDC, but is now able to see its profound effects firsthand. "Without the Ben Massell clinic, thousands of people in Atlanta would have to do without dental care. This clinic changes people's lives."

For more information or to sign up for the program, call Susan at 404-667-7603, or e-mail payasmileforward@gmail.com.

IN THE JOB MARKET? Jewish Family & Career Services (JF&CS) is a "one-stop

shop" for job seekers. The agency's Career Services—Tools for Employment division offers a host of services to those looking for jobs, starting with the employment series workshops. Job seekers may also meet individually with one of three highly experienced career counselors—Charlotte Hayes, Deena Goldberg Takata, and Carol Kem—to discuss pre-employment strategies, including professional assessments. Finally, Robyn Cohen, the recently hired job development manager, can connect seekers to employment opportunities.

How well does it work? Ask Dan Knapp. The Dunwoody resident's job in development for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra was eliminated in mid-August. A week later, he met with Robyn and walked out with several interviews scheduled, including one the next day with Ahavath Achim Synagogue. Not too long after that, he started his job as AA's head of development.

"It was just that fast," he said. "I can say without hesitation that Robyn was absolutely amazing and constantly checked in on me. She went above and beyond the call of duty. There's no way this would have happened so quickly without her."

Dan is just one of the many success stories. Working together to connect skilled job seekers to employers in the Atlanta metro area, the career counselors and job-development manager have helped more than 100 job seekers with employment opportunities just since April (three-quarters of those since July 1). At the same time,

a team of professional executive volunteers, experienced in human resources and consulting firms, have come on board to assist with a demand for services that has doubled due to the economy. This team facilitates the Resume Development, Interviewing Skills, and Job Search Skills Workshops that are held monthly at the agency. From July through September, 400 job seekers attended workshops, and 270 clients have received one-on-one counseling.

Job-seekers can contact Judy Ledger at 770-677-9358 to register for the career workshops or schedule an appointment. Employers can contact Robyn Cohen at 770-677-9306 to list job openings.



The careers team at JF&CS: (from left) Charlotte Hayes, Sharon Almon, Deena Goldberg Takata, Robyn Cohen, and Africa Roberson. (Not pictured: Carol Kem)

NEW STAFF. Connie White has joined JF&CS as director of Aviv Older Adult Services—Tools for Aging. Prior to coming to JF&CS, Connie was chief operating officer at BrownRichards & Associates, where she focused on elder care and other work-life issues. Before that, she spent nine years as director of In-Home Services at Senior Connection, a DeKalb County-based nonprofit that provides home and community-

based services such as meals on wheels, home repair, and senior centers. She has served on the board of Aging Services of Georgia and has worked closely with the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Department of Human Resources as well as with JF&CS professionals in various collaborations. A mother of two girls, 16 and 20, she moved to Atlanta in 1968 and grew up in the house in which her mother still lives in the Toco Hill NORC (Naturally Occurring Retirement Community).

Karen Harvell has assumed the operational program management aspect of the Georgia NORC Initiative from the Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta (JFGA) in August. This new position, funded through the state of Georgia and JFGA, provides program oversight for the six NORCs across the state. Karen, a Washington, D.C., native, has more than 16 years' experience working with older adults in a career that has given her the chance to travel to Asia, South America, and Europe, as well as throughout the United States. She moved here from San Diego two years ago to be near three of her five grandchildren.



Karen Harvell (left), NORC Program coordinator, and Connie White, director of Aviv Older Adult Services—Tools for Aging

BUSINESS BITS

By Marsha Liebowitz

DEAN OF CONSULAR CORPS. Ambassador Reda Mansour, consul general of Israel to the Southeast, has assumed the deanship of the Consular Corps in Atlanta, which currently consists of 23 consuls general and 38 hon-

orary consuls. Appointed to his current post in August 2006, Mansour previously served as ambassador of Israel to Ecuador, deputy ambassador at the Israeli Embassy in Portugal, and deputy consul general of Israel to the Pacific Northwest. He holds a masters degree from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and is a Ph.D.

www.ajff.org or call 404-806-9913.

SAVE THE DATE. Jewish Unity Live 2010 will honor Jeff Goldstein, March 14, 2010, at the Woodruff Arts Center. For more information, contact Atlanta Scholars Kollel, 404-321-4085 or ask@atlantakollel.org, or visit www.atlantakollel.org.

FOR INTERFAITH FAMILIES. Pathways: The Interfaith Family Network of Greater Atlanta offers free parenting classes for mothers and couples interested in learning the "how-tos" of raising a child in Judaism. Classes are Friday and Sunday mornings at the MJCCA Zaban Park. Onsite childcare is available. For further information and to register, contact Rachelle Schaffer at rachelle.schaffer@atlantajcc.org or 678-812-4161.

candidate in Haifa University's Middle Eastern History Department, with his research focusing on Syria.

THE BUSINESS OF WATER. Showcasing some of the world's most innovative water technologies, the American-Israel Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Region (AICC), held the Southeast-Israel Water Technology Business Exchange on October 15, at the offices of Arnall Golden Gregory. Israel has always treated water efficiency as a national priority, and one of the country's largest areas of expertise is in the field of water. AICC organized this event in partnership with the Center for Water Technologies, Israel NEWTech, Israel Economic Office to the Southern U.S., the Consulate General of Israel to the Southeast, and Green Chamber of the South.

CHANGES AT PARADIES. Jill Paradies is the new vice president of training and customer service for The Paradies Shops. With the company since 1993, she now manages customer service and training/development and will develop a new recognition program. She earned her bachelor's degree from Emory University and a masters of social work from University of Georgia. Kevin Smith is the new vice president of finance. Prior to joining the company in 2008, Smith spent 20+ years at The Home Depot in different roles, including financial reporting, financial operations, and procurement. He holds a BBA in accounting from Kennesaw State University.

BIG PLANS. Joel Marcovitch is the new director of Hillel at University of

Georgia. He is the former assistant director of Hillel at the University of Michigan. Marcovitch plans to host a variety of Jewish events for different interest groups. For example, he has just created the Jewish Greek Council, which will facilitate Jewish fraternity and sorority members coming together to celebrate a unique Shabbat experience and plan philanthropic events. In addition, students will go on more free trips to Israel through Birthright Israel and participate in more Alternative Spring Break tzedakah projects worldwide.

TDSA TEACHERS. Torah Day School of Atlanta has welcomed new and returning teachers to the school. Ms. Ashley Goodman, physical education and after-school athletics instructor, graduated from Georgia State University with a degree in health/PE for pre-K through 12th grades. Mrs. Linda Bellinger, a former TDSA 1st-grade teacher, has returned to Atlanta after several years in Arizona and will contribute her expertise to Mrs. Alterman's 5th-grade boys' class. Mrs. Vita Resenson tutors children in the ESOL program and assists in the library; she earned early childhood education master's degrees in Russia and Israel.

ON THE MOVE. After nine years, the American-Israel Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Region, has moved from its Lake Hearn Drive location to The Pointe office complex in the North Perimeter area of Atlanta. The new address is 400 Northridge Road, Suite 250, Atlanta GA 30350. The telephone (404-843-9426) and fax (404-843-1416) numbers remain the same.

Thought

From page 9

kbrown@westga.edu. Deposits are due December 18.

10 YEARS OF GREAT FILMS. The 10th Annual Atlanta Jewish Film Festival (AJFF) is January 13-24, 2010. Screenings are at Regal Cinemas Atlantic Station Stadium 16, Lefont Sandy Springs Theater, and Regal Cinemas Medlock Crossing Stadium 18. The AJFF will announce the 2010 lineup and begin ticket sales on December 8, 2009. Tickets are \$10 for general admission and \$9 for seniors (65 and older) and students with a valid ID. Matinees (Monday-Thursday, 4:00 p.m.) are \$8. For more information, visit

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In memoriam: Nancy Mossler Taffel

Twenty-one years ago, we started *The Jewish Georgian* with the intent of contributing to the vibrant, growing Jewish community of Georgia by providing a source of news and information about the people and events, present and past, and how they have affected and continue to affect our lives. In our pursuit of this goal, it has been through the efforts and personal touch of our writers that we have been so well received and are now the most widely circulated Jewish publication in Georgia.

One of those contributors was Nancy Mossler Taffel, whose death on October 16, 2009, brought to an end the life of a multi-talented person whose interests spanned many areas. Nancy moved to Atlanta in

1958 when she married native Atlantan Jack Taffel, and here they raised their three children. It was rare to attend an Atlanta Jewish community function and not see the ubiquitous Nancy, most often with her camera. She was a person of many interests, but she was particularly dedicated to the musical arts, theater, and her participation in the Needlepoint Guild.

Nancy blended her many interests with her degree in journalism from Northwestern University to write numerous articles for *The Jewish Georgian*. Her contributions to the content of the paper helped create our publication, and for this we are grateful.

We join many others in expressing our sympathy to her family, and to her memory, we say "Thank you."



Nancy Mossler Taffel

MISHMASH

By Erin O'Shinsky

AMIT UNIVERSITY. The Amit Program recently started Amit University, an ongoing program offering a range of stimulating courses geared to educators working in diverse classrooms. The program is open to the entire community. Participants will receive one professional learning unit (PLU) for each three-part course. Classes will be offered in the Amit office. Amit is also available to design learning opportunities specific to individual schools. For more information, visit amitatlanta.org.

REPURPOSING THE "VINE THAT ATE THE SOUTH." In a green Tikkun Olam project, Jewish community members and other volunteers are helping their Bhutanese neighbors reclaim their lives and dignity after being exiled from Bhutan, their homeland, and living up to 18 years in Nepalese refugee camps. To survive beyond initial subsistence required an out-of-the-box solution. Thanks to local scourge kudzu and their own diligence, Bhutanese artisans are harvesting and weaving the vines into one-of-a-kind baskets, wreaths, and custom products. For orders and inquiries, email BhutanBaskets@gmail.com. For information on Atlanta's Bhutanese refugees, visit Bhutan > Atlanta at <http://bhutan-atlanta.blogspot.com/>.



Bhutanese artisans and Jewish community volunteers

WHIRLWIND TOUR. The Consulate General of Israel to the Southeast welcomed Lt. General Moshe Ya'alon, vice prime minister of Israel and minister of strategic affairs, who visited Atlanta and Nashville in late October to meet with political, religious, community, and law enforcement leaders. In Atlanta, he briefed some major supporters of AIPAC; visited Georgia Tech for meetings with university President Dr. Bud Peterson; Dr. Kenneth

Knoespel, dean of the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts; and Dr. Brian Woodall, director of graduate programs at the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs; and met with Attorney General Thurbert Baker.



Ambassador Reda Mansour, consul general of Israel to the Southeast and Dean of the Atlanta Consular Corps, and Minister Moshe Ya'alon

WITH DEEPEST APPRECIATION. Greater Atlanta Hadassah honored Colleen Weston and Hazel Karp for their years of service to the organization. Southeastern Region Major Gifts Chair Rita Loventhal presented each with a framed rock from the construction site of the Sarah Wetsman Davidson Tower at the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem. The Tower will be a 14-story structure with 500 beds, 20 operating rooms, a 50-bed ICU, and the ultra-modern Heart Institute. It will also house expanded centers of excellence in invasive angiography, immune-mediated disorders, minimally invasive surgery and computer-assisted surgery, cell therapy, and molecular medicine.



Colleen Weston, Rita Loventhal, and Hazel Karp



At a recent Greater Atlanta Hadassah function, Ruth Siegel (from left), Anita Levy, Elva Rosner, and Diane Bessen Weiner were among those who received certificates of appreciation for 10 or more years of giving to the annual National Hadassah's Keepers of the Gate campaign. In the background is Greater Atlanta Hadassah President Toby J. Parker.

THE WRITE STUFF. The 7th Annual Jewish Heritage Contest provides creative writing opportunities and promotes a strong Jewish identity among students in 6th-8th grade. Categories (creative writing, true story, poetry, and research) were chosen to encourage inquiry into Jewish experience, history, and culture. Entries will be judged on innovative research, originality of thought, and quality of writing. Submissions must be original compositions of 500-1,000 words. Prizes will be awarded for 1st (\$100), 2nd (\$50), and 3rd (\$25) place, and there is a winner's teacher award of \$50. The deadline is April 9. Details are available at www.JewishHeritageContest.com.



On September 30, the Mt. Scopus Group of Greater Atlanta Hadassah held its first meeting of the year at Congregation Or VeShalom. The speaker was Deputy Consul General Sharon Kabalo, who was appointed to the Atlanta-based Consulate General of Israel to the Southeast in August 2008. Ms. Kabalo spoke about current events in Israel. Pictured: (from left) Andi Frolich, vice president of programming;

Marilyn Perling, co-president; Sharon Kabalo; and Edie Barr, co-president.

GIVING BACK. Following the success of Gesher L'Torah's effort in the nationwide Project Isaiah food drive, the congregation decided to extend the project. On October 6, religious school students, teachers, parents, and the rabbi joined other volunteers at the Atlanta Community Food Bank's Product Rescue Center. They delivered food collected during Project Isaiah and helped sort, inspect, and package food items for distribution to nonprofit partner agencies throughout North Georgia. This is the second trip Gesher L'Torah volunteers have made to the food bank; at least two more trips are planned this year.

LEO FRANK FILM. Ben Loeterman's *The People vs. Leo Frank* reexamines one of the most complex and compelling criminal cases in American history: the 1913 murder of 13-year-old Mary Phagan and the trial and lynching of Leo Frank, the Jewish factory supervisor from "up North" accused of her murder. The film was shot in Atlanta and features such prominent Atlantans as Alfred Uhry, former Governor Roy Barnes, *Marietta Daily World* editor Bill Kinney, Melissa Fay Greene, and more. *The People vs. Leo Frank* aired nationally on PBS, on November 2. For more information, visit http://pressroom.pbs.org/programs/the_people_v_leo_frank.



Rabbi Analia Bortz of Congregation Or Hadash (right) was one of several clergy who offered blessings at the interfaith dedication of the Hospice Atlanta Center's new garden on October 29. She is joined here by (left to right) Rev. Joel M. Konzen, S.M., principal, Marist School, who represented the Catholic faith; Daphne Clement, D.Min., BCC, chaplain, Hospice Atlanta; and Tayyibah Taylor, who represented Islam.

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Annual Bazaar is the highlight of a busy season for Congregation Or VeShalom

Fall at Congregation Or VeShalom is a busy time. The ladies of OVS Sisterhood (a.k.a. "the Real Housewives of the OVS") are baking their traditional Sephardic delicacies for the Annual Bazaar, to be held Sunday, December 6, 11:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. This event offers a myriad of quality hand-crafted jewelry, pottery, art, gifts, and Judaica, as well as a raffle. Children can enjoy the giant outdoor moonwalk, face painting, games, and arts and crafts. This year, unwanted jewelry can be exchanged for cash at the gold buying booth.



The women who make the OVS Bazaar happen: (seated on left) Sharon Sonenshine and Lynn Simon; (standing, from left) Emily Amato, Itta Zaslavskaya, Vicki Cadranell, and Corrine Rousso; (seated on right) Rachel Capelouto and Clare Habib

The OVS Bazaar is known throughout the city as the place to find mouth-watering, packaged-to-go, Old World pastries that cannot be purchased anywhere else in town, at any time. This uniquely Sephardic food includes borekas (pastries filled with potato, rice, spinach, or eggplant); and sweets such as baklava, burmelos (fried dough dipped in honey syrup), biscochos (cinnamon sugar cookies), and much more. Come for lunch and stay for dinner. The Annual Bazaar is a fun-filled day for all ages.

Most every Tuesday, 30 to 40 women come together to bake for the bazaar. Each woman sits at her regular table, rolling dough, filling pastries, basting with eggs, or sprinkling sesame seeds. Afterwards, everyone enjoys a delicious Sephardic



Shelley Cooper (from left), Clare Habib, Rica Pieniek, Grace Benator, and Sue Wolfe

lunch.

Tickets for the Annual Bazaar are only \$2.50. Congregation Or VeShalom is located at 1681 North Druid Hills Road, just minutes from Lenox Square. Free parking is available at the synagogue and across the street at Cross Keys High School.

In addition to the Annual Bazaar, November and December are packed with exciting opportunities. A unique Chinese

Shabbat ethnic dinner is scheduled for Friday, November 20, following evening services. December 15 is the Children's Hanukkah Celebration. Saturday evening, December 19, is Comedy Night. These programs are open to the community. For more information, contact Mitchell Gersten, director of Member Programs, at 404-633-1737.

The Chanukah cabbie

By Susan Robinson

Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise is kosher.

It had been cold and wet for days. The stone-covered streets were slippery with rain, and the sky was a dreary gray. With no boots and only a lightweight fall jacket, I was not prepared for my first winter experience in Jerusalem.

We had been advised that December weather in Jerusalem is similar to December in Atlanta, so my clothing choices for the trip seemed logical, and yet it just wasn't working for me. No matter. This vacation, over our school's Chanukah break, was not for touring—we were here to meet our newest granddaughter for the first time and to become better acquainted with her big sister, who was turning two in a week or so.

In the evening, as we lit Chanukah candles, the two-year-old exuberantly shouted out "Chanukah!" Later that night, we put her in the stroller and walked around the neighborhood. A yeshiva just around the corner had set up metal shelving on their balcony. There were several dozen chanukiot, Chanukah menorahs, placed inside rectangular glass prism boxes, resting on the metal shelves. Our granddaughter pointed, giggled, and called out "Chanukah!" again and again, as she spied yet another chanukiah.

The following evening, we visited the Kotel. At the plaza, some students broke out into a spontaneous dance, and my husband joined in, although he wasn't familiar with any of the young men. A huge menorah, constructed of cans filled with flaming oil, burned in the distance. Walking towards the bus stop, we bumped into several Atlantans, some who had made aliyah, others who were studying in the various yeshivas and seminaries, and still others who were simply vacationing.

We had intended to visit the Jerusalem Zoo in the morning, but the rain was still falling steadily. So, we headed out to the Jerusalem Mall instead, where there's a small indoor petting zoo. Who would have thought that a mall would have live animals? The children loved the rabbits and the parrots. The adults loved eating in the food court, where even the

Finally, it was time to head back to the apartment. We hailed a taxi and piled in, all six of us. The cab driver was a "typical" Israeli: bareheaded and clean-shaven. We were making some casual conversation about the weather, when the driver abruptly changed the topic. I listened carefully, translating many of the words in my head, following the conversation.

Suddenly, I realized what this turn in the conversation was about—the story of Yosef, which is always read and studied this time of year as part of the weekly parsha. This cab driver was delivering a D'var Torah worthy of any serious student of Torah. After drawing to a close, he told a silly joke, again in Hebrew. This one was an old standard: Moshe Rabbeinu, when receiving the Torah tablets on Har Sinai, asks HaShem how much they cost. "They're free," says HaShem. "Okay," says Moshe, "I'll take two!" (Bada-bing, bada-boom!) We laughed, despite the corniness of the joke, because the predictable punchline allowed us to easily follow along in Hebrew. We knew exactly what to expect.

And yet, what I hadn't expected was a D'var Torah from a taxi driver—and a driver without a kippa, no less. But this is Israel, where simply living on the land has a special kedusha, holiness. Of course, a taxi driver would know Torah, and I should expect it.

And so, a lot was accomplished on that trip. Yes, we played with the grandchildren and their equally delightful parents, as expected. Yes, we met up with old friends and enjoyed their company, as expected. Of course, we celebrated Chanukah and visited some very special Jerusalem sites, as expected. And finally, a Jerusalem taxicab driver reminded us of an important life lesson: sometimes, we just need to put aside assumptions and expect the unexpected.

To everyone in Atlanta, Jerusalem, and all points in between—have a Happy Chanukah!

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My wife was on a tear

Fall is not the usual time of year for cleaning out an attic full of files and an accumulation of 46 years of memorabilia, but, at our house, it was like spring cleaning and Passover all rolled into one. My wife, Frieda, said that we were not going to leave a packed attic of junk for our kids to clean out after we are gone.

Despite a weak back, she tackled the task with determination and gusto. Being a packrat myself, I feared she would shred valuable papers and written memories that we would need in the future. That thinking was tossed out the window as she began the job that took over a month to accomplish.

A person doesn't always realize how much stuff can be acquired in a span of 46 years, especially in a large, 11-room home.

Frieda found the project interesting as well as challenging, as she sifted through birth notices of people who are now middle-aged; airplane tickets to far-off places; old Boy Scout certificates; letters of commendation from many organizations; past



BY **Leon Socol**

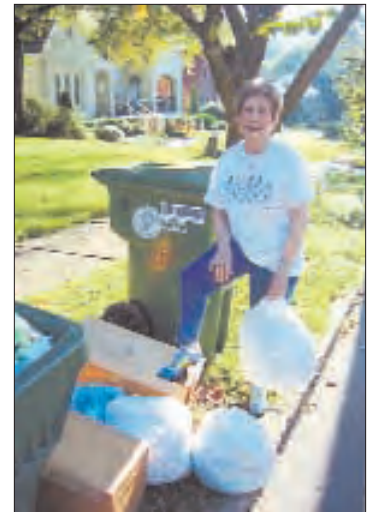
home sales and purchases; expired insurance policies; and a mountain of cancelled checks and deposit slips.

Letters and cards by the boxful slowed down the shredding process, because Frieda took the time to read and reflect on many of them. Naturally, some from dear friends and family just couldn't be put through the shredder, so Frieda lovingly placed them in new folders for archiving and re-reading in the future.

Some of the hardest decisions involved which photographs to keep. We have volumes of albums in which the pictorial history of our family is kept. We just couldn't discard them, so Frieda divided them up by subject matter and set them aside for distribution to family members.

Each week, we would pile the bags and boxes next to our garbage "Curby" for pick-up. Those poor garbage collectors were dismayed week after week with the volume of trash we put out for them.

In an undertaking like this, you find items that you had forgotten about or thought were lost. Frieda showed me a copy of a \$10,000 United States Savings Bond that was issued in 1963. I had no recollection of it and took it to my banker to find out about it. He did some calculations and said if the bond had not previously been cashed, it would now be worth \$87,316! Even if the bond has no current value, I'm glad that it escaped Frieda's shredder.



Frieda Socol

Davis students design Children's Healthcare of Atlanta holiday cards

Two students at the Alfred and Adele Davis Academy have lent their artistic talents to help raise funds for pediatric cancer research this holiday season. Artwork by Beth Galaid and Amanda Schwartz, both 13, appears in the 2009 Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Holiday Card Program.

"We received more than 300 art submissions, with most of the pieces completed by patients in our hospitals or submitted by metro Atlanta art teachers," said Julianna Rue, who captains the holiday card program for the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Foundation. "Each year, we assemble a committee of Children's volunteers, graphic designers, and art enthusiasts to choose art pieces that capture the holiday spirit, as well as the spirit of the artist. It's always a difficult decision, and Beth and Amanda should be very proud that their artwork was chosen."

Beth's *Scarf in a Tree* and Amanda's *Blue Hanukkah* grace two of 12 traditional holiday cards, available for purchase at

www.choa.org/cards. Each \$12 pack includes 20 cards and 21 envelopes. For the first time, the holiday card artwork is also available as the background for family photo cards through Tiny Prints,

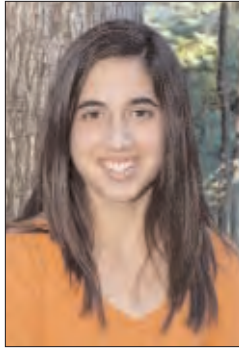
Amanda loves to draw, and her favorite subject is math. Because her brother was recently a patient at Children's, Amanda was especially honored that her artwork was chosen to support the hospital. Beth is also an athlete and enjoys playing soccer and running cross-country. She enjoys art, math, science, and being with her best friends.

Since the holiday card program debuted more than 20 years ago, personal and corporate card purchases have raised more than \$2 million for the Aflac Cancer Center and Blood Disorders Service of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. The Aflac Cancer Center treats more than 350 new cancer patients each year and more than 2,000 children with sickle cell disease, hemophilia, and other blood disorders. Federal funding for pediatric cancer research is at an all-time low, which makes community support critical to advance research and treatment.

To read more about this year's artists, learn about the submission process, or place an order, visit www.choa.org/cards, or call 404-785-7380.



Beth Galaid



Amanda Schwartz

www.choa.org/tinyprints, a create-your-own photo card Web site.

Outside of art class, Beth and Amanda are active in their Atlanta communities. In addition to playing soccer and basketball,



Scarf in a Tree by Beth Galaid



Tiny Prints version of *Blue Hanukkah* by Amanda Schwartz

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Raingutter Regatta unites the generations

By Shauna Horvath

On September 13, Cub Scout Pack 1800 took an outing to The William Berman Jewish Home. The boys came to visit the nursing home residents, share stories and snacks, and, most importantly, host a very special program: their annual Raingutter Regatta.

The Raingutter Regatta has been a Cub Scout tradition for the last 10 years. Given small kits, the boys assemble their own customized wooden sailboats and practice blowing through straws to push them down eight-foot-long canals. While this event has always been a crowd pleaser, the Scouts thought that they could do more this year, so they took the show on the road.

The boys of Cub Scout Pack 1800 are 1st-5th graders, divided into age-specific dens. They spent the first half of their visit schmoozing with Jewish Home residents, who told the boys about their lives, loves, and childhoods. In turn, the residents got a chance to find out about the Scouts. They talked about the two generations' differences and similarities.

Then, it was time for the races. Den by den, the boys took their sailboats to the water-filled gutters. The races started, and the boys blew through straws into the sails, moving the boats toward the finish line. A large-screen TV was set up in the courtyard

to allow everyone a close-up view of the action. Together, the boys and their new friends cheered the racers on.

In the end, Ryan Hartley earned bragging rights by edging out John Getty in the final competitive race.

Following the last race, everyone shared apples and honey cake. Overheard from the crowd was a Scout who asked, "Do we have to wait until next year to come back?" Not every kid left with a prize, but every kid left a winner.

This visit to The Jewish Home was much more than small talk and a few races. It was an opportunity for the boys to build relationships with members of an older Jewish generation. It was an opportunity for them to realize that they are part of a chain of people going back to a distant past.

Passing stories, skills, and traditions from one generation to the next has been a significant aspect of keeping Judaism strong and vibrant. The visit to The William Berman Jewish Home gave the boys an opportunity to participate in that process.

The melding of Scouting and Judaism is a constant challenge. A Jewish pack has to deal with unique issues, such as kashrut and Sabbath observance. It also faces problems such as non-participation in fundraisers—for example, this year's popcorn sales, which fell on the High Holidays. But the payoffs of Jewish Scouting are tremendous.



Benjamin Fairchild



Jeremy Mix and Doris Myers



Jack Spandorfer and Myles Hartley with Maryanna Stewart



Jaden Fisher and Jake Mark with Lillian Galin



Jacob Sessions with Sara Bloom



Max Blafer

Though the Boy Scouts of America was originally a Christian-based organization, it now embraces a wide variety of religions. For example, it offers over 35 religious emblems, including the Maccabee and Aleph awards for Jewish Scouts.

"The Scouts give us the framework and Judaism gives us the meat," explains Craig Blafer, Pack 1800's Cub Master (and father of Scout Max). "And you haven't seen anything until you see a group of Jewish men in

the middle of the North Carolina mountains, teaching their sons how to gut a fish without a bagel in sight."

Scouting and Judaism work together well. Both stress community service and challenge boys to do their best. That is the experience of the Scouts of Pack 1800.

"Scouting really helps the boys learn who they are," said Scott Fisher, as he stood proudly with a hand on his son Jaden's shoulder. "And Jewish Scouting...well, we just have a slightly bigger picture."

Shauna Horvath is director of volunteer services at the William Berman Jewish Home.

MIDAS OF SANDY SPRINGS

Happy Hanukkah



Pictured (back row): Reed Bell, Chris Adams, Patty Conway, Mark Ritzer, Mike Doherty. (Front row): Jessie Swieter, Damien Gordon, George Hall, Les Walker, Mark Hoover

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THE Jewish Georgian

Happy Chanukah



Jews below the Gnat Line (or My Southern Rosh Hashanah in Fitzgerald, Georgia, y'all)

By Henry Michalski

I would have been excited if my wife, Lynn, urged a trip to Paris or Hawaii. Even Beersheba, I thought, on the edge of the Negev Desert, beckons with an exotic allure of hookahs and caravans. But Fitzgerald, Georgia? The gnat capital of the world? Clear on the other side of America, Fitzgerald, Georgia, home, no doubt, to roughly 8,347 hearty souls settled amidst steamy cotton fields, held little to zero interest for me.

But I'm a married man, a slave to my wife's happiness, and since Fitzgerald occupies such a special place in Lynn's heart, so many childhood memories of the various wings of the family coming together for the High Holidays, I had no choice but to be the loving, supportive husband and travel with her to the former 13th Colony.

But it doesn't end there. Lynn also wanted to drag along our little golden-doodle puppy. I maintained that bringing four-month-old Stella, not yet housebroken, would be cumbersome, a potential disaster. I imagined schlepping through the airport with valises and bags full of suits and fancy big-city ties to impress the family with, gifts for all the mishpucha, Trader Joe's packaged lunches (since the airlines don't feed customers on cross-country flights anymore), a sleeping crate for Stella large enough to house a full-grown goat, an airport regulation-sized carry-on kennel, my iPod, and, of course, Stella herself, eager to sniff everything in sight, viewing two-legged strangers as piles of rock worthy of a hike. With a chronic back ailment, I needed all these bags and a five-hour flight to a hot state founded by criminals like I needed a tumor.

But celebrating Rosh Hashanah in Fitzgerald with family was a Feingold

See GNAT LINE, page 31

Yad L'Yad: Jewish hands reaching out to help others

By Suzi Brozman

Historically, the Jewish community has taken care of its own—from schools to food, clothes, shelter, and money, Jews have always held out a hand to those in need. And so it continues today, through Federation, ORT, Hadassah, nursing homes, and a veritable alphabet soup of agencies and volunteer organizations dedicated to relieving suffering of one kind or another. Almost every synagogue has a discretionary fund for those in dire straits. Almost every home has a "pushke," or blue box, where young children learn to deposit coins to be used to help others. And most people belong to or support at least one charitable group.

For several years, Atlanta's Jewish needy have known that they could turn to Yad L'Yad Charity Fund to provide help in critical situations. The group was founded with a three-part mission: to provide kosher food, to provide emergency funds for those who can't pay bills like gas and electricity, and to found an Interest Free Loan Fund.

The first two goals were met quickly.



Loan officers Dr. Mort Barr, Lester Czuper, Laura Kahn Travis, Howard Newman and Burt A. Sharf

The Interest Free Loan Fund is just now being launched, says Dr. Mort Barr, the fund's chairman. "This is a millennia-old Jewish response to financial need, most famously articulated by Maimonides: 'To help others help themselves is the highest form of tzedakah (charity).'"

The Interest Free Loan Fund's first

goal is to educate the community about its purpose and the needs in the Atlanta area, after which an appeal will be made to solicit contributions. Within a few months, the fund will be able to start offering short-term (usually about two years) loans.

See YAD L'YAD, page 32

The Jews of Athens, Georgia

By Caryn Miller and Dr. Stuart Rockoff

The city of Athens grew out of a trading settlement called Cedar Shoals, located on the banks of the Oconee River in Northeast Georgia. This tiny village of seventeen families was transformed in 1801, when the Georgia General Assembly selected Athens as the home of the recently established University of Georgia. Over the years, as people bought plots of land around the ever-growing school, the community developed and expanded. Though the town was incorporated in 1806, the first record of a Jewish resident did not appear until several decades later.

The first Jews who settled in Athens came from Filehne, in the Posen area of Prussia, arriving in the years before the Civil War. Moses Myers, born in Filehne in 1833, founded a dry goods business in Athens in 1858. He avoided the draft because of an injured leg, though some Athens residents suspected that he was exaggerating his injuries to avoid serving in a war in which he had little interest.

According to one account, people in Athens used to say that Myers rubbed his leg with a brick to keep it sore, and some even yelled "Bricks" at him whenever he appeared on the street.

Whatever the truth of the matter, these stories reflected the suspicion with which native Athenians viewed these newly arrived Jewish immigrants, whose loyalty to the Confederate cause seemed suspect. Despite these rumors, Myers went on to run a successful business and later became the first president of Athens' Jewish congregation. Gabriel Jacobs, also born in Filehne, settled in Athens before the war and manufactured military caps for soldiers. He later would become the first service leader of the synagogue and the first teacher in its religious school.

After the Civil War, a growing number of Jews came to Athens and began to worship together. They first met in Robert Bloomfield's blacksmith shop. In 1872, a group of community leaders petitioned the Superior Court of Clarke County that a charter of incorporation be granted them



The first home of Congregation Children of Israel, built in 1883

for a congregation under the name of Kol Kadush Beni Yisroile and Congregation Children of Israel. The following year, the newly organized board of trustees purchased land at the corner of Hancock and Jackson streets for the synagogue. On December 28, 1883, Rabbi A.R. Levy of Athens dedicated the newly constructed building, which would remain Congregation Children of Israel's home for the next 84 years. The congregation also bought land in the Oconee Hills Cemetery in 1873 for use as a burial ground.

See JEWS, page 34



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Kosher Affairs

HOW SWEET IT IS—
DELICIOUS NEW FINDS

FUNKY CHUNKY GRAHAM CRACKER BAR. Many of you know that I am a value shopper, a Clark Howard groupie who would never, ever pay \$5 for a candy bar. But I would, and I will for this graham cracker bar layered with caramel, dark chocolate, white chocolate, and marshmallow. I love home-made s'mores, but this is up a notch—an irresistible, gourmet s'more. To order or simply drool, visit FunkyChunky.com, if you dare! The company also makes flavored popcorn, which I haven't tasted yet.

ALMONDINA is a crunchy, low-calorie, cholesterol-free, natural, satisfying, healthful nut cookie, available in several flavors and totally addictive. It is a wonderful accompaniment to coffee or tea and a guiltless stand-alone. More good news: a serving of four cookies is only about 130 calories. Visit worldpantry.com to check out all the flavors.

YOGACHIPS by Yogavive are new, delicious, and a must for healthy snacking. The chips are OU-certified and made from oven-baked and dried organic Fuji apples. There are currently five varieties—original, apple-cinnamon, caramel, peach, and strawberry.



BY Roberta Scher

Especially convenient are the one-apple size bags for snacking on the go. Visit yogavive.com for more information. Encourage our local supermarkets to stock this new product.

THE CAKE MIX DOCTOR RETURNS. My copy of Anne Byrn's 10-year-old bestseller, *The Cake Mix Doctor*, is tattered, dog-eared, and stained from so much use and from frequently baking her easy and delicious cakes, while keeping the closely held secret that many of my "masterpieces" were created from mixes. Well, she's done it again—even better. In *The Cake Mix Doctor Returns* (Workman Publishing Company), she's included some of her classics, reformulated several recipes, and added many new creations. So, please, don't tell...just buy the book, and keep the secret between us! Visit cakemixdoctor.com.

NIELSEN-MASSEY. I use vanilla powder in

almost all of my baking. Yes, chocolate is still my #1 favorite flavor, but vanilla is a very close second. In addition to vanilla extract, I often use Nielsen-Massey Madagascar powdered vanilla and sprinkle it into cake batters, icings, pancake mixes, and such. Sometimes, I also use vanilla bean paste, especially when making ice cream. If you would like to expand your knowledge and repertoire regarding vanilla and other flavorings, pick up a copy of *A Century of Flavor*, an award-winning cookbook that tells the story of the 100-year-old Nielsen-Massey company (www.nielsenmassey.com) and shares mouth-watering recipes using vanilla and other flavorings.

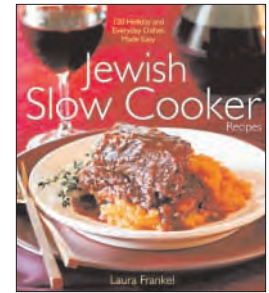
Some vanilla tips from Nielsen-Massey: Store pure extracts, vanilla bean paste, vanilla powder, and vanilla beans in airtight containers at room temperature. Do not freeze. Add extracts at the end of the cooking process.

SLOW COOKIN'

Julie Powell (now familiar to most of us via the film *Julie and Julia*) cooked her way through all 524 recipes in Julia Child's classic *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*. I have been thinking of doing something similar.

I have begun testing a new 6-quart Rival Crock-Pot and been inspired by the new publication *Jewish Slow Cooker Recipes* (Wiley). I am tempted to create *Roberta and Laura*—yes, I'm referring to Laura Frankel, famed restaurateur (Shallots in Chicago), talented chef, and author of this creative new book.

Using what she calls her "Shabbat miracle machine," Laura pairs her passion for fresh, seasonal ingredients with her culinary imagination and shares 120 enticing kosher gourmet recipes for everyday and holiday meals, all appropriate for the kosher kitchen. So, in my brand new, easy-to-use Rival Crock-Pot (model SCV-603, available at Wal-Mart for \$39), I am giving some a try. This Crock-Pot is large enough to feed a crowd of eight or more, yet simple to clean up.



In addition to this no-frills model, which is perfect for Shabbat use, Rival has recently introduced state-of-the-art, programmable Crock-Pots, which would be excellent for everyday use. There are several models that can be programmed for up to 20 hours and then kept on warm for several more. A Crock-Pot is also a helpful weekday tool for busy families. Visit Crock-Pot.com.

See KOSHER AFFAIRS, page 28

Kosher Korner



KOSHER BAKERIES IN ATLANTA

What makes a bakery kosher?

- All ingredients must be certified kosher. Many non-kosher bakeries use animal fats, lard, oils, emulsifiers, shortenings, release agents, or equipment that is not kosher.
- In a kosher bakery, Jewish law requires that all breads must be parve. Croissants, biscuits, and English muffins, however, are allowed to be made dairy.
- In a Jewish-owned kosher bakery, challah must be separated. Challah is not just a type of braided bread eaten on Shabbos; it is also a biblical term used to describe a special mitzvah. Whenever baking bread (even matzoh or flat bread), a person has a special mitzvah to separate a piece of the dough. In biblical times, this piece was given to a kohen. For more details about separating challah, consult your rabbi.
- A rabbi or kashruth agency must approve and inspect all ingredients and equipment to make sure they comply with kashruth laws.

ATLANTA-AREA KOSHER BAKERIES

PLEASE NOTE: In a supermarket, one must be careful to purchase only items that are clearly marked as kosher, because supermarkets have non-kosher baked items from other parts of the store that can be misplaced in the kosher area.



BY Rabbi Reuven Stein

• **Kroger Sandy Springs Bakery** is a commissary that makes baked goods that are distributed to several other kosher stores.
227 Sandy Springs Place
404-256-3434

• **Kroger Toco Hill Bakery**
2205 LaVista Road
404-633-8694

• **Publix Toco Hill** has a dairy bakery and a parve bakery. The following breads are kosher and parve, even though they have no AKC label: baguettes, frozen dough, wheat, Italian, and five-grain. (There are technical reasons why these items do not have AKC labeling at this time.)
2969 North Druid Hills Road
404-638-6022

• **Simone's Bakery**
2899A North Druid Hills Road
404-321-5108



Some other facilities where kosher baked goods are made:

Ali's Cookies makes dairy cookies and cakes, as well as items that don't contain any dairy, but are made on dairy equipment.
1255-13 Johnson Ferry Road,
Marietta
770-971-8566
www.shipacookie.com

Bagel World is a pas Yisroel wholesale bagel store for large orders only.
6190 Regency Parkway, Suite 306, Norcross
770-662-8522

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2153 Briarcliff Road
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KOSHER NEWS

AVENUE K presents the first-ever glatt kosher restaurant in East Cobb; it is initially open evenings, once a month, at 4450 Lower Roswell Road, Marietta (Chabad of Cobb). Call 770-217-5641.

BAGEL BREAK has closed its Roswell Road restaurant, but will continue to operate For All Occasions and More, its AKC-certified catering facility. The meat and dairy locations are currently at Congregation Beth Jacob, 1855 LaVista Road; 404-255-6055 or 770-565-8710.

BROADWAY CAFE (404-329-0888 or 770-457-4578) is offering a new Frequent Diners' Club discount. The restaurant is now serving lunch specials. Online ordering is available at www.broadwaycafe.takeout1.com.

GOODFRIEND CATERING. All products made in the Dairy Side of Goodfriend Catering of the MJCCA are cholov Yisroel. Pre-packaged ice cream and cream cheese are not. The dairy kitchen of the MJCCA produces regular kosher dairy meals for the MJCCA pre-schools and the Weinstein Center. Call 678-812-3994.

RETURN TO EDEN (2335 Cheshire Bridge Road, 404-320-3336) carries a full line of kosher (cholov Yisroel) cheeses from Italy, France, England, and Switzerland and a new line of cakes.

THE WESTIN BUCKHEAD (formerly Swissotel) is no longer offering kosher catering.

WHOLE FOODS (404-634-7800) now has OU Kosher Valley All Natural Poultry, without antibiotics or added hormones.

Kosher Affairs

From page 27

AND SPEAKING OF KITCHEN HELPERS....

SIMMERMAT. I have featured this before (in 2005), but must do it again. I use it almost every day. The SimmerMat is a flame diffuser for slow cooking on electric or gas ranges; it keeps the flame low to avoid scorching or burning foods such as soups, rice, and casseroles. This indispensable and money-saving item is well worth the cost, about \$15. Visit simmermat.com for shopping information.

EMILE HENRY. The new Emile Henry Flame-Top Braiser is truly the perfect cookware to create pot roasts, casseroles, and, of course, Julia Child's famous beef bourguignon. It is oven-, range-, and microwave-safe, dishwasher-safe, freezer-safe, and very easy to clean. I simply love the Flame-Top line and feel that it is worth the investment. The only way I have found to damage it is to drop it. (Oops!) Visit emilehenryusa.com.

(You can find Julia's beef bourguignon at <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/recipe?id=8222804>. Of course, I omit the bacon and butter. Try smoked kosher turkey chunks instead of bacon and parve margarine instead of butter.)

THE CUTTING EDGE. I have never seen or used a more exciting set of cutting implements for the kosher kitchen than Pure Komachi knives. The knives in the Pure

Komachi 2 series are brightly colored from tip to end—each a different, brilliant, bold color—making them easy to identify. The set of eight fits into a clear acrylic holder, which makes a stylish addition to any countertop. The technology and color coding have a serious purpose: stopping cross-contamination when preparing food. But the “off-label” result is that these knives offer the kosher cook an easy way to identify and separate meat and milk cutlery. The set makes a perfect wedding gift—Or, even better, treat yourself, and reduce preparation time in your kitchen.

Pure Komachi 2 knife block

But the “off-label” result is that these knives offer the kosher cook an easy way to identify and separate meat and milk cutlery. The set makes a perfect wedding gift—Or, even better, treat yourself, and reduce preparation time in your kitchen.

THE HOURGLASS—UNINTENDED COFFEE CONSEQUENCES. Goodbye instant coffee on Shabbos! The Hourglass Cold Brew System was originally created to non-electrically produce smooth, rich coffee with 69.6% less acid, without the use of paper filters and with no waste. However, as discovered recently by KosherEye co-founder Lois Held—and checked by Rabbi Stein of the AKC—the system is actually Shabbos friend-

ly!

Now, the Sabbath observer can prepare coffee “essence” on a weekday. Just let the coffee cold brew on a countertop for 24-72 hours, pour the essence into a decanter, and then use it with hot water from a Sabbath urn. I have tested the Hourglass and found it to work well.

However, if you like your coffee strong, as I do, I recommend using an espresso or dark



The Hourglass

French roast, brewing it for 72 hours to assure strong coffee, and leaving the essence unrefrigerated for at least eight hours before serving.

The system also works with tea leaves. For more information about this product, visit hourglasscoffee.com.

MISCELLANEOUS GADGETS. Some other new time-saving gadgets have made my kitchen prep time quicker, easier, and more precise.

Instead of my haphazard measuring tools (various sizes of stainless flatware), I am using KitchenArt plastic Adjust-a-Cup sliding measuring cups and Adjust-a-Spoon. These are inexpensive, dishwasher-safe, and easy to use.

From Rösle (Rosleusa.com), a stainless steel and silicone collapsible colander stores compactly; is heat-resistant, dishwasher-safe, and ergonomically designed; and comes with a lifetime warranty.

The compact Vacu Vin wine saver is the little gadget that could—the perfect solution to the problem of all those half-finished bottles of wine. Simply push the stopper into the open wine bottle, attach the pump handle, and pump out the extra air. My brother-in-law Helmut, a wine aficionado, says that this little gadget is great. But knowing Helmut, he rarely has a half-finished bottle of wine! Also from Vacu Vin is the Slice and Catch minislicer, perfect for small veggies and fruits. Both gadgets are dishwasher-safe. Learn more at Vacuvin.com.

Thanks to my dear friend Doris Katz for providing a very helpful web link! When my fridge becomes a maze of leftovers, overbuys, and various mystery items, I don't know what to heat, eat, freeze, or toss. Many of these shelf-life questions can be quickly answered at stilltasty.com. And here's a tip: Frozen, zip-

Recipes

Vanilla Apple Pudding

Adapted from *A Century of Flavor* by Nielsen-Massey Vanillas

1/2 cup butter, softened*
2 cups sugar
2 teaspoons Nielsen-Massey vanilla extract
2 eggs
2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking soda
2 teaspoons cinnamon
4 cups coarsely chopped, peeled apples
1 cup chopped walnuts (optional)
1/2 cup packed dark brown sugar
Nielsen-Massey's signature whipped cream for garnish (optional, see recipe below)*

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat 9" x 13" pan with nonstick cooking spray.

Cream butter, sugar, and vanilla with electric mixer. Add eggs one at a time, beating after each addition. Beat until batter is light and fluffy. Add flour, baking soda, and cinnamon. Mix well; dough will be crumbly. Add apples and walnuts; mix just to incorporate.

Press dough mixture into bottom of prepared pan. Sprinkle brown sugar over top, and press into dough.

Bake 30-35 minutes; serve warm.

*For parve pudding, substitute margarine, and garnish with parve whipped cream.

Nielsen-Massey's Signature Whipped Cream

1 cup heavy whipping cream
2 teaspoons pure coffee extract or Madagascar pure vanilla bean paste
2 tablespoons sifted confectioners' sugar

Whip cream and with electric mixer on medium-high, adding confectioners' sugar, until soft peaks form. Add coffee extract or vanilla bean paste. Whip until blended.

Houdini Bars

Adapted from *The Cake Mix Doctor Returns* by Anne Byrn
makes about 30 bars

“So rich and delicious, they disappear quickly!”

1 box plain yellow cake mix
8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter, melted
3 large eggs
1 (8-ounce) package reduced-fat cream cheese, at room temperature
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 cups confectioners' sugar, sifted
1/2 cup sweetened flaked coconut
1/2 cup chopped pecans, optional

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Place cake mix, melted butter, and 1 egg in a large mixing bowl; beat on low speed with an electric mixer until ingredients are incorporated, about 1 minute. Press the batter into the bottom and partially up the sides of an ungreased 13" x 9" metal baking pan.

Place cream cheese in the same mixing bowl; beat with an electric mixer on low until fluffy, about 30 seconds. Add remaining 2 eggs, vanilla, and sugar. Beat on low until smooth and combined, about 1 minute. Fold in coconut. Pour the mixture over the crust, and smooth the top with a rubber spatula. (Optional: Scatter pecans over the top.)

Bake on center rack until edges are browned and center is firm to touch, about 45 to 50 minutes. Cool for about 30 minutes before cutting into bars.

For parve bars: Use Duncan Hines Yellow cake mix, parve margarine such as Earth Balance, and parve soy cream cheese such as Tofutti brand.

Senegalese Peanut Soup

Adapted from *Jewish Slow Cooker Recipes* by Laura Frankel

A Frankel family favorite.

Canola oil
1 large sweet potato (about 1 pound), peeled and diced
1 small butternut squash (about 1-1/2 pounds), peeled and diced
2 medium Spanish onions, thinly sliced
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 tablespoons curry powder
1 quart chicken stock
1 can diced tomatoes (14-15 ounces)
2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 8 ounces), cut into cubes
1 cup creamy peanut butter
1 1/4 cups unsweetened coconut milk
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat slow cooker to low.

Place a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Lightly coat the bottom of the pan with oil. Sauté the sweet potato, squash, onions, and garlic in batches until they are browned, about 5 to 7 minutes per batch. Season each batch with salt and pepper. Transfer the vegetables to the slow cooker insert.

Add the curry powder, chicken stock, tomatoes with their juices, chicken, and peanut butter to the insert. Stir to combine. Cover, and cook on low for 6 hours.

The soup may be cooked two days in advance and can stored, covered, in the refrigerator up to three days or frozen for up to one month. Optional garnishes: chopped peanuts, scallions, parsley, cilantro.

locked foods all seem to look alike! Buy some freezer tape (available at Wal-Mart or the Container Store) and a permanent marker. Label frozen foods with name and date.

LOCAL NEWS

Kudos to Whole Foods Briarcliff. This store has taken several steps to better serve the kosher community, including kosher bulk bins, gelato, Kosher Valley organic poultry, and best of all, fresh, never-been-frozen kosher fish. Special orders are welcome; contact david.oswald@wholefoods.com.

On the advice of another dear friend, Shelley Shaw, I bought a turkey chop at Kosher Gourmet. According to the National Turkey Federation, this is actually a skinless turkey breast cut against the grain, diagonally. Believe it or not, it looks just like a veal chop. I marinated it for about an hour (in lemon, thyme, rosemary, black pepper, garlic, and olive oil) and grilled it. Wow—so simple and so delicious! My guests could not guess what it was, but certainly enjoyed “gobbling” it down! Turkey chops are available at Kosher Gourmet on Briarcliff Road and Grillers Pride (Grillerspride.com).

Kroger Toco Hill recently hosted a focus group attended by corporate representatives and store management. The purpose of the meeting was for the store to better understand and serve the needs of kosher shoppers. In addition to presenting a constructive wish list of new products, attendees wanted to see a special emphasis on Passover 2010 selection and value. KosherEye (koshereye@gmail.com) arranged the event as a community service and will do the same for any local kosher food business desiring community input.

KOSHER AFFAIRS ON THE ROAD

What a fabulous Labor Day weekend I spent at Limmudfest at Tumbling Waters Retreat and Conference Center in Clayton, Georgia. The spectacular natural surroundings enhanced the learning and camaraderie.

One attendee said he enjoyed “song, dance, food, text, music, art, culture, history, philosophy, medicine, science, sports, and movies.” I agree! What an inspiring and unifying experience to spend Shabbos with people from many Jewish communities—affiliated, non-affiliated, observant, not.

What is Limmud? Find out by attending the next local event, March 14, 2010, at Oglethorpe University, or pre-book your space for Labor Day Weekend 2010 at Limmudse.org. For information on kosher retreats at Tumbling Waters, visit tumblingwaters.org. (Full disclosure: the retreat center's very talented executive director is my daughter, Andrea Proser.)

Let me recommend a visit to Charleston, South Carolina, for a kosher family vacation. Late last summer, my family and I rented a home on the exquisite Isle of Palms, within walking distance of the beach. (E-mail me if you would like information on the spacious five-bedroom home we rented).

We spent our days touring historic down-



Magnolia Plantation

town Charleston and environs. We enjoyed a visit to the beautiful Magnolia Plantation, where we explored the grounds, enjoyed the petting zoo, rode the nature train around the expansive property, and went on a guided tour of the authentic slave cabins. We biked, fished, kayaked, went shelling, and jumped waves at the beach. A highlight for the entire family was a guided carriage ride tour around downtown Charleston, with the friendly Olde Towne Carriage Company (oldetownecarriage.com).

Of course, we brought most of our kosher food from Atlanta but also discovered that Charleston has some kosher resources as well. We devoured delicious “from scratch” pastries from the kosher Sweetsmith Bakery (Sweetsmithbakery.com) and visited the well-appointed, kosher Broad Street Guest House (charlestonkosherbedandbreakfast.com), for a potential future stay.

Charleston is a wonderful family destination. If you go in August, be prepared for hot, humid weather.

A FEAST FOR THE EARS. In celebration of the 10th annual Atlanta Jewish Film Festival, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, with Grammy award-winning Hollywood guest conductor Richard Kaufman, will present an evening of music from Jewish-related films on Monday, January 4, 2010.

This column is meant to provide the reader with current trends and developments in the kosher marketplace and lifestyle. Since standards of kashruth certification vary, check with the AKC or your local kashruth authority to confirm reliability. If you are searching for a hard-to-find kosher ingredient, need help with a kosher substitution, or have a kosher food question, please contact us, and we will do our best to find the answer. Also, we ask that you share your discoveries

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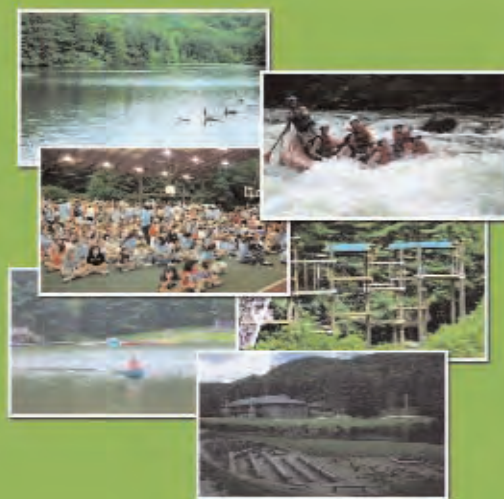


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GNAT LINE

From page 25

tradition, and Lynn very much wanted to bring the various clans together and for me to meet the many relatives I had only heard of since meeting my wife nearly a dozen years ago at a bar mitzvah in Napa, California (which is also when I first discovered there were significant numbers of Jews scattered, by choice, throughout the Old Confederacy).

Wanting nothing but happiness and good times for Lynn, I consented to going along and proved my commitment by scheduling a haircut by a professional, a yearly indulgence usually performed around my birthday in August. I also promised to be good, a nice Jewish boy. A week prior to departure, Lynn shipped a case of Napa's liquid specialty to Fitzgerald to add to what we felt was the Southern crowd's proclivity towards their Bloody Marys, Jack Daniels, and Scotch. She explained that after each service, hired caterers prepare wonderful kosher meals for everyone to enjoy, along with their choice of alcoholic beverage...or sweet tea.

The usual dog-watchers fell through: Jane moving to Georgia, of all things; Elaina unable; Wendy in Chicago with family; Bloomburges too busy to look after a puppy who thinks nothing of soiling your favorite rug. So, through a process of elimination, it was agreed that Stella would schlep along to Georgia with us—oy.

Before we could leave, however, there was the small matter of my cousin Zahavah, her husband, Eli, their son, Etai, and his wife, Osnat, who were visiting from Israel, living in various corners of our home, unwilling to add my soy milk to their morning coffee.

On the day of departure, Lynn concluded final packing chores; Elaina, my college-educated daughter with a driver's license, took the younger couple; and we took Zahavah and Eli in the Volvo, along with everyone's luggage and Stella, and headed into San Francisco for a visit with my mother and brothers, for the predictable borderline knife-wielding ordeal of deciding which restaurant would be best for saying goodbye. Choice one and two fell through, and everyone was starving, so we ended up eating in a crummy Thai restaurant on Clement Street, everyone on best behavior, smiling through their patay, knowing they would be at the airport soon.

Following the obligatory good-byes, hugs, and promises, Lynn and I and all the Israelis packed into my Volvo and drove to the airport, where we checked into the Crowne Plaza and turned the car over to the Israelis, as their plane for New York was not departing until 2:00 p.m. the following day. We were scheduled to depart early the following morning.

We had two relaxing nights with Lynn's sister, Dr. Lucy Feingold, and her best dog friend, Noah, whose hips deterred him from playing with the frisky Stella. Lucy lives in a nice section of old Charleston, South Carolina, with a swimming pool. Then, it was off to the local airport to pick up our rental car, which turned out to be a behemoth Ford SUV upgrade with enough horsepower to break through the heavily fortified Khyber Pass in a

thunderstorm. The Ford Expedition was red, so in a burst of outright creativity, we named the truck "Big Red." We enjoyed driving through the kudzu-covered countryside, dotted with the occasional abandoned African-American cottages of another era and churches galore, one per family, all set along gently rolling hills, permanently green from the rain and humidity. For entertainment, we rolled down the windows, howling with laughter as Stella tried desperately, again and again, to bite the wind. What goes on in that little doggie mind, I wondered.

Within a few hours, we arrived in the historic city of Savannah, a place Conde Nast ranks as a top-ten American travel destination. Lynn's best friend from college, Peri, and her daughter, Leila, came by the dog-friendly DeSoto Hilton, situated a block from one of the 27 historic squares that make up the heart of Savannah, what General Sherman spared along his demented, arsenic-obsessed march to the sea. A short walk from our hotel led to the famous Mercer House, popularized by the novel *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, and Temple Mikve Israel, the nation's third oldest shul. That evening, we all met at Lynn's cousin's custom-built home in a fashionable district of Savannah for authentic call-out fried chicken and all the fixings. For me, it was great visiting with Lynn's first cousin Lisa; Scott, her dentist husband; their three adorable children, all of an age where one can actually discuss things of substance; and the fried chicken.

The next day's highlight was a real Southern family-style lunch at Mrs. Wilkes' Boardinghouse, and the four-hour convoy behind the Cohen family car; then Lucy's car with Noah, the ancient golden retriever; and us in Big Red, holding up the rear. Our goal was the South Central region of Georgia, below the Gnat Line, to the small town of Fitzgerald, founded, according to Google, by newspaperman Philander Fitzgerald of Indiana as a home for veteran soldiers of the Civil War. We hoped to reach our destination, settle into the Country Hearth Inn, and arrive at shul in time for the evening services. The staff at Mrs. Wilkes rendered the necessity of future meals irrelevant, but we were on a Southern roll, and that fried chicken washed down with sweet tea sure sounded good as we enthusiastically looked forward to the next catered Dixie indulgence, topped with a little banana pudding, at the conclusion of the evening service.

In a neighborhood of old brick structures surrounded by cotton fields, the charming, small, red-brick shul, Fitzgerald Hebrew Congregation, established in 1941 by some of Lynn's relatives and a few local Jewish families, slowly swelled to capacity as the evening Rosh Hashanah service was about to begin. Lynn's relatives, close and distant, arrived from four Southern states, dressed in their finest clothes, attracted, no doubt by the prospect of visiting and getting reacquainted with long unseen relatives, as well as enjoying the intimacy of the charming little synagogue for the High Holidays. It felt *hamish* to be surrounded by generations of intermingled families, grandchildren with adoring grandparents sitting in the well-used pews on a powder blue carpet over worn oak floors, shined and

buffed chandeliers above, and period stained glass windows inscribed "in loving memory" with the names of Feingolds and Perlises long-gone. The warm glow of the lights and the smiles of relatives greeting each other gave the sanctuary the nostalgic feel of a 1950s Norman Rockwell illustration.

Everything was in place. The Yahrzeit plaques bearing the names of the founders and recently deceased was illuminated with little lights, and the bimah boasted two enormous colorful bouquets of flowers on either side of the holy ark, which houses the most cherished gift of the Jews...the Torah. The rabbi, resplendent in his white flowing robe, paced around, anticipating the opening prayers. He was a forty-something with a short-crop beard, a trained cantor filling in for the holidays, visiting from New York with his Orthodox wife, beaming parents, and small child. Families mingled, hugged, laughed, and talked while the young rabbi, impatient to get through the required order of prayers and announcements, began his songs and prayers in the earnest hopes that the crowd would eventually settle down. They did, but they had a lot more to say.

The following morning, Lynn asked if we could sit under her father's name on the Yahrzeit plaque, "Robert Julian Feingold 1928-1980." Surrounded by Lynn; her sister, Lucy; her brother, Louis, and his kids, Natalie and Bobby; and their many cousins and extended family members, I thought of my mother saying, "Ven you marry a goil, you marry the whole family...."

Between prayers, Lynn quietly pointed out various second cousins and told their

accompanying stories...some she had a crush on, others who teased her, and a few who went on to make their lives a blessing. The Conservative service, led by the clear tenor voice of the trained cantor, evoked a wonderful feeling of spirituality and familiarity. It always amazes me that, no matter where in the world my body takes me, even to the Deep South below the Gnat Line, I instantly recognize the melodies, the beautifully haunting cords of our ancient, yet contemporary, system of worship. I met so many Perlises, Millers, HARRISES, HELLERS, and KAMINSKYS that it will take another visit to Fitzgerald just to sort them all out. But what really struck me was that I, a product of Holocaust survivors with almost no living relatives, suddenly felt fully accepted into a large and accomplished family.

Except for the pesky gnat that refused to find another person to bother during the entire afternoon Musaf service, it was a fabulous week, one of thousands in an endless series that Lynn and I decided to pluck out and make holy and extraordinary with memory.

Henry Michalski was born in Dzumbul, Kazakhstan, in August of 1945, to Polish parents Fela and Joseph Michalski, who were fleeing to escape the Nazis; the family eventually settled in San Francisco. Henry retired five years ago from Napa (CA) High School as a history/government teacher. He is married to the former Lynn Feingold, an architect who is originally from Camilla, Georgia. Henry is the father of two adult children, Elaina Michalski and Geoffrey Michalski.



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YAD L'YAD

From page 25

Yad L'Yad (Hand to Hand) is a study in perseverance. The group began about three years ago when Mrs. Shani Posen saw a need and proposed a way to help. According to Mrs. Malka Rosenbaum, who took over leadership when Posen made aliyah to Israel, "It was neighbors helping neighbors, people Shani knew who were having serious financial problems. People were collecting different things to eat, and Shani would distribute it. There was a spaghetti neighborhood, a sauce neighborhood. Everybody on a certain street might give one thing, eggs or cereal or whatever, and drop the food off at Shani's house. She'd distribute it. But people had to come to her house to pick things up, and it was too public."

So Rosenbaum tried to take it to a higher level. "People donate money. We buy gift cards or coupons and send them to needy people in the mail, so nobody has to meet anybody. Our mission statement is to help needy people who need kosher food. There was a pantry, but not with the kind of food people who really keep kosher can use."

In addition, the group maintained an emergency fund for those who couldn't pay bills. She stresses that when she took over from Posen, "It was just Rebecca Azran and I. As our treasurer, Rebecca worked diligently to obtain our tax-exempt status. She

is a backbone of the organization, who has built it to what it is today, working side-by-side with me the whole time."

The philosophy was, and is, simple—sharing resources. If you have something you can give to others to help them, you give. You create kindness from one person to another. Yad L'Yad is also an advocate of sharing via gemachs, informal "exchange shops," where people can donate gently used items such as clothing and household goods, which are then lent or sold to those who can't afford to purchase things at full retail prices. Though separate from Yad L'Yad, these gemachs also help to feed people. "It's a beautiful idea," says Rosenbaum. "It's a cycle. People donate, the clothing goes to people in need. They can then give the things to others." This form of lending a helping hand goes on all over town, in the city, in Alpharetta, downtown, and it is supported by the entire community.

Food and money aren't the only available resources. There's a community resource directory to help guide people to sources that will help them with budgeting, credit counseling, debt consolidation, and other professional services. Monetary grants can help sustain people during a financial crisis.

And now there will be an Interest Free Loan Fund, providing short-term loans to the Jewish community, especially to those individuals and families who would not otherwise have access to credit. The rules

are relatively simple. Applicants must be residents of Atlanta, Jewish, and affiliated in some way with a synagogue. They must be at least 21 years old and able to show the ability to repay the loan within 24 months. Loans must have guarantors, and borrowers must sign legal documents. Dr. Barr stresses that the entire process will be handled professionally and with strict confidentiality. The loan committee is a constituent part of Yad L'Yad, which is itself a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The fund is also a member of the International Association of Hebrew Free Loans, a professional umbrella organization of some 45 Jewish free loan funds in major cities throughout North America.

"We've just started. We have limited capital and some initial pledges," explains Barr. "We are respecting Federation's Community Campaign, so we did not make any appeal for money before November 1."

If applicants can get conventional loans, the committee will suggest they try that method. If the need is chronic, individual are referred to counselors and appropriate agencies. "People with chronic financial problems often have other problems that lead to financial issues," Barr says. In addition, the Interest Free Loan Fund will seek to coordinate with synagogues and others that have funds for their own communities.

Funding will come primarily from donations from the metropolitan Atlanta Jewish community. Tax-deductible contributions will enable the fund to provide loans on a daily basis to people facing urgent financial challenges. Barr stresses that donations are unique, in that every donation is a perpetual mitzvah—every day, someone in need is benefiting from the donations. And once the money is repaid by

the borrower, it is available to help another needy person.

What does the money go for? Critical needs, include emergency medical and dental care, home repairs, job-related training, and urgent short-term education needs.

Like the fund, Dr. Barr is a relative newcomer to Atlanta. Upon retiring from Colgate-Palmolive in 2006, he and his wife, Edie, decided to retire to Atlanta to be closer to their grown children. Serendipitously, the executive director position at Congregation Beth Jacob became available, and Mort, who had been involved in Jewish communal activities for over 20 years in New Jersey, stepped in to fill the post. "As scary and risky as it was to move and become executive director, we did it a week after retiring," he commented recently.

While working at Beth Jacob, Barr met Malka Rosenbaum. After he stepped down from the Beth Jacob position, Barr remembers, "She asked if I'd help create the loan fund for Yad L'Yad. Like Barr and Rosenbaum, those involved in this endeavor have a passion for unity and shalom in the Jewish community. Says Barr, "There are so many sources of division within the Jewish community. The non-judgmentalism of the fund provides a wonderful opportunity to bridge diverse elements and creates peace, unity, cooperation, and understanding within the community. Like our patriarch, Aaron, we should love and pursue peace—focusing not on what divides us but what we have in common."

To learn more about Yad L'Yad, visit www.yadlyad.com. For information about the Interest Free Loan Fund, contact Dr. Mort Barr, 404-325-0340 or freeloan@yadlyad.com.



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Start the instant déjà vu, and you may find that you would have picked simple daisies and not orchids to wear again. It may be the day you wore the organdy Easter dress and black patent Mary Janes and thought you could click your heels together and wind up in Oz. Was it the day you became a first-class scout or a second lieutenant? Or played first base?

It could be the day you met your wife or that second you realized you were in love. It could be the glorious, fortunate day you realized you were not in love with the wrong person. Was it the day you bought the luxury car or the day you got rid of it? Would you choose a cast of thousands or a quiet time with someone special? It might even be a day of inevitable sorrow that brought with it



BY Shirley Friedman

new strength and understanding and love abounding. And, oh, those halcyon days of youth—they would be hard to resist.

Would it be a time of expectation or fulfillment, preparation or performance? Would it be an age when we were foolish enough to wish for the moon or when we were naive enough to think we were on the moon? Might we possibly hope that our perfect day lies ahead in the future? Perhaps we should heed the words of Hesperides as he paraphrased Solomon: "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may, Old Time is still a-flying: And this same flower that smiles today, tomorrow will be dying."

Or shall we grasp instead the invitation of Browning's Rabbi Ben Ezra? "Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be, The last of life, for which the first was made: Our times are in His hand."

Johnny Esposito: He did it his way

There is no greater legend in Atlanta than the inimitable Johnny Esposito, founder of Atlanta's renowned, most successful, and longest surviving nightclub, Johnny's Hideaway. If you don't believe Elvis is still alive, you've never visited the club during one of its Elvis evenings.



Legendary Johnny's Hideaway Founder Johnny Esposito

Although Johnny is Italian, he's a longtime member of the Jewish War Veterans and a great friend of our community. He joined the JWV as a tribute to his friend Eddie Marcus, who got him into a VA hospital when he was "sick and broke, as usual," and none of the other veterans groups could help him out.

Johnny has endless stories about some of the great acts, the legends, he has featured or hosted at his club in its three fabulous decades, including Fats Domino, Benny King, Ike and Tina Turner, Buddy



BY Reg Regenstein

Rich, Count Basie, Woody Herman, Conway Twitty, the Drifters, Dave Gardner, Tiny Tim, the Coasters, the Four Aces, Roy Hamilton, and Al Hibbler. He has even hosted the legendary Frank Sinatra, whose music is practically a theme of the club, along with Elvis.

Johnny's has long provided a great venue for those of us of a certain age, as the French say, and the club still packs them in. In all, Johnny has opened, bought, or run 20 clubs, here and in Florida. Yankees manager Casey Stengel used to come into one of the clubs during training season and introduce some of his ball players to the waitresses.

Johnny is still good friends with comedian Jerry Farber, whom Johnny has both hired and fired. Jerry came to work for Johnny at The Oaks nightclub in 1968, and when a customer began knocking Jerry's performance, Johnny physically threw the guy out. Shortly thereafter, he threw Jerry himself out, telling him he was playing the wrong kind of music, and saying, "You'll

hate me now, but you'll love me before it's all over."

Yes, Jerry does. In fact, he still owes Johnny \$200 he borrowed from him, which Jerry had to have "by midnight" one evening (don't ask) and Johnny never expected to get back. But Johnny says it was worth it not to have to see Jerry for a while.

Jerry says that Johnny "is a genuine 24-hour friend. You can call any time, day or night, if you're in trouble. I think I've already used up 22 of my hours." Jerry notes that "Johnny would never say this, but many people would tell you that there is no more charitable person than Johnny. He has given generously to children's hospitals, groups that fight diabetes, cancer—he supports them all."

In 1979, Johnny started the Hideaway on Roswell Road in Buckhead, and soon, the likes of Frank Sinatra and his entourage, including "right hand man" Jilly Rizzo and comic Pat Cooper, began dropping in when they were in town. Johnny later sold the club, which still hosts such popular events as Atlanta's Greatest Characters, as well as Sinatra and Elvis festivals featuring numerous impersonators of those two superstars.

Along the way, Johnny did run into the occasional troublesome affair. Once in Florida, he and a pal were hitting the bars and when they met "two beauties," who invited them back to their home. There, Johnny noticed a huge painting of a man

one of the women said was her uncle. Not quite.

The next day, a couple of FBI agents knocked on his door (apparently they had the house under surveillance and took down his license plate number) and told him that the subject of the picture was not "Uncle Vinnie," but her boyfriend, a notorious alleged mobster. Johnny called the guy up, apologized, and said, "I didn't know." The guy replied, "Don't worry, everybody 'dates' her." Johnny lives to tell the tale.

At age 75, Johnny is still hanging in there, fighting diabetes, moving a little slower, but as sharp and ornery as ever. He likes to have breakfast at the Landmark Diner, across the street from the old club, with old pals like World War II heroes Leon Butler and Joe Gaddis, two veterans of the June 1944 D-Day landings, who piloted landing craft that dropped the troops on the beaches amidst intense German artillery and machine-gun fire.

There aren't many folks like these guys left, but breakfast with them is an experience you won't soon forget.

One thing's for sure, Johnny's had a great life, never boring. He still commands great respect, has tons of friends, and most of all, as Frank's song says,

I've lived a life that's full.
I've traveled each and every highway;
And more, much more than this,
I did it my way.

Farbiks (l-r) Harvey Winokur, Temple Kerbel, Chaim Fred Greene, Temple Beth Tikvah; Ron Herstik, Cong. Dor Tivnik; Peter Berg, The Temple; and Scott Colbert, Temple B'nai M'El.



Farbiks (l-r) Ron Segal (Temple Sinai); Paul Kerbel, Cong. Eitz Chaim; Avraham Bortz, Cong. Or Hadar; Laurence Rosenthal, Ahavath Achim Synagogue; and Karpuj, Cong. Or Hadar.



On the far right: Nathan Lerner, Cong. Beth Shalom; Chaim Linderblatt, Cong. Ahavath Achim.

What do Rabbis Winokur, Greene, Herstik, Berg, and Colbert have in common with Rabbis Segal, Kerbel, Bortz, Rosenthal and Karpuj?

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JWS

From page 25



Moses Michael

Athens Jews benefited from the prosperity that followed the end of Reconstruction. The most prominent Jewish businessman in Athens was Moses G. Michael. Born in Jefferson, Georgia, in 1862, Michael moved to Athens with his family in 1865. By the age of sixteen, he had graduated from the University of Georgia with a degree in engineering, the youngest-ever graduate at the time. In July of 1882, he began a dry-goods business with his brother, Simon, in a small store that shared a building with the city jail and the city police court. The business grew, and eventually the Michaels took over the entire building.

By 1885, the brothers had entered the wholesale business and employed a traveling salesman to call on other stores nearby. Soon, they had five salesmen traveling throughout all of Northeast Georgia and part of South Carolina. Moses' sons, Leroy and David, would eventually take over the operation. During his lifetime, Moses Michael played many roles within both the Jewish and larger communities. He served as the president of the Chamber of Commerce and vice-president of the Athens Savings Bank, which he founded with clothier Myer Stern in 1892. Michael was also involved with Congregation Children of Israel, often leading services when there was no rabbi and serving as superintendent of the religious school for thirty years.

Such was the closeness of Moses and Simon Michael that, at the height of their prosperity, in 1902, they built twin neo-classical houses. Possibly as a demonstration of their love for each other or their desire to save money on architect fees, they built their identical mansions side-by-side and even connected them by a colonnade. Whatever the reason for this unique relationship and the brothers' companion homes, it did not last. Simon moved to a different home in 1912, after the death of his youngest son, Bert, while Moses would live in his house until his death in 1944. Both houses were demolished in the 1960s.



The twin neighboring houses built by brothers and business partners Moses and Simon Michael

By the early 20th century, there were growing disputes over the style of worship at Children of Israel. The congregation was slowly adopting Reform Judaism, which angered some of its more traditional members. The congregation had never been strictly Orthodox; during the dedication of the synagogue in 1883, there was an organ and a mixed-gender choir, and the congregation joined the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) by 1885. But, over the years, the congregation disaffiliated with the Reform UAHC.

In 1914, an Orthodox faction, led by Moses Michael, broke away to form the "Russian Jewish Congregation"; Michael led services for the traditional group. They rented a hall and worshiped separately from Children of Israel. The dispute was soon resolved as the breakaway group rejoined Children of Israel in 1916, which then numbered 38 member families. Apparently, this short-term breakaway did not leave too many hard feelings, as Michael was elected president of Children of Israel in 1920. By 1925, Children of Israel had once again affiliated with the UAHC.

According to the U.S. Census, 60% of Athens' adult Jewish population in 1920 was born in the United States, a remarkably high figure for a time in which immigrants dominated Jewish communities demographically around the country. Of those who were foreign born, a slight majority was born in Russia or Poland, while the remainder consisted of German immigrants. Although most of these immigrants had lived in Athens for many years, 38% of them were not yet naturalized citizens of the United States.

Athens Jews were concentrated in retail trade. In 1920, of the 64 Jews listed in the Athens city directory, almost a third were in the dry goods business, either as clerks or business owners. Many others were involved in other kinds of retail businesses, such as clothing, furniture, or jewelry. Over half of those employed owned their own businesses. Slightly over a third worked as salesmen or clerks, including a number of female stenographers. Only 6% were professionals, while another 6% were skilled laborers, most of whom were butchers.

Athens Jews were involved in a wide array of businesses. Aaron Cohen, Charles Stern, and "Moe" Levy owned men's clothing stores; Dorsey and Frankenstein sold furniture; and Jake Joel owned the old Palace Theatre. In 1929, 18-year-old Henry Rosenthal leased space in the basement of the Michael Brothers store as a manager of a shoe concession. The following year, he opened his own store with chairs that he borrowed from the Palace Theater. After World War II, Sol Abrams opened up the Harlem Theater, Athens' first movie theater that catered to African Americans.

A few Athens Jews were professionals in the early 20th century, a harbinger of a trend that would eventually reshape the Athens Jewish community. Jerome Michael was a lawyer who would go on to an illustrious career as Athens' city attorney and then assistant attorney general of the United



Congregation Children of Israel today (photo by Caryn Miller)

States. Jake Joel entered the law profession after briefly taking part in his father's theater business. He later became active in politics, serving five terms representing Athens in the Georgia General Assembly. Dr. Sigmund Cohn, a refugee of Nazi Germany, became the first Jewish faculty member at the University of Georgia. Cohn was the first in a wave of Jewish faculty that have contributed significantly to the Athens Jewish community ever since.

The years after World War II saw much growth the Athens Jewish community; its population went from 90 in 1937 to 210 by 1968. By 1965, the synagogue needed major repairs, and the city was planning an urban renewal project that required the destruction of the old building. Congregation President Harry Rosenthal negotiated an acceptable price for the property and then bought land near the university for a new synagogue. The new temple was dedicated on October 13, 1968. By the time of the congregation's 100th anniversary, in March 1973, membership had increased to 78 families. The congregation has been led by Rabbi Ronald Gerson since 1990 and has almost doubled in membership since he took over. Today, Congregation Children of Israel has over 140 members, many of whom are associated with the university.

As the university drew in more Jews from other parts of the country, there arose a group of Orthodox Jews who did not wish to worship in the Reform manner of the Children of Israel. In 1972, three Orthodox Jews organized a small minyan. At first, they met at peoples' homes and then, later, in the Hillel building at the University of Georgia. The group grew as students and professors, many affiliated with the UGA math department, began to participate. The group has never had a rabbi of its own, but often takes advantage of the Chabad and Kollel houses in the area, sometimes using their facilities and clergy. They are still not incorporated, leaving Congregation Children of Israel as the only chartered congregation in Athens.

In recent years, Jews have become active in local politics. In 2002, teacher and

University of Georgia graduate Heidi Davison was elected mayor. Since then, she has contributed to economic development, community improvement, and environmental initiatives in Athens. After being involved in local environmental protection efforts for many years, Ed Robinson was elected District 6 city commissioner in 2008.

Today, the Athens Jewish community is



Bumper stickers touting Jewish candidates for local office in Athens (photo by Caryn Miller)

thriving, with Congregation Children of Israel at its historical peak in membership. With an increasing number of Jews being drawn to this quaint college town, the community looks likely to continue its growth.

Readers can learn more about the history of Jewish communities in Georgia by visiting the Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities found at www.isjl.org. The Institute of Southern Jewish Life considers the encyclopedia to be a work in progress. It invites the public to contact Dr. Stuart Rockoff, at rockoff@isjl.org, with additional information related to the history of Jews in Georgia or other parts of the South.

Caryn Miller is an intern at the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life (ISJL). Dr. Stuart Rockoff is director of the ISJL History Department.

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41	13.07	11.31	19.98	16.46	40.70	31.90
42	13.68	11.66	21.21	17.16	43.78	33.66
43	14.34	12.06	22.53	17.95	47.08	35.64
44	15.09	12.45	24.02	18.74	50.82	37.62
45	15.88	12.89	25.61	19.62	54.78	39.82
46	16.72	13.38	27.28	20.59	58.96	42.24
47	17.64	13.90	29.13	21.65	63.58	44.88
48	18.57	14.43	30.98	22.70	68.20	47.52
49	19.62	15.00	33.09	23.85	73.48	50.38
50	20.77	15.62	35.38	25.08	79.20	53.46
51	21.96	16.24	37.75	26.31	85.14	56.54
52	23.23	16.90	40.30	27.63	91.52	59.84
53	24.60	17.60	43.03	29.04	98.34	63.36
54	26.14	18.35	46.11	30.54	106.04	67.10
55	27.81	19.14	49.46	32.12	114.40	71.06
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Schwartz on Sports

JEWISH GEORGIANS AT THE 2009 NATIONAL SENIOR GAMES. The National Senior Games is the largest multi-sport event in the world for people over the age of 50. The games were held August 1-15, in the Palo Alto/San Francisco Bay area. Over 10,000 competitors, plus their families and friends from around the United States, traveled to California to compete in 25 sports, ranging from horseshoes to water polo and shuffleboard to soccer.

This was the fourth time I competed as a member of the Atlanta Classics 3x3 basketball team. We actually had four teams competing, one in the 50-54 age group, which won the gold medal; two in the 65-69 age group, one coming in fourth and the other tenth; and one in the 70-74 age group, which finished in the Final Four. It was a wonderful experience, as were the other three in Virginia Beach, Virginia; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Louisville, Kentucky.

The basketball games were played at Stanford University's Maples Pavilion and were definitely the best organized of all the games I've attended.

My wife, Nancy, and I spent four days in the Palo Alto area, and it was beautiful. The weather was perfect, the accommodations great, the Stanford campus magnificent, and the basketball friendly, but highly competitive. I've never seen so many guys over 65 who are 6' 5" and taller congregated in the same area. I kept looking around for someone smaller than I, and I finally found a guy in the last game we played.

Our team played seven games in two days, and, if we had won the last game on Friday, we could have had three more the next day. Nancy told me that she watched more basketball than she cared to see, and it would probably be two years before she sees another game. But she, along with the other wives, were great fans and picture takers.

Before I left for Palo Alto, I wanted to find out if there were any other Jewish Georgians competing in the summer games. Nobody on the four Georgia basketball teams, besides me, was Jewish, so I started investigating the other sports.

I knew George Jordan had competed in tennis in past games. I see George all the time at the MJCCA, either at the EdgeWise educational programs or working out at the Brill Fitness Center. So, one morning, I talked to him about the upcoming games. He told me that he wasn't going, but Saul Cohen was competing in racquetball.

Great, another Jewish Georgian! Now, I had to figure out how to get in touch with Saul. By coincidence, later that afternoon, I ran into Joan and Larry Brenner at the MJCCA's food court. I had originally met them when they worked at the entrance counter of the Brill Fitness Center, and they told me about their involvement in sports through their children and grandchildren. I played basketball with their sons-in-law, Jonathan Ginsberg and Brian Krebs. I'd also written an article about their daughter,



BY **Jerry Schwartz**

Jody, and her involvement as a coach for the Maccabiah Games.

Somehow, the conversation got around to the Senior Games, and they told me that Joan's cousin, Saul Cohen, was going along with his wife, Myrna. I got Saul's phone number, we made contact, and I found out that racquetball started a few days after the basketball competition ended. So, I told him we'd get together when he got back, and we did.

This was also Saul's fourth Senior Summer Games. He participated in the 75-79 racquetball senior and doubles competition. He didn't fare so well in the singles, but he and his partner, Gerry French, won a bronze medal in the doubles.

This trip was extra special because his daughter, Barri Summey, and his 14-year-old grandson, Jacob, traveled from West Palm Beach, Florida, to see him compete in the tournament for the first time. They also allowed time to sightsee in the San Francisco area before the games started.

In talking with Saul about his background, I found that both he and I graduated from the University of Miami. He and his wife moved to Atlanta 30 years ago, and he worked in the commercial finance business for 43 years before retirement. He plays racquetball at the Concourse and really enjoys it, having been a member there for 20 years.

Maybe we'll be in Houston together for the 2011 National Senior Games. And if anyone knows a 6' 7" guy who is 65-69 years old and can play basketball, let me know. He doesn't even have to be Jewish.

THANKFUL. *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* sports columnist Furman Bisher wrote his last column on October 11, after a brilliant career covering 59 years.

One of my favorite columns of his came out every Thanksgiving, when he'd write about the things he was thankful for. So, here's my "Things I Am Thankful For" list in regard to the Jewish Georgian sports scene.

I Am Thankful For:

- basketball officials who know the difference between a block and a charge.
- a wife who understands that the two-minute warning in an NFL game means 20 more minutes before I can come to dinner.
- being able to get to the MJCCA on Saturday and Sunday mornings before the sides are selected for the first pick-up game.
- reaching the 35-minute mark on the stationary bike and knowing I'm through for the day.
- basketball players who understand the



Jerry Schwartz and Saul Cohen: Two Jewish Georgians talking about their experiences at the National Senior Games

"pick and roll."

- having children who recognize the importance and benefits of sports and provide their children the opportunity to participate.
- the many good guys I have played ball with and the friends I've made over the years.
- being able to get this 67-year-old body

through another year of competitive activity.

- another year of sharing my column in *The Jewish Georgian*.

Until next time, drive for the bucket and score.

New fund helps local families pay for day school

An anonymous donor is challenging the Atlanta Jewish community to help make Jewish education affordable for more families. The donor has already deposited \$54,000 into the newly established Last Chance Scholarship Fund (LCSF) and is willing to commit up to \$100,008.

While the community subsidizes local day schools through the Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta's annual campaign, the lion's share of per capita costs fall upon the parents' shoulders. As a result, Jewish education is largely viewed as available only to those children whose parents are wealthy.

The LCSF makes awards to the neediest families, those who have already qualified for tuition assistance through the scholarship process. Funds awarded

go directly to the participating schools, Or Yisrael, Temima, Torah Day School of Atlanta, and Yeshiva Atlanta.

Donations can be made via the CBJ (Congregation Beth Jacob) Charity Fund, earmarked "Last Chance." (Please note that the Last Chance Fund is not a project of Congregation Beth Jacob; CBJ is serving only as a conduit for contributions. All donations will go to the Last Chance Fund and will benefit students at the four participating schools only.) The deadline by which the anonymous donor will provide full funding is December 31, 2009.

Prospective donors seeking additional information regarding this opportunity can contact Rabbi Ilan Fedman, 404-633-0551 ext. 224 or rabbibethjacobatlanta.org.

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Consul General Mansour affirms Israel's support of gender equality

In his new role as dean of the city's Consular Corps, Ambassador Reda Mansour, consul general of Israel to the Southeast, was welcomed at CIFAL Atlanta's 5th Annual Global Forum, "Gender, Governance, and Economic Empowerment," which was held September 30-October 2.

CIFAL Atlanta, part of the International Training Center for Local Authorities/Actors (*Centre International de Formation des Autorités/Acteurs Locaux*, or CIFAL), is a joint initiative of the United Nations Institute for Training Research (UNITAR) and the City of Atlanta.

In his remarks, the ambassador highlighted Israel's strong history as a supporter of gender equality.

"Israel is known as the home of the Golda Meir Center in Haifa," commented Ambassador Mansour. "The Golda Center has been promoting gender issues since the 1950s."

Israel is one of the few places in the Middle East where women enjoy full political and personal rights. Just as in the U.S., women in Israel serve at every level in business and government and are treated with the same dignity and respect as their male counterparts.

Since its establishment in 2004, CIFAL has worked to provide local leaders with a forum to exchange best practices in support of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Currently, there are 12 CIFAL centers around the world.

CIFAL Atlanta specializes in four main areas: economic development, social development, information technology, and environmental sustainability. Since its inception, CIFAL Atlanta has trained more than 8,000 participants.

The 5th Annual Global Forum was the joint effort of the United Nations, UNITAR, CIFAL, the City of Atlanta, Fulton County, and Hunton Williams LLP.



Douglass Selby, Hunton and Williams partner; Nancy Boxill, Fulton County commissioner; Alexander Mejia, CIFAL Atlanta executive director; Ambassador Maria del Lujan Flores, permanent representative of Uruguay to the Organization of American States; Ambassador Reda Mansour, consul general of Israel and dean of the Atlanta Consular Corps; and Kurt Powell, Hunton and Williams managing partner.

Eleven-year-old pens book about life with her special-needs brother

Being the sibling of a child with special needs has its own unique challenges that often go unrecognized, unseen...especially when the disability itself is invisible. Eleven-year-old Morasha Winokur's *My Invisible World* is a gentle, honest book that describes what many families face daily

behind closed doors. In addition, this young author exposes a hidden public health crisis that impacts each of us.

Out of every 100 live births, one is affected by prenatal alcohol exposure, which is the leading known cause of intellectual disability. Fetal alcohol

spectrum disorders (FASD) is an umbrella term for a number of birth defects that can have lifelong neurological, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral consequences. This devastating legacy is 100% preventable if a pregnant woman does not drink alcohol.

As the "typical" sister, Morasha Winokur candidly shares her story about the invisible life that exists within a life that others think they know. Hidden dreams and hidden challenges become understood and embraced when a specially trained behavioral assistance dog for Morasha's brother joins the family. Through Chancer, an irresistible 90-pound golden retriever and the first dog ever trained to deal specifically with FASD, healing happens for not only Morasha's brother, but for each member of the family in unexpected ways.

My Invisible World is the first of three books in *The Chancer Chronicles* series. In *Nuzzle*, a children's picture book, Chancer, a service dog, tells children the story of how he helps to raise his special human boy. Children and adults will understand the daily challenges faced by an 11-year-old living with fetal alcohol syndrome. *Wounded in the Womb* is an adult non-fiction book that tells the story of the Winokur family's emotionally treacherous journey as it contends with Iyal's needs and struggles. These two books, by Donnie Kanter Winokur, will be published in the spring of 2010.

Morasha began writing *My Invisible World* at the age of eight and completed it three years later.



Morasha, Chancer and Iyal

Her hope for the book is that it "gets out to a lot of people. Fetal alcohol is 100% preventable, and my generation can stop it from happening to more babies," she says. "We all have to know about it."

Morasha's life in the United States began at 14 months, when she was adopted, like her brother, Iyal, from Russia by her parents, Donnie and Rabbi Harvey Winokur. As a toddler, Morasha created elaborate stories about her life in Russia, an early indication of her vivid imagination and irresistible style of expression. A 6th-grader at a public school in Roswell, Georgia, she lives with her parents; brother Iyal; his service dog, Chancer; and two cats, Manhattan and Eilat.

"Although specifically written regarding fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, her well-communicated observations are applicable to other diagnoses," says Yvonne W. Fry-Johnson, MD, MSCR. "*My Invisible World* should be recommended reading for all school personnel, pediatric healthcare providers, and health policymakers."

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FOR SENIOR AMERICA

Real estate professionals depend on Alan Wexler



BY Gene Asher

You can take the boy out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the boy.

Says who? Certainly not Alan David Wexler, who grew up in what was then small-town Carrollton but what is now big-town Carrollton, thanks mainly to Southwire.

Wexler made his mark in Carrollton, but he wanted bigger and better things. So he moved to Atlanta. After paying his dues by working for the other fellow (Ivan Allen Co.), he struck out on his own to do market research.

With little financial backing, he opened shop in his two-bedroom apartment.

Within 30 days, he had five major clients. Today he has more than 100 clients all over the world.

Wexler's company, Databank, is one of the largest market research companies in America. For the past 40 years, it has provided information to real estate firms, mortgage companies, the Atlanta Housing Authority, and many others.

For Atlanta-area real estate developers,

Databank has no equal. They rely upon Wexler's judgment of property values and rental rates, not only for commercial property but for the income potential from shopping centers, high-rise apartments, and condos as well.

Wexler's Databank Co. has won the respect of almost every real estate developer in the country.

Says Taz Anderson, one of the country's leading real estate developers, "He provides all the valuable information anyone would want to know for sellers, buyers, and investors: who buys, who invests, what the conditions of the sale are and what they should be.... I know of no one who does a better job of providing key information in a real estate sale than Alan Wexler."

Wexler is not the first small-town boy to make good in the big city, but he has to be one of the best all-round.

Says Walt Boden, senior vice-president

of the John Hunsinger Co., "Alan Wexler is the greatest. We consult with him monthly, on all sales of office space, warehouses, retail shops, and land.

"Once a year, he puts on a seminar, and it is so packed with vital information that it attracts the governor and all those running for political office. If anyone wants to know what is

going on in Atlanta, the state of Georgia, and most every place else, they need to talk with Alan."

Now 70 years old, Alan has spent 40 of those years building Databank. He left a

mark on Carrollton that few will equal.

He excelled in football and track at Carrollton High School. His speed and fierce determination as a running back helped his football team win the Georgia State Class A Championship. He sparked his track team to two championships, first in the Florida Relays and then in Georgia's All-Class State Championships; in both, he won the 440 and ran a leg on the relay team.

Wexler is hardly one-dimensional. Besides his football and track victories, he played the saxophone in the Carrollton High band, edited the school newspaper, and drove to Atlanta every weekend to attend religious services at the Ahavath Achim Synagogue.

He attended the University of Georgia and was a standout on the Bulldogs track team. He was president of the Tau Epsilon Phi fraternity and was selected for the Gridiron Honor Society.

In the summers, he was a counselor at camps Blue Star and Rutledge.

Wexler graduated from the University of Georgia with a journalism degree. He joined the staff of the old *Atlanta Constitution* but soon found out that you could not feed a wife and two children on bylines.

His children are Kara, 15, a sophomore at Riverwood High School, and Adam, 24, a musician.



Alan Wexler

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Sunday, December 13 – 10:00 a.m.

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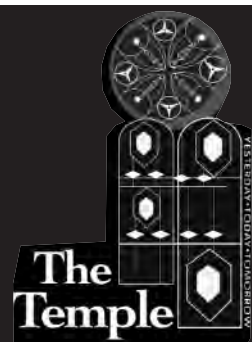
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New U.S. group supports special needs programs in Israel

The American Friends of Chimes Israel (AFOCI) was launched with successful events in Atlanta, Georgia, and Montgomery, Alabama. The AFOCI is a dynamic group of individuals who are committed to supporting the humanitarian and educational mission of Chimes Israel, a nonprofit organization in Israel that works to improve the lives of people with special needs.

Chimes Israel representative Evan Wertheim spoke at the inaugural meeting, which was held at the Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta on September 29. Dr. Alan Manheim, the founding executive director of Chimes Israel, was also present to answer questions and talk about his experiences with the organization. The meeting brought together over twenty people to learn more about the formation of the American support group and begin planning its future. The meeting generated a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement for partnering with an Israeli organization that impacts the lives of peo-



AFOCI in Atlanta: (from left) Brian Wertheim, Ronnie Merlin, and Sheryl Arno

ple with special needs.

On October 1, a parlor meeting was held in Montgomery, Alabama, at the home of Carol Hart. Rabbi Elliot L. Stevens of Temple Beth Or introduced Evan at the meeting. Fifteen people attended the event and donated over \$6,500, far surpassing the goal for the evening.

Chimes Israel assists individuals with special needs in developing to their fullest potential, so that each may live the most



AFOCI in Montgomery: (from left) Ina Orange, Carol Hart, Peggy Cohn, and Evan Wertheim

independent and rewarding life possible. It operates 18 different programs for people of any religion, gender, age, or ethnicity. Chimes Israel has a strong focus on working with the adult population through sheltered workshops, supported employment, inter-social skills, leisure activities, and other programs that are geared towards increasing independent behavior. Additionally, it operates several centers for infants with developmental delays as well



AFOCI in Montgomery: (from left) Rabbi Elliot Stevens, Anne Levin, Raymond Cohen, and Kathie Cohen

as several after-school special education programs for school-aged children. Further information can be found at www.chimes-israel.org.il.

Next up for AFOCI is a series of events to be held in Atlanta in early December. For more information, contact Evan Wertheim at afoci.info@gmail.com.



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JELF HONORS PAST PRESIDENTS



The Jewish Educational Loan Fund (JELF) honored its past presidents at the First Annual JELF Dinner of Honor on November 1, held at Ahavath Achim Synagogue. Nearly 200 people gathered to honor the past presidents and celebrate JELF's accomplishments. Honorees pictured are (left to right, back row first) Ned Montag, Marianne Garber, Hank Greenstone, Judy Wolman, Bea Feiman, Nancy Abrams, (front row) Paul Hirsch, Stephen Garber, Beryl Weiner, Marvin Botnick and Nanette Wenger.

אנו עומדים יחדיו
We stand with Israel
security • peace • solidarity

Annual Community Campaign makes impressive strides despite the gloomy economy

The Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta's annual Community Campaign 2010 launched September 1, with a goal of raising \$16 million to fund Jewish programs and organizations in Atlanta, Israel, and around the world. By the end of the campaign's first six weeks, one quarter of that amount had already been raised.

And, in only four days in late October, another \$801,055 was raised during a phone fundraiser, when over 300 volunteers obtained pledges from 1,200 individuals. Volunteers came from the following community organizations: Ahavath Achim Synagogue, Davis Academy, Breman Jewish Heritage and Holocaust Museum, The Cohen Home, Congregation Beth Jacob, Congregation Beth Shalom, Congregation Etz Chaim, Congregation Or Hadash, Congregation Or VeShalom, Congregation Shearith Israel, The Weber School, The Epstein School, Hillels of Georgia, Jewish Family & Career Services, Jewish Healthcare International, Greenfield Hebrew Academy, the Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta, Temima High School, The Temple, Temple Emanu-El, Temple Sinai, Torah Day School, The William Breman Jewish Home, Yeshiva Atlanta, and Young Israel of Toco Hills.

As each phoning session began, Federation President Steve Rakitt thanked



Bruce Weinstein, chair of Community Campaign 2010 Phonings, and volunteers from Temima High School (Photos courtesy of Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta)

volunteers for taking the time to make calls. Also present at the phonings were counselors from Jewish Family & Career Services. These volunteers weren't asking people for gifts, but were offering immediate support to those in need due to the continuing economic downturn.

With the theme, "The Good We Do Is Up to You," Community Campaign 2010 funds three focus areas: Jewish identity and continuity; vulnerable populations; and Israel and overseas. To accomplish its goals, Federation allocates campaign funds to 17 affiliate agencies and five pro-



Volunteer Sarah Khoshkesan from Temima High School



Volunteers hard at work

grammatic initiatives, called Outcomes, which impact every aspect of Jewish life in Atlanta and abroad.

"In the midst of a difficult economy, there are more requests for services than ever," Campaign Chair Joel Marks said. "It is truly moving to see so many community members stepping up to the challenge and personally answering the call for aid."

The campaign's success to date, in spite of the challenges of the economy, bears witness to the Jewish community's commitment to making a real difference.

As vice chairman and chief operating officer of Advanced Equities Financial

Corp., Marks brings a solid background in finance to his role as campaign chair. "I'm thrilled to work with an organization that is financially responsible."

This spring, Federation received national recognition from Charity Navigator, the nation's premier independent charity evaluator. The organization put Federation at the top of its rankings with a four-star rating, indicating that Federation "exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities." A four-star ranking puts Federation in the "exceptional" category for allocating 87.6 percent of all revenue to fund programming.

Learn more at JewishAtlanta.org.

Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta supports struggling senior program

The Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta supports aging seniors who want to continue living in their own homes through the Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) program.

"NORC is a good program," said beneficiary Elizabeth Davis. "Many people here benefit from the program. A lot of people don't have anywhere to go. It's good to be able to meet people like me. I've been involved for a year. I participate in the walking club and the birthday club. The program coordinator is great."

NORC provides seniors critical assistance with tasks they are not able to perform for themselves. After massive cuts in state funding, NORC was in danger of closing. Federation stepped in with a grant to sustain it, making up the deficit left by the funding cut.

Without NORC, the inability to do simple things, like running errands or changing a light bulb, would force seniors to move into assisted living facilities. With support from volunteer community members and NORC partner organizations, these seniors

can stay in their homes.

NORC serves seniors of various faiths, races, and nationalities, including Jews, African-Americans, Russians, Latinos, Catholics, Protestants, and other groups. The overwhelming majority of the seniors served at all NORC sites have low-to-very-low incomes.

"We're proud to support the NORC program," said Federation Project Director/Planner Deborah Kahan. "Knowing that our contribution allows so many seniors to continue living in their own homes gives us great satisfaction."

Although Federation has been able to keep NORC afloat until now, the program's future is uncertain. Massive budget cuts due to Georgia's fiscal crisis have crippled the program. Federation's support has bought NORC time to secure more funding.

Federation's annual Community Campaign launched in September. Without the funding the campaign garners, Federation would not be able to support the seniors who benefit from NORC.

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Class Notes

By Belle Klavonsky



A PROUD MOMENT. Of the 83 students inducted into Centennial High School's National Honor Society, seven were Davis Academy alumni/ae. Pictured: (from left) Jamie Gottlieb, Jake Seltman, Ashley Rosenberg, Kevin Spiegel, and Lindsey Rosenberg. (Not pictured: Jessica Jacobs and Nick Myers)



ACTIVE AND HEALTHY. Davis Academy 2nd-grader Ethan Asher tries out the new climbing structure on the Lower School playground. It is one of several recent outdoor additions, which include a junior-sized basketball court, four-square court, and kick wall (along with new triple jump and pole vault areas at the Middle School) that were installed as part of the school's Health and Wellness initiative. Throughout the year, the school will also feature special programs and speakers and create curriculum tie-ins in areas such as nutrition, internet safety, avoiding risky behaviors, and more.

A BOWL FOR A CAUSE. Each year, Davis Academy 6th-grade students make clay bowls



for the Empty Bowl Dinner, benefiting Jewish Family & Career Services' programs that help the homeless. Pictured: Jansen Redler works on his bowl during a Middle School art class.



MAKING MUSIC. As part of a yearlong rotation of electives, Davis Academy 4th- and 5th-grade students take music, along with subjects such as technology and world language. Pictured: 4th-graders (front row, from left) Mia Schwartz, Eli Katz, and Leora Greene; and (back row, from left) Marshall Berton, Judah Krug, Ian Levin, Mitchell Bohrer, Sophie Minsk, and Emily Falkenstein play recorders in Ms. Renfroe's class.

A DAY IN HISTORY. Eighth-grade social studies teacher Matthew Barry (left) poses as founding father George Washington with student David Martos, who plays the part of Virginia delegate and Declaration of Independence signer George Wythe in a reenactment of the Second Continental Congress. In an extraordinary annual learning event, students in Mr. Barry's classes spend weeks researching the people and issues that



caused the colonies to decide to break from Britain and form a new, independent government.



A SUKKAH LUNCHEON. Despite a rainy Sukkot week, Davis Academy students managed to enjoy some time in the school's beautiful new sukkahs, one each at the Lower School and Middle School. Each spacious new sukkah holds up to 100 people. Pictured: Kindergarten students (and twins) Ava and Lili Stark, lunching with their mom, Rhonda



A MEANINGFUL CELEBRATION. Eighth-grader Hannah Altman prepares to read the Torah at The Davis Academy Simchat Torah celebration, on October 9. The entire school, from Mechina (Kindergarten prep) to 8th grade, comes together each year for this joyous Davis tradition, during which two Torah scrolls, carefully held by Middle School students, are unrolled and read from, and each Lower School grade sings songs.

SHARING THE GIFT OF READING. During Chol Hamoed Sukkot, Greenfield



Hebrew Academy 7th and 8th graders went on a field trip to volunteer for the Books for Africa project, which collects and distributes books for children. The students spent the day at the local Books for Africa warehouse, sorting books and packing boxes for shipment. Pictured: 7th-graders Elliott Dosetareh, Asher Benator, Josh Williams, and Jaren Mendel



SPORTS AT GHA. GHA A-team girls volleyball finished the season 5th out of 9 teams in its league. B-team girls volleyball won the championship; the team's final record was 16-1. Boys A-team and B-team soccer both took 2nd place. Pictured: Boys B-team soccer



A HUNGER TO CREATE. Class 1G at GHA has been learning about author Eric Carle. The class read most of his books and discussed how he created illustrations with tissue paper and glue. They voted on which book to use as a model to write their own class book and selected *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. They then discussed which animal to use as their book's main character, took another vote, and then went to work on *The Very Hungry Woodpecker*. Everyone at school can now enjoy 1G's book. Pictured: Stav Manoh

SUKKOT SCAVENGER HUNT. During Chol Hamoed Sukkot, GHA 8th-graders used their Mishna skills to put together a scavenger hunt for the rest of the school. The clues covered the entire building, requiring hunt participants to shake the lulav, visit the sukkah, and think about who fasts and who doesn't on Yom Kippur. Students tried to solve the many intricate riddles, learned



about the major mitzvot of each of the High Holidays, and, at the end, enjoyed a sweet treat for Sukkot. Pictured: 4th-graders at the completion of the Sukkot Scavenger Hunt



MAKING LEARNING FUN. Morah Ilana's 1st-graders have worked very hard this year to learn new Hebrew vocabulary words. The GHA students are proudly displaying words they built as teams as well as on their own. This activity involved the children manipulating letters to "write" words from memory. Pictured: Jolie Adabi, Simon Linowes, Daniel Chasen, Noah Chen, and Marley Steuer



VISITING THE JEWISH HOME. On a recent visit to the William Breman Jewish Home, GHA 4th-graders got a real feel for the residents and what their lives are like, what they do each day, and what their needs and abilities are. The students learned that one 94-year-old resident is a WWII hero and several residents recently were bar and bat mitzvahed. The students entertained the residents by singing two Hebrew songs and performing Israeli dances. Students connected with residents one-on-one by chatting with them and giving them paper flowers they made. Pictured: Matthew Chen gives a handmade flower to his new friend.

MUSIC WITH MACHINES. Epstein Middle School's new enrichment academies, called "Odysseys," focus on arts, technology, math/science, and the humanities. Students take one class from each area throughout the year. One offering, "Making Music with Machines," is taught by flutist/teacher Jessica Sherwood, a member of Sonic Generator, the



new music ensemble-in-residence at Georgia Tech. In this elective, students explore different music technology and experiment with numerous devices, including an oscilloscope, Theremin, synthesizer, guitar effects pedals, and ZOOZBeat. The elective will culminate in a recording project of the students' pieces. Pictured: 7th-grader Jeremy Shapiro



1st-grader Ella Katz holds up the turkey she made.



Maddie Fellner and Ilana Hilley participate in drama activities.

CELEBRATING THE ARTS. This year, Epstein elementary students are participating in arts-filled themed afternoons. Recently, 1st-graders engaged in a Fall Arts Afternoon that integrated music, drama, art, and technology. Students sang songs, played percussion instruments, created corn on the cob with colored tissue papers, painted fall leaves, made turkeys, participated in drama games and poetry activities, created computer art, solved puzzles, and engaged in fall-themed learning activities in Epstein's computer lab.

LEARNING ABOUT LEONARDO. As part of Epstein's 4th- and 5th-grade history studies and the school's yearlong Celebration of the Arts, the High Museum's Emily Hermans and actress Suehyla El-Attar conducted a program about great Italian artist and inventor Leonardo Da Vinci. The visit began with stu-



dents being interviewed by Leonardo's assistant "Maria" (El-Attar), who was looking to fill an apprentice position. In the process, students learned about Leonardo's life, history, work, likes, and dislikes. Students also enjoyed a slide show of images from the High's current exhibition, "Leonardo Da Vinci: Hand of the Genius." Pictured: Omer Friedman and Suehyla El-Attar



Elliott Pollack, age 3, climbs aboard the caterpillar train.



Ava Kate Goldberg, age 3, sets sail from "Snowville."

SNOWVILLE. Thanks to the Sylvia and Martin Snow Charitable Foundation of the Pittsburgh Foundation, Epstein has completed the first of its Early Childhood Program and Elementary School playgrounds. "Snowville," for 2-3-year-olds, is surfaced with colorful, durable, and safe recycled materials. The theme of the playground is "Our Community." It is encircled by a "road" with pedal-powered cars and features a play café, gas station, ship, castle turret, and caterpillar train. The new elementary playground is nearing completion.

PEACE BY PIECE. Recently, The Weber School welcomed visitors from Marist and The W.D. Mohammed School for a day of interfaith learning. The day included tefillah, Israeli dancing, panel discussions with Judaic teachers, and a learning session with Dr. Sim Pearl, head of school, who explained Judaic ritual objects. Students also had time to get to know each other at lunch and during outdoors free time. Weber School Peace by Piece

members will visit their partner schools later in the school year.



ATHLETICS UPDATE. Weber athletes picked up numerous fall All Region and All State awards. Senior and soccer team forward Josh Videlefsky (number 11, pictured on the left), has made the GISA All State fall soccer team. Josh and senior defender Eli Oppenheimer also made the GISA Region 1-AAA All Region soccer team. In girls volleyball, junior setter Jessica Senft and sophomore outside hitter Samantha Westheimer made GISA Region 1-AAA All Region.

THE PLAY'S THE THING. No, not *Hamlet...Macbeth!* Students from Weber's 11th-grade British Literature and Composition class went to see a production of *Macbeth*. Seeing how directors and actors use subtext and characterization to interpret the intricacies of Shakespeare's language helps address class objectives such as comprehension, interpretation, and analysis of literature.

CURRENT EVENTS. Weber's Modern Arab/Israeli Conflict class is designed to provide students with critical thinking skills and a fair, honest understanding of the complex and controversial issues surrounding the conflict. As part of their studies, the students review newspaper and television coverage of Arab/Israeli relations, present their findings to the class, and lead a thoughtful debate surrounding current events. A recent student presentation included a review of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's remarks to the United Nations General Assembly.



BUBBE, ZAYDE, AND SUKKOT. Over thirty Weber grandparents gathered for a special Sukkot celebration in their honor in October. While the weather did not allow for a gathering in the sukkah, a good time was had by all, as they learned a little Torah with Head of School Dr. Sim Pearl, toured the building, and ate lunch with their grandchildren. Pictured: Nadine Paull, Phyllis Eisenberg, and Hannah Paull

Does the Eternal Light still burn in the Temple menorah?

The Last Ember

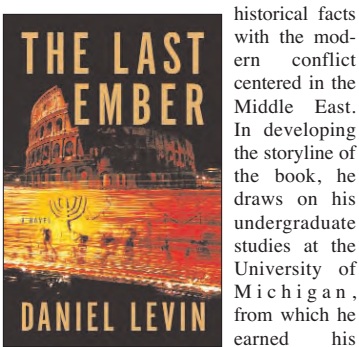
By Daniel Levin

Riverhead Books, 2009

415 pages, \$25.99 hardcover

Mystical symbolism, ancient history, and modern intrigue are all blended together by Daniel Levin in his new novel, *The Last Ember*.

This first literary offering by Levin, a fictional tale of a terroristic cabal, combines



historical facts with the modern conflict centered in the Middle East. In developing the storyline of the book, he draws on his undergraduate studies at the University of Michigan, from which he earned his bachelor's degree in Roman and Greek civilizations; his legal training at Harvard Law School; his Jewish background; his service as clerk for the chief justice of the Supreme Court of Israel; his experience as a practicing attorney; and his time as a visiting scholar at the American Academy in Rome.



BY Marvin Botnick

As you read this book, you cannot help but think that the current popularity of author Dan Brown, whose novels include *The Da Vinci Code*, helped motivate Levin. In this work, he has crafted a present-day fictional account of treachery, deceit, religious and societal conflicts, and heroism, interspersed with and woven into actual events and structures dating back to the days of the Roman Empire and the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

The central character is Jonathan Marcus, a young American attorney who studied at the American Academy in Rome and established himself as a sought-after legal representative among antiquities dealers. He is summoned from his firm's New York office to its Rome, Italy, office. There, he will serve on the firm's legal team representing the defendant in a case brought by the Italian Cultural Ministry, dealing with the ownership of two fragments from the Forma Urbis Romae, the Form of the City of Rome. In this role, he comes face-to-face with Dr. Emili Travia, now a UN official

and the ministry's expert witness in the case but also a fellow former student with whom Marcus had been romantically involved.

The plot revolves around a zealous villain, the fictional grandson of the Grand Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini, a historical figure who served as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and who sided with the Nazis. This character adopts the name of Salah ad-Din after Saladin, the 12th-century Muslim leader who became the Sultan of Egypt and Syria and led the Muslims against the Crusaders, eventually recapturing Palestine from the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

Based on the legacy left by his grandfather, Salah ad-Din is convinced that, after the destruction of the Second Temple, it was a replica of the Menorah that was taken to Rome, and that the original had been secreted in what is now the Temple Mount. He believes that not only did the Temple Menorah still exist, but also that the eternal light, the last ember, with its mystical power for the Jews, was still lit. Salah ad-Din wants to erase the historical basis of the Jews and the land, and he sets about the archaeological destruction of the past, including the Temple Menorah.

The underlying story is that of Yosef Ben Matityahu, who, after his capture by the Romans in 76 CE, later became a Roman citizen, changed his name to Josephus Flavius, became a confidante of

the Roman ruler, and went on to be the best known historian of that period. The concept in the novel is that Josephus was actually a double agent, outwardly evidencing a loyalty to Rome while secretly maintaining an allegiance to Israel and a mission of protecting the Temple Menorah.

Not only has Levin penned an intriguing historical novel spiced with actual events; he also shines a light on what appears to be an actual effort by certain parties to eliminate many historical artifacts. These are priceless properties that cannot be replaced, and it seems that world opinion is now becoming attuned to this politically motivated, wanton destruction.

But the book is not merely an impersonal account of events. As would be expected, the relationship between Marcus and Travia, both professionally and personally, is developed. There is also a transition by Marcus back to his original dedication to the antiquities.

I think that we will be hearing more from Mr. Levin. I have no doubt that his central character, Jonathan Marcus, will play a part in Levin's future literary contributions. Those who enjoy novels based on historical happenings will now have another intriguing author, whose offerings will bring many hours of enjoyment.



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