

# Shalom

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**Opinion**

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# Happy Chanukah



Over the past few weeks, we witnessed events in the Jewish community that gathered people in support for Israel. Each time I see Jewish people united with a common goal, that is a special moment for me. It shows to the world that even though we are not many, and that we are diverse, and even though there are those that hate us for no reason, united, we are strong.

As the Presidential elections in the U.S. came to a close, we saw that the defeated candidate was criticized for not connecting to the immigrant community, which includes Latinos and other minorities. What were once the “Invisible

People,” the people that we may not know by their names but who serve our coffee, clean our offices and maintain our lawns, have spoken, made their voices known at the polls, and have emerged as a major force in our country.

I am Brazilian, I am Jewish, and of course, I connect with both communities. One thing that has always amazed me is how much both groups have in common, and yet, how little they know about each other. Each time I tell my fellow Brazilians that I am Jewish, they think that I was born in Israel or that I converted. It is difficult for them to understand that one can be Jewish and be born anywhere in the world, including in Rio de Janeiro. On the other hand, when I tell Jews that I was born in Brazil and my parents were born in Lebanon, it is a double surprise.

When the most recent conflict between Israel and Gaza began, I decided to go on various Portuguese-speaking radio programs in Massachusetts to explain the situation. Most of the listeners were Catholics or Evangelicals who learn about Israel when they read the Bible. Judging from the questions posed by the host, it was clear that they often mix up the term Israelites with Israelis. Some of them think that because Jews were called Israelites, that means that we were all born in Israel. To me, it is funny that non-Jews see a stronger connection between Jews and Israel than between many Jews themselves. I had to explain that you can be Jewish and born in Brazil, and also, that you could be born in Israel, and not be Jewish.

As we reach more and more non-affiliated Jews by enlarging the distribution of *Shalom*, I hope that this edition will help you connect with Israel and the local Jewish community.

May the Festival of Light brighten our world and bring peace to all.

*Shirley Nigri Farber* - Editor

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*Shalom Magazine has been published 4 times a year since April 2009. Free copies are distributed in Massachusetts and available for download at our website [www.ShalomMA.com](http://www.ShalomMA.com).*

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**Cover: Zamir Chorale at LimmudBoston 2012**

**Photo: Mickey Goldin**

**CONTACT: 781-975-1009 Editorial**

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# Community Event Listings

## *Boston Israel Group*

BIG (Boston Israel Group) presents an olive oil tasting in honor of Chanukah. Join other young adults on Thursday, Dec. 13 at 6:30 p.m. for wine, cheese, and premium authentic olive oil from around the world! Cost: \$10. For location and to RSVP, email [contact@bostonisraelgroup.org](mailto:contact@bostonisraelgroup.org).

## *J Street Lecture*

Jeremy Ben-Ami, president and founder of J Street, will speak about "U.S. Leadership in 2013: Advancing Israel's Peace and Security" on Monday, Dec 17 at 7:30 p.m. at Temple Israel of Boston, 477 Longwood Ave, Boston as part of a series entitled "Learn, Debate, and Engage: Five Nights, Five Advocates" hosted by Temple Israel (<http://www.tisrael.org/learndebateengage.asp>). For information contact Temple Israel ([news@tisrael.org](mailto:news@tisrael.org), 617.566.3960) or J Street Boston ([boston@jstreet.org](mailto:boston@jstreet.org), 617-401-5553). The event will also be live-streamed at <http://tisrael.org/flashvid2.asp>. Free and open to the public.

## *Sam Glaser in Concert*

Sam Glaser, singer and composer, will perform his music at two Worcester locations: as part of Friday night Sabbath services, starting at 7 p.m., at Temple Sinai on December 7 and for a free concert on the first night of Chanukah at Temple Emanuel in the sanctuary, at 7 p.m., on Saturday, December 8. Glaser is an internationally known musician and composer. Over 100,000 people hear him each year during his concert tours. Glaser's Jewish CDs include Hallel, Nigun/Voice of the Soul, Presence, The Bridge, A Day in the Life and the award-winning children's musical Kol Bamidbar. For further information, contact Wendy at 508-755-2519 or [educator@templesinaiworcester.org](mailto:educator@templesinaiworcester.org).



## *Chanukah Celebration Temple Hillel B'nai Torah, 120 Corey St., West Roxbury*

On Dec. 14, come celebrate the seventh night of Chanukah with dinner, singing and games. Preschool story and service (6 and under) 5:30-6 p.m., followed by all ages 6 p.m. dinner with latkes, candlelighting, singing, dreidel and making friends. All invited to bring your own Chanukah Menorah and candles and we'll create a sea of festival lights. Cost \$18 per person; Children under 13 free. For reservations, call 617-323-0486 or email [hboffice@temple.hbt.org](mailto:hboffice@temple.hbt.org)

Temple Hillel B'nai Torah is a warm, inclusive Reconstructionist community that honors tradition and is responsive to the world we live in. Our Chaverim School offers innovative Jewish programming with an emphasis on progressive values for pre-K through high school.

## *Miri Mesika at Berklee*

On Saturday, December 15 at 8 p.m., the Greater Boston audience is in for a true musical treat at the Berklee Performance Center - HaKeshet ([www.hakesheronline.com](http://www.hakesheronline.com)) is proud to collaborate again with Teev Events to bring the highly acclaimed artist Miri Mesika, and her band to Boston for the first time.

Mesika is one of Israel's most beloved and multi-talented artists, whose singing range extends from Pop to Rock and Ethnic music in Hebrew, Arabic, and French.

Tickets are available at [www.berklee.edu/events/miri-mesika](http://www.berklee.edu/events/miri-mesika) and by phone via HaKeshet, Inc. at 617-738-5038. E-Mail [annette@hakesheronline.com](mailto:annette@hakesheronline.com) for more info.

**For information on how to include your event in listings, please send an email to: [shalomma@msn.com](mailto:shalomma@msn.com). Shalom is not responsible for the information provided by event organizers. Please contact them before attending.**

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# STAND WITH ISRAEL RALLY

*On November 19, more than 2,000 supporters of Israel came to Temple Mishkan Tefillah in Newton to attend a "Freedom from Fear" rally organized*

*by Combined Jewish Philanthropies and the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston. The crowd was filled with Israel supporters of all ages who are concerned about the ceaseless rocket attacks which Hamas and other terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip have been launching against innocent men, women and children since Israel left Gaza completely in 2005.*

*Supporters heard from a wide range of speakers, including Consul General of Israel to New England Shai Bazak and Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick. Israeli lawyer Tziona Koenig-Yair, currently in Massachusetts on a Harvard fellowship, gave an emotional recount of her family's routine of rushing to take shelter during rocket attacks in Israel.*



Tziona Koenig-Yair



Pastor Juarez from New Life Church, East Boston



Jeremy Burton, JCRC



Governor Deval Patrick

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# STAND WITH ISRAEL: FREEDOM FROM FEAR RALLY

photos: Shirley Farber



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# ADL YOUNG LEADERSHIP CELEBRATION



*Elliot Targum and Jamie Golden with ADL members*



*Scott and Shirley Farber, Debora Heller and Renato Duek*

More than 300 ADL young leaders from Greater Boston gathered at Villa Victoria in the South End for ADL's 10th annual Young Leadership Celebration, honoring Jamie Golden and Elliot Targum with the Krupp Leadership Award. Judi Krupp provided historical framework in her comments, before presenting the award.

ADL New England Board Vice Chair David Grossman, an ADL young leader himself, spoke about the impact that ADL young leaders often have in the community. Golden has been involved with ADL since she attended ADL's Team Harmony as a high school student. She represented ADL on missions to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, as well as to Austria and Germany. Golden is the co-chair of ADL's Associate Board and sits on the New England Regional Board as a member of both the Nominating and Development Committees.

Targum graduated from ADL's Glass Leadership Institute in 2010 and has stayed involved with ADL ever since. He was the Co-Chair Elect for the Glass Class of 2011 and the Co-Chair for the Glass Class of 2012, helping to insure that more young leaders would stay involved with ADL. He is currently part of the Associate Board and is the Co-Chair of the Glass Leadership Institute Alumni Association.

Guests at the event enjoyed drinks, refreshments, dancing and raffles, as well as a silent auction.

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## ADL YOUNG LEADERSHIP CELEBRATION



*Avner Fink and Ilana Snapstailer,  
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# AJC COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP EVENT



City Counselor Mike Ross presenting the 2012 AJC Boston Community Leadership Award to Robert Beal



Consul General Ilias Fotopoulos, former MA Governor Michael Dukakis, NAIOP CEO David Begelfer, and former UMass Medical School Vice Chancellor Albie Sherman



Alan Dana, AJC Boston Board of Directors, and Margie Dana

On Oct. 17, AJC Boston was proud to honor Robert L. Beal, President of the Beal Companies, with our 2012 Community Leadership Award. The evening was a testament to the great work of Robert and of AJC. We learned that Robert is a true connector in the Boston community. Whether it be the State Treasurer who used to be his little brother in the Big Brother Program, the former Governor who taught him to ride a bike, or the many community leaders whom Robert has mentored, every part of this city has been touched by his leadership. At the same time, we learned about the initiatives AJC Boston has taken in connecting the Jewish community in Boston to AJC's global Jewish advocacy, to the diplomatic community, and to the many diverse faith and ethnic communities in Boston.



Leslie Godoff; David Squire, AJC National Board of Governors; and Ned Dublio, AJC National Board of Governors

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# The David Project Presented

## David Horovitz



*David Horovitz; Seth Klarman, Co-Chair of the Board; David Bernstein; The David Project Executive Director; and Grace Zimmerman, Co-Chair of the Board*

David Horovitz, founding editor of The Times of Israel, spoke on behalf of The David Project at Temple Emanuel in Newton on November 15, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. Over 150 people were in attendance as Horovitz spoke eloquently and touched on a number of timely points dealing with the current conflict in Israel. Horovitz was previously editor-in-chief of The Jerusalem Post, before stepping down in July 2011 after almost seven years. He was also editor and publisher of the award-winning news magazine, The Jerusalem Report. While in Israel, Horovitz has written for newspapers around the world, including The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Irish Times and (London) Independent. He is a frequent interviewee on CNN, BBC, Sky, Fox News, NPR and other TV and radio stations.



*Sherry Alpert of Canton asks a question*

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# CONGREGATION TIFERETH ISRAEL

## 90TH ANNIVERSARY

Congregation Tifereth Israel held a 90th Anniversary celebration on Sunday, Oct. 21, at the Continental Restaurant in Saugus. CTI is a Sephardic synagogue with a membership of approximately 100 men and women, located in Peabody. It was founded in 1922 by a small group of families, mostly from Turkey, who had recently immigrated to the U.S. As part of the celebration, members came to the podium to offer their recollections of the early days of CTI and spoke about what their membership in the small, welcoming shul has meant to them.

Attendees were provided with a program listing the names of the Charter Members, Religious Leaders, and Presidents from the founding of the synagogue until the present. Entertainment was provided by singer Ann Segal, accompanied by pianist Paul Madore. In conjunction with this year's celebration, the Ladies Auxiliary of CTI has created a 90th Anniversary Commemorative Cookbook containing delicious traditional Sephardic recipes, tasty Askenazic recipes, and other family favorites submitted by members of the Congregation. The cookbook is professionally printed and spiral bound and is available for \$12, plus \$5 shipping and handling. To see a preview of the cookbook with the complete table of contents, visit <http://ctipeabody.org>.

*Congregation Tifereth Israel of Peabody*



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# Boston Israel Group



*Boston Israel Group Fall Foliage Hike to the Blue Hills.  
To join or learn about future events, visit [www.bostonisraelgroup.org](http://www.bostonisraelgroup.org)*



## JVS Event : Transitions to Careers in Nonprofits



*Transition to Careers in Non Profits recently held at CJP, sponsored by Career Moves - A Division of JVS*

### *Career Moves – A Division of JVS Event*

The Transitions to Careers in Nonprofits event took place on November 14. Hosted by CJP, and moderated by veteran employment specialist George Zeller, Career Moves presented a panel of experts who shared key information with the audience of folks interested in learning about employment in the nonprofit sector. Panelists were: Deborah Elizabeth Finn, Strategist and Consultant to Nonprofit and Philanthropic Sectors, and Founder of Mission-Based Massachusetts; Rodney Byrd, Human Resource Manager, Third Sector New England; Margaret Chapin, HR Specialist, JVS; Chrissy Holt, Search consultant, Commongood Careers.

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# ISRAEL RALLY AT TEMPLE EMUNAH



Over 300 people from Temples Emunah and Isaiah of Lexington, and the surrounding Northwest Suburbs came together in support of Israel at Temple Emunah on Sunday, Nov. 25. Called by Congressman Ed Markey, the rally featured speakers who included Congressman Markey, Consul General Shai Bazak, CJP President Barry Shrage, ADL President Jeffrey Robbins, and Massachusetts State Treasurer Steven Grossman. It was an inspirational evening uniting the community in solidarity as attendees reflected on the issues facing Israel today.



*Congressman Ed Markey*



*CJP President Barry Shrage*



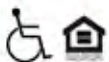
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# The Day of the Bomb

By Shirley Nigri Farber

Some people write music based on something that they have experienced. For me, certain music re-connects me with something that I experienced, and inspires me to write about it. During his recent show in Boston, as I heard Rami Kleinstein play the theme song of his first album *Yom Shel Haptzatza* (The day of the bomb) on the piano, I thought about the first time in my life that I heard an explosion.

It was 1986 and I was taking a year off to experience life in Israel. I was 17, living in Kibbutz Sde Eliahu in the northern part of Israel, bordering Syria. I was learning Hebrew part time, and working the other part. At the same time, my sister Daisy, who is four years older, was in Israel on a different program. On my days off I would travel around the country, and visit my grandmother in Petach Tikvah or my sister in Jerusalem. Very often I would pass by the central bus station in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem, where they would be playing some of the Israel's latest hits. It was there that I first purchased one of Rami Kleinstein's cassettes, as well as one by Shalom Chanoch. At that time I had a *Walkman*, and I would listen to the cassettes during work and travel.

I remember being at the Heritage Hostel in the Old City of Jerusalem one evening when I heard a loud noise that sounded like a bomb explosion.

Because the sound was so loud, we figured that it exploded nearby, and so we went out to see what had happened. I had just turned 18, and did not know much about Israel's politics or the situation in the Middle East. In my Jewish school, we learned about a Utopian Israel, the land of our fathers, as described in the Torah. We learned about some of Israel's past wars, but at that point I was not familiar with current conflicts with the Palestinians. While in Israel, I would hear about terrorist attacks, and that the Organization for the Liberation of Palestine was fighting for the land. But at that time I had very little access to the media, could not read the newspapers in Hebrew, had no TV in my room, and could not understand much on

the radio either. But one person caught my attention when talking about the situation. It was the polemic Rabbi Meir Kahane. I briefly remember him saying that Jews should not deal with terrorists, we should not negotiate, and that he wanted to expel all Arabs from Israel. People would call him radical, even crazy.

That day of the explosion, my sister was not with me, and I recall walking to the area of the explosion with some of the hostel guests. Remember, I was coming from the sunny and peaceful beaches of Ipanema and Rio de Janeiro. I had never heard a gunshot or seen a person bleeding heavily. What I saw just outside the Dung Gate of the Old City of Jerusalem, the gate that is the nearest one to the Western Wall, was a group of Israeli soldiers in uniform lying on the floor, many of them bleeding and crying. Later, I learned that they were at a military ceremony at the Western Wall with their families and when they went back to their buses, terrorists threw grenades at the buses. I asked myself a simple question that my 8-year-old asked when I was teaching him about the Holocaust: why do they want to kill Jewish people? After a while, a rabbi and his group walked by. People told me that it was Kahane. What a strange scene. While he was walking, people were applauding him as if they agreed with his ideas of how to deal with terrorists and Arabs in general. It was a mix of people on the floor crying and recovering from the shock, and at the same



time applauding a man that had been call by many a crazy radical.

If life was a movie, Rami's song could have been the theme for that scene. After that, I went back to normal life in Brazil and started college. I never thought about that scene again, and never talked to anyone about it either. It was as if I had merely seen a movie. Actually, I wrote in my diary that none of my friends were interested in hearing about Israel anyway.

Recently, I googled the event to make sure it really happened, and I also checked what I wrote on my agenda. It was October 15, 1986, and the Givaty Infantry Brigade was boarding buses at the Dung Gate after participating in a military ceremony at the Wailing Wall when the grenade exploded. Seventy people were injured, and one killed. The PLO claimed responsibility.

Martin David Kahane, also known as Meir Kahane, was an American-Israeli rabbi and ultra-nationalist writer. As a political figure, he proposed, in an attempt to avoid the eventuality of Jews becoming a minority in their own land, a compensation plan for Arabs who would leave voluntarily, and encouraged retaliatory violence against Arabs who attacked Jews. He was considered a racist by many Jewish organizations, including the Israeli government. He was jailed several times based on allegations of planning armed attacks against Palestinians in response to the killings of Jewish settlers. Kahane was assassinated in November, 1990 in New York, by an Egyptian-born American citizen.

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# Student Chesed Battalion Aids Storm-Battered New Yorkers

By Jason Avigan '13

On Sunday, Nov. 11, fifty-one Maimonides students in Grades 8-12 arrived in Long Beach, New York.

Headed by Rabbi Mordechai Soskil, Upper and Middle School Judaic Studies Principal, and Mrs. Judy Boroschek, General Studies Principal, the volunteers had stepped up for a day of manual labor to help some of those worst hit by Hurricane Sandy.

What we saw was shocking and painful to many.

The first glimpse into the uprooted lifestyle was a sign instructing residents: "Do not flush toilets." That was the least of their problems.

Driving along the beach, we saw mountains of sand collected from the neighborhood. Carried in by waves of water, the sand itself had been a huge factor in the destruction of many homes.

Venturing further into the wasteland, we began to look down residential streets, where the destruction wrought by the storm manifested itself on front lawns. In front of every house lay immense piles of garbage - garbage that until the storm on Oct. 29 and 30 was these people's furnishings and other possessions.

The bus dropped us off in one of the most devastated areas, where we split into groups of five and six. Groups walked from door to door, asking people what they could do.

"I was skeptical at first, doubting we could get anything done in such a short period of time," said Shoshana Stitcher '13. "When we got there, though, we got right to work and were able to help a lot of people who needed us."

Adam Kramer '13 asked several people before finding somewhere for his group to work. He remarked, "Countless people turned us away, telling us about others who needed our help even more. Despite everything they had lost, they seemed so selfless."

Each group, however, quickly found a way to make itself useful. Elisha Jacobs '13 and his group got to work on a pile of debris left on the sidewalk outside a man's house.

"If you could get this cleared up before my kid gets home," the man told Elisha with a grateful smile, "it would mean so much to him." The group shoveled through the wreckage, much of which was evidently sewage, bagged it and set it out to be taken away.

Daniel Ofman '13 and his group used saws to cut up tree branches to be hauled away. Jacob Bergel '13 led his group in the demolition of a family's garage, breaking up walls and carrying away the remains.

Most groups, though, focused on helping families dispose of their belongings. "It was like spring-cleaning except no one chose what to throw out - they had to get rid of everything," commented Elisha Galler '13. He added, "We almost felt like a moving service, except instead of loading peoples' lives onto a truck, we dumped them on the curb."

My group spent a majority of the time helping one family move the wreckage piled in the backyard onto the front lawn. Every time we picked something up, we had to walk back through the house. The house was completely empty. Every piece of furniture



had been removed, and most of the rotting walls had been broken up and discarded.

When I found a family portrait within the wreck, I carried it through what was left of the house, understanding what had been lost. The mother saw me and asked me to put the photograph aside to be saved, but I knew that the picture was ruined.

After several hours of work, the groups reassembled and returned to the bus. We shared our experiences and Yoni Schoenberg '13 commented, "I know we could only make the tiniest dent in the catastrophe, but it was still nice to do what we could."

The others agreed, many admitting that they felt proud to tell people they had made the trip from Boston to help. "In school we learn about chesed and tzedaka, some of our most important values. But this gave us an opportunity to DO chesed, which really is a more important lesson," said Rabbi Soskil.

Soon we arrived at the house in nearby Lawrence of Maimo alumna Leah (Rosenfield) Lightman '78, who served us dinner and expressed her deep gratitude for our help. Many heads nodded in agreement when she told us, "Nobody can understand the devastation unless they come and see it."

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# Meet The Mensches

*Excerpted from: Rabbi Rocketpower and the Mystery of the Missing Menorahs - A Hanukkah Humdinger, by Rabbi Susan Abramson and Aaron Dvorkin. Illustrated by Ariel DiOrio.*

Not so long ago, in a place not too far from here, lived a mom, a dad, a boy and a cat.

If you met them, you wouldn't notice anything unusual.

But for those in the know, this was one very unique family.

You see, the mom was not only a mom. She was a rabbi. And she wasn't only a rabbi. She was a rabbi with super powers.

Everyone knew her as Rabbi Beatrice Ann Mensch (B.A. Mensch for short). But before you could say "Shma Yisrael,"\* she could transform herself into the courageous, all powerful, all knowing Rabbi Rocketpower... able to wipe out evil wherever she found it, able to make bad guys turn good with a flick of her mighty yad,\* able to make peace where there was war with a blast of her mighty shofar.\*

Whenever she blasted off on one of her missions, she would shout "Oy vay! Up, up and away!"

Dad was no ordinary dad. He was a brilliant, multilingual computer scientist. He could find any information you needed to know on his trusty secret supercomputer before you could type [www.helpmefindthisinformation.com](http://www.helpmefindthisinformation.com).

Aaron was no ordinary boy. He was always the first to notice when something was not so kosher. He was his mother's trusty right-hand boy. No one knew it, but he was a super-boy-in-training.

Last, but not least, was their crazy cat Purr. She looked like an ordinary black cat with white paws and a white stripe running down her tummy. But in fact, she was the only cat on earth who could talk. And most of the time, what she said was not very nice.

The Mensch family thought they had adopted a cute little kitten from the animal shelter. But after they brought Purr home, she informed them that her full name was "Purreneal Pest" and that she was actually an alien from the planet P.I.A., which stands for "Pain In the Asteroid."

She preferred spending her days chasing her tail, trying to catch bugs on the ceiling and chewing up plants. But when the family was trying to solve a mystery, she did condescend to help out....

## Chapter 1 - Purr's First Hanukkah

"Purr!" Aaron called excitedly when he came home from school. "Tonight is going to be your very first Hanukkah!"

"Hanukkah, shmanukkah," yawned Purr. "Wake me up when it's over."

"You don't even know what Hanukkah is," Aaron insisted. "First of all, it lasts for eight days."

"Eight days!" she groaned. "This is going to be one long catnap."

"Second of all," Aaron continued, ignoring her, "we get to play a fun game called dreidel.

And we'll make delicious potato pancakes called latkes and jelly doughnuts called sufganiyot."

"Remind me to lick them when you're done," Purr smirked, unimpressed.

"But before we do anything, we'll light the Hanukkah menorah and choose what color candle to put in each candle holder," Aaron continued.

"Don't you know I prefer it when it's dark?" she snickered.

"I bet if you knew what Hanukkah was about you'd really like it," said Aaron. "There was a really bad cat called Antiochus who destroyed the Jews' holy temple in Jerusalem. He sent his army to tell all the Jews they couldn't be Jewish anymore. But a man named Judah and his family called the Maccabees fought and won back the Temple. They found a little jar of oil there which miraculously burned for eight days instead of one. And we get presents every night to celebrate!"

"Presents?" Purr said, perking up. "Now you're talkin' bub."

## Chapter 2 - Got Menorahs?

"Aaron," Rabbi Mensch called from her study upstairs, "could you please take the Hanukkah menorah down from the mantel and put it on the dining room table? It's almost time to light the candles!"

Aaron grabbed a chair and brought it over to the fireplace. He reached up over the wood ledge and felt around right in the middle where he knew the menorah was always kept. But he couldn't find it.

He jumped off the chair and took a couple of steps back to see if someone had moved it slightly. But it wasn't on the mantel at all. He looked in the living room, the dining room, the kitchen, even under his bed. It was nowhere to be found.

"Very funny, mom," he shouted, assuming his mother was playing a trick on him. "Where did you hide it?"

"What are you talking about?" she answered. "It's right where it always is."





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# Chanukah Questions & Answers

By Rabbi Susan Abramson

## What Does Chanukah Commemorate?

This holiday celebrates the Jews' defeat of the Greek ruler Antiochus the 4th in Palestine in the 2nd century BCE. Antiochus desecrated the holy Temple in Jerusalem and used his army to intimidate the Jews into abandoning their traditions. Judah Maccabee and his sons, who lived in the town called Modiin, organized a revolt and eventually defeated the army, regaining control of the Temple and reconsecrating this holy site.

## What Does The Word Chanukah Mean?

Chanukah means "rededication," in honor of the holy Temple in Jerusalem being rededicated by the Jews after they won the war.

## Why is Chanukah Eight Days Long?

The most important Jewish holiday at the time was *Sukkot*, an eight-day fall harvest festival. During the war, the Jews were unable to perform the rituals and sacrifices associated with this holy day. When the Jews reconsecrated the Temple, their highest priority was to celebrate this sacred occasion.

## Why Do We Light A Chanukah Menorah?

The Talmud tells the story of how after the Jews regained the Temple, they found a little jar which only had enough oil to illuminate the menorah in the Temple for one day. Miraculously, it burned for eight days. We light a menorah to recall this miracle.

## How Do We Light the Chanukah Menorah?

Each night we add another candle to the left on the menorah. The shamash or helper candle, which is situated above the other candles, is used to light the candles for each night. It is customary to light the candle for the newest night first (the one furthest to the left), then move

to the right until each candle has been lit. Some families have a menorah for each member of the family. Others have one menorah for everyone. It is supposed to be lit after sundown, except on Shabbat, when it is to be lit before the Shabbat candles.

## What is the Difference Between A Menorah and a Chanukiah (Chanukah Menorah)?

The first menorah was created by the artist Bezalel in Biblical times, to be placed in the Tabernacle that the Israelites carried through the desert. It has seven branches and is reminiscent of the Burning Bush and the six days of creation. There is a detailed description of it in the Torah (Exodus 25:31-40).

A Chanukah menorah has nine branches, symbolizing the eight days of the holiday and the eight days that the menorah burned in the Temple after it was rededicated by the Maccabees.

## Where Do You Put A Chanukah Menorah?

Traditionally, the *menorah* is placed in a window to proclaim the miracle of Chanukah to the outside world.

It is acceptable to use an electric menorah if there are safety concerns. The candles are supposed to burn for at least 30 minutes.

## What Do You Do After You Light the Chanukah Menorah?

There are three blessings to be recited the first night of Chanukah: the blessing over the candles, thanking G-d for the miracle of Chanukah, and the *Shehecheyanu* prayer thanking G-d for enabling us to reach this season. On all subsequent nights, only the first two blessings are recited. These may be found on the Internet, and often on the box of Chanukah candles.

## What Special Foods Do You Eat on Chanukah?

It is traditional to eat fried foods such as *latkes* (potato pancakes) and *sufganiyot* (donuts) to recall the miracle of the oil.

## What Is A Dreidel?

A *dreidel* is a four-sided top which has one Hebrew letter on each side. The letters stand for the Hebrew phrase *nays gadol haya sham* - a great miracle happened there. Dreidels in Israel contain the phrase *nays gadol haya po* - a great miracle happened here. It is used to play a gambling game, often using gelt (chocolate coins), nuts or small candies.

## Chanukah Gift Giving

It is traditional to give children gifts on this holiday to celebrate the liberation of the Temple. Some families exchange a small gift each night. Others prefer to exchange one larger gift. More and more families dedicate at least one night of the holiday to give a monetary gift to a charity, food to a food bank, etc.

**Rabbi Abramson is the rabbi of Temple Shalom Emeth, Burlington, MA.**



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# Building community and student leadership at Striar Hebrew Academy

The recent Elementary Shabbaton at Striar Hebrew Academy was a transformative experience. It accomplished this not only by turning the social hall into a beautiful Shabbat dining room, but also by allowing the fourth, fifth and sixth grade students to lead every aspect of planning the event. Each grade was responsible for cooking part of the meal, leading a song, and creating a game.

Fourth graders made chicken soup from scratch, adding the special ingredient of “Shabbat,” while learning new Hebrew words. They also made elaborate centerpieces, which depicted scenes and verses from the parsha, to adorn the Shabbat tables (see photo). Fifth graders cooked matzah balls and cookies, while the sixth graders baked challah and gathered in the school kitchen during the week with parents in order to cook the Friday night dinner. Once all of the preparations were in place, a certain magic was set in motion.

“Seeing everyone involved in the *Kabbalat Shabbat davening* [with the Young Israel of Sharon], and watching students enjoying Shabbat as a community with singing, food and fun was an awesome experience,” said Judaic Studies teacher Bracha Frohlich.

“The kids who were in charge of leading a song really took ownership of it,” added Nina Cusner, another Judaic studies teacher. “They prepared and practiced the melody themselves, then taught it to the class, and then the class presented it at the Shabbaton.”

“It was like having a party with your friends, but on Shabbat,” said fourth grader Zoe Roda.

“The singing and dancing were the best part for me,” said fifth grader Aviel Taube.

Miryam Farren-Greenwood, also in fifth grade, agreed. “*Davening* with our friends and with the community at the same time was a different experience,” she said. “I liked it.”

Sixth grader Gavi Spellman thought that “making *challah* from scratch” was the highlight for him.

Parents joined their children for dessert and *zemirot* (singing) before going home. “This year’s *Shabbaton* was warm and campy,” said Jodi Hoffman, whose son and daughter participated. “The children showed their leadership skills, had a great time, and sang with *ruach!*”

“Our teachers skillfully worked with their students in leading the school community, and our students took this responsibility seriously and ran with it,” says Rabbi Yehudah Potok, Head of School. “It was incredibly powerful to see how energized and invested each student was in making this *Shabbaton* a huge success.”



6th graders baking challah



Scott Goldberg

## Raising Spiritual Children

Today’s children live in a world of results and immediate gratification. Is it still possible to generate and maintain enthusiasm for learning, upholding religious practices and involvement in home and community? In a world of results, how do we create excitement and value for the process of learning and growing itself? How do we speak about and incorporate G-d into our homes and lives so that our children are engaged and inspired?

Dr. Scott Goldberg, director of Yeshiva University’s Institute for University-School Partnership, will answer these questions at the Striar Memorial Lecture on Sunday, Dec. 16 at 10 a.m. at Striar Hebrew Academy, located at 100 Ames St. in Sharon. Goldberg’s topic is “Nurturing and Nourishing Souls: Raising Spiritual Children.” The Striar Memorial Lecture is given in memory of the school’s founders, R. William and Daniel Striar, z”tl, who established the school in 1986. Please join us for this important discussion.

*Photo courtesy of Scott Goldberg, Ph.D.*



4th graders' centerpieces



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# Latest Bus Bombing Brings Back Painful Memories



## Alex Rychin

The image is forever embedded in the Israeli psyche. The smouldering carcass of a passenger bus. Charred metal, burning glass, the faded colours of once happy branding, now turned pale, flecked with brown and black. The eyewitness accounts are familiar, too. Limbs blown clear, bodies mangled beyond recognition, death, destruction, blood and terror. The targets - soft and easy. Unsuspecting commuters preoccupied with

the morning rush. Blind, oblivious, never saw it coming.

Those images became a reality once more after a bomb was detonated on a Tel Aviv bus on November 21, injuring twenty-nine civilians.

It is the first serious bomb blast in Tel Aviv since April 2006, when a Palestinian suicide bomber killed 11 people at a sandwich stand near the city's old central bus station.

The last bus bomb targeting Israelis was carried out on July 18 this year, in the Bulgarian black sea resort of Burgas, as excited holiday makers boarded a bus on the airport tarmac. Seven people including a pregnant woman, were killed in that attack.

As Israelis came to terms with the return of bus bombings to their streets, there were scenes of jubilation in Gaza. Sweet cakes were handed out in celebration in Gaza's main hospital. Gazans fired exuberantly into the air upon hearing news of the attack. Yesterday, in those same busy streets, suspected traitors were summarily executed, their corpses dragged behind motorbikes in a grand procession for all to see.

Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri praised the bombing, while the organisation's military wing took to social media to convey the hope that "we will soon see black body bags" in the aftermath of the attack. This was followed by the tweet, "We told you #IDF that our blessed hands will reach your leaders and soldiers wherever they are," even though the attack targeted ordinary commuters, not soldiers or leaders at all.

The aftermath of the attack is predictable. Israel has been here many times before. Even Tel Aviv, regarded as the country's centre of liberalism, will be hardened in its support for a permanent solution to Hamas's campaign of terror. The world will express sympathy peppered with calls for restraint. Better the suffering be localised in Israel rather than risk aggravating extremists abroad by acquiescing in a stern Israeli response.

The apologists will cite Israeli "occupation" and the "blockade" as the real causes of this latest act of terror. The natural reaction of an oppressed people. Ignoring the fact that war and terror were repeatedly inflicted on Israeli civilians before any blockade and before Israel's victory in the Six-Day War.

The UN Human Rights Council, which has a "pathological obsession with Israel," will likely remain silent. Historically, Israeli human rights are of little consequence to the Council. If they do speak up, it will be to caution against Israeli "disproportionality." To urge restraint on all sides. The usual false equivalence of action and reaction, terror and targeted response. As though assassinations of Hamas generals and air strikes on the infrastructure of terror is somehow comparable with firing rockets at kindergartens and blowing up buses. Then the esteemed Council will return to its usual business. In March this year, it hosted a Hamas politician and in July, Syria announced that it would be seeking a seat on the Council. Almost half of the resolutions it has passed have been against Israel.

We will no doubt also hear from Catherine Ashton, the EU's Foreign Policy tsarina. She may even do what she did in the wake of the Toulouse Massacre and flavour her condemnation with another obscene rationalisation of terrorism by suggesting that Israel is doing the same thing to the Palestinians.

The legend of terrorism will grow. More martyrs for the jihadist scrapbook. More posters for the streets of Jenin and Tehran. Brave resisters. Liberating the land. Standing up to the mighty occupation. Striking a blow for Islam. One dead Jew at a time.

All the while, the rights of Israelis are eroded a little bit more. The right to defend its citizens from rocket fire. 1,644 rockets have been fired this year alone. The right of Israelis to engage with the world without harassment and boycotts. A performance by Israel's Bathseva dance ensemble in London was recently disrupted by protesters inside the theatre. The right of Israeli children to study in peace. The right of Israelis to travel without fear.

Israel loves to cite examples of its successful integration into the international community. Start-up nation, OECD member, renewable energy, sustainable development, more trees, more female entrepreneurs. All good stuff. All achievements to be genuinely proud of provided they do not detract from that one great truth: Regardless of what Israel does, there will always be people who seek to kill Jews simply because they are Jews. And there is not a UN council, a human rights organisation or a foreign state that is capable of preventing that.

*Alex Rychin is a lawyer, writer and founder of opinion website, The Jewish Thinker (www.jewishthinker.org). The article was first published in the Huffington Post.*

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# Why Israel?

**Dr. Rebecca Housel**

Israel is a tiny triangle of land in the Middle East flanked by Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and the Red Sea. How tiny is it? Israel is less than half the size of Costa Rica. It's the land where the basis of all language began; it's also the place where archeological artifacts and remains have been found that trace no less than one-million years of human evolution. Though bi-peds have existed for the last four-million years, our ancestors did not resemble the humans of today. But one-million years ago, in the land of Israel, humanity as we know it emerged. The philosophy of Judaism also comes from that area of the world, the first discovered recordings of which date back six-thousand years. Four-thousand years later, Christ was born. Five hundred years after Christ, Mohammed.

Israel primarily belonged to the Jewish people for at least 5,000 years until the 7th century, when the Arab conquest coincided with the beginnings of Islam. For the next twelve-hundred years through World War I, Christians and Muslims would fight over the "Holy Land," during which time the Jewish people were consistently persecuted simply for existing, not only in their own land, but all over Europe and Russia. Nearly 1,800 years later, the unfounded hatred continued as Jews were specifically targeted in a madman's scheme that the rest of the world encouraged through their collective silence for more than a decade, resulting in the worst human atrocity in the history of civilized man. And I use the term "civilized" loosely....

In 1948, Jews reclaimed our homeland, much to the chagrin of the world. Despite the numerous and consistent efforts of Christians and Muslims over that ridiculously long period of time, the Jewish people did not become extinct. We survived. And today, Israel is a symbol that Judaism has not only survived, but has somehow thrived. It's important to note here that World War II was not fought in defense of Jews, but in defense of the countries Germany and her allies began targeting - the same countries that used the excuse of "appeasement" when it came to cooperating with the Nazi swarm. Britain was one of those countries.

Britain occupied Israel after WWI, creating the Mandate of Palestine, which acknowledged the population of Muslims, Christians, and Jews in their new governmental organization. However, Muslims refused to cooperate with any government that included Jewish people. By 1930, the Black Hand was created by the Muslim scholar, Izz ad-Din al-Qassam, who was the first to use the word "jihad" in reference to a physical struggle for Muslims (the word "jihad" is largely translated as an inner spiritual struggle for Muslim believers). The Black Hand opposed British rule and the recognition of Jewish people within Palestine's new government, targeting Jewish homes and farms, killing thousands. Britain responded to the Arab resistance to Jewish people with the infamous White Paper of 1939, which limited the Jewish population to only 75,000, and also prevented any Jew from buying land in Palestine. Britain claimed later that the German-led persecution of Jews wasn't public knowledge until 1942, when the British government then gave permission to Jewish children in Bulgaria to immigrate to Palestine. Of course, the idea that Hitler's plan for the Jews wasn't public knowledge is blatantly absurd. And here's the reason why:

Hitler did not keep his desire to "remove Jews from public life" a secret. That's why Eugenio Pacelli, appointed Bavarian Nuncio in 1917, supported Hitler by ensuring the Enabling Act was passed by the Catholic Zentrum Party in 1933. Eugenio Pacelli would later become what history remembers as "the Nazi Pope," Pius XII. Amazingly, Pope Benedict XVI venerated Pacelli in 2009 - a necessary part of the beautification process toward Sainthood.

Einstein was fond of reminding the world that there are no coincidences. Pope Benedict XVI was a mem-

ber of the Nazi Youth in Bavaria - the same Bavaria Pacelli had influenced from 1917-1929, continuing his influence in the region thereafter as the Cardinal Secretary of State. Though Benedict XVI claimed to have been an "unenthusiastic" member of the Nazi party, venerating the man who helped Hitler rise to power - the man whose direct actions through the Reichskonkordat and a repeated refusal to not speak out against the atrocities as Pope, allowing Hitler to ghettoize and murder MILLIONS of Jews - says otherwise. Pacelli's intervention in the lives of Jewish children supposedly orphaned by the Holocaust and baptized by the Church continues to this day; Pacelli prevented those children from being reunited with Jewish family after WWII, one of whom was Abe Foxman, Foxman, now the Director of the Anti-Defamation League, called for a stop on Pacelli's beautification process as Pope Pius XII in 2005, a call clearly ignored by the Church.

And if you think things like the Reichskonkordat are ancient history, think again. It's still in use today between the Vatican and Germany. So when the recent conflict created by Hamas with Israel began, it was not a surprise to see Israel criticized by news organizations from around the world, including Britain, and sadly, members of the American media.

The question, "Why Israel?" must be considered by Jews who do not fully understand Israel's history. I'm talking to those who criticize Israel's defense of its own people - YOUR PEOPLE - against openly anti-Jewish groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. Assimilated Jews who feel removed from Israel are a bigger threat to Jewish survival today than any other population on the planet.

Despite the world's promises, anti-Semitism remains a pandemic, making the disconnected Jew no better than the Judenräte of Nazi Germany, offering up your own people as fodder to save yourself... from what, I'm not quite sure. Israel and the Jewish people are not separate entities; the idea that they are is part of a growing body of anti-Semitic rhetoric, similar to Nazi propaganda that dehumanized the Jewish people. Such hypocrisy cannot be tolerated within the Jewish community, not when so many died for believing in Judaism's innate self-responsibility - the founding tenet that has carried the Jewish people for more than 6,000 years.

*Dr. Rebecca Housel, a native Bostonian, is a social theorist, scholar and professor in New York as well as an author and editor in Wiley's Philosophy & Pop Culture Series. To learn more, please visit: <http://www.RebeccaHousel.com>*



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### QUESTION:

How can I prevent sticky rice?

### ANSWER:

Add 1 tablespoon olive oil or other vegetable oil to the water when cooking the rice, and stir when done. Also, rinse the rice with warm water.

PLEASE NOTE CORRECTION: In the September issue, #15, the stuffed cabbage recipe had a mistake due to incorrect information supplied to Shalom. It should be 1/4 cup honey or sugar.

## Feelings

The recent hurricane reminded me of a song that my mother hummed and sang the words to: "Feelings, OY, OY, Feelings..." I wonder how many young adult grandchildren called their grandparents to say "Hello, how are you? Are you ok? Did you have electricity?"

Judging by a conversation I had with several members at our senior center, it seems that very few did. They seem to depend on their parents to call. The older grandchildren say they are very busy and yet, the cell phone is always with them and they find every part of the day to call everyone else constantly, whether they are in the car, at work, or elsewhere.

I wonder, with communication so easily available, where are their feelings and thoughts for members of their family, especially their grandparents? Do they realize that we love them and are always concerned about them? I bet they never heard of Grandparents' Day (this coming year, it falls on September 8, 2013). I hope they remember to call their grandparents - not just to thank them for Chanukah gifts, but as part of a new resolution they have made to say hello to them often!

Happy Chanukah,

### Bubbe and Avrom

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## Potato Varenikis (stuffed potato cakes) - Meat Meal



- 3 large or 5 medium potatoes
- 1 large egg
- 1 cup cooked leftover meat cut in small cubes (pot roast, beef, or chicken)
- 1/2 medium onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- breadcrumbs
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 small garlic clove chopped (optional)

Heat frying pan to medium. Add one tablespoon vegetable oil. Sauté chopped onion for about 3 minutes until soft, stirring often. Add meat cubes, onion, salt, and chopped garlic. Stir together for about 2 minutes so flavors will blend. Cool slightly. Transfer mixture to food processor and grind fine. Transfer to a bowl. Peel and cut potatoes, place in medium sauce pan, cover with water and place cover on saucepan. Bring to a boil and cook on low until soft, for about 12 to 15 minutes (check with fork). Drain liquid from potatoes, mash, add beaten egg, salt and pepper to taste. Cool slightly until easy to handle. Divide mashed potatoes into 4 or 5 balls, and place on plate. With spoon, divide meat mixture into 4 or 5 heaps. Wet hands again with one ball in the palm of your hand. Make a well in the center and fill with meat mixture. Carefully bring the sides together to cover the meat, and shape into a smooth potato cake. Gently roll the cake in bread crumbs on both sides.

Heat a large frying pan on medium heat. Add 1 tablespoon oil, and carefully place the potato filled cakes into the pan. Cook until golden brown on all sides. Serves 4 or 5. Serve with your favorite vegetables.



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# An Island of Peace and Serenity Amidst Stormy Seas

## Rabbi Moshe Bleich

It seems that the few days that I spent last week in NYC at the international conference for Chabad emissaries were an island of peace and serenity in the midst of stormy seas.

Coming just days after a divisive election and superstorm Sandy, and followed by the current crisis in Israel that have seen the tragic deaths of several Israelis (one of whom was a Chabad outreach worker in New Delhi; two others were part of the Chabad community in Kiryat Malachi), the five days in New York have been somewhat of a personal antidote to the current chaos.

The workshops and presentations I were outstanding, but more important were the less formal meetings (a/k/a *farbrengens*) where pearls of wisdom, stories of Chasidic masters, and general words of encouragement were peppered with Torah study and Chasidic melodies, and shared with old and new friends.

Indeed, in an era where we Chabad followers still deeply miss our beloved Rebbe, these sideline get-togethers produce a feeling of brotherhood that can be considered the bedrock of the Chabad Chasidic movement.

One story I heard over the weekend from my colleague Rabbi Yosef Jacobson aptly reflects this contention and also highlights the unique dedication of Chabad emissaries.

As you may recall, four years ago on November 26, the Chabad House in Mumbai, India was attacked by Islamic terrorists, killing seven of the occupants including the Chabad emissaries Rabbi and Mrs. Gabi Holtzberg.

Rabbi Jacobson related how Rabbi Shalom White, a Chabad emissary in Perth Australia, had just returned home from attending the 2008 Shluchim conference in New York, and heard of the tragic murder of his fellow emissaries. Immediately, he returned to the airport and boarded a plane to Israel to attend the funeral.

Standing at the funeral in Israel some twenty hours later, Rabbi White meets a friend from his yeshiva days. His friend is surprised to see him and inquires why he chose to travel all the way from



Australia to attend the funeral. "Are you family? Did you know Gabi from yeshiva?" he asks.

Upon learning that his friend Rabbi White neither knew Rabbi Holtzberg from school nor was related to him, but made the long and expensive trip simply because a fellow brother and sister had been brutally murdered, he became so deeply touched and moved by this sense of love and dedication that he returned home uplifted and inspired, packed up his business, and became a Chabad rabbi in Israel.

The message for all of us is clear. Whether one is a Jew living in India or a Chabad representative in North America, we all need to step up the efforts to reach out to our own Jewish brothers and sisters in our communities. The upcoming holiday of Chanukah provides a great opportunity for this. By reaching out to your Jewish neighbors and encouraging them to celebrate the festival light, you can help add much needed light to a very chaotic world.

I also want to take this opportunity to invite you to join us at the Wellesley Weston Chabad for our Chanukah celebration on Sunday, Dec. 9. Please contact us at 781-239-1076 or [Chabadwellesley@aol.com](mailto:Chabadwellesley@aol.com) for the details.

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# Team Israel's Gallant Effort at the World Baseball Classic

## Larry Ruttman

If members of Congress in America got along half as well as members of the baseball squads from Spain, France, South Africa, and Israel got along with opposing teammates at the World Baseball Classic qualifying round at Jupiter, Florida in September, then maybe this presidential election season would have been far less divisive.

Team spirit and good cheer pervaded the soggy South Florida atmosphere, whether at Roger Dean Stadium, where the games were played, or at the nearby Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, where most of the players' down time was spent. Such proximity can spell trouble when competition is the issue, and the winner takes all, but not here, not now.

Commissioner of Major League Baseball Bud Selig was onto something when he decided a decade or so ago to make it his ultimate great priority to put the strength of his office behind the World Baseball classic and the internationalization of baseball. Always a proponent of "hope and faith," Selig hoped that the teams from many lands would put on a good show, get along, and grow the game he loves, and he had the faith to commit to that idea. If this week has evidentiary value, that faith has been rewarded.

Israel was managed by the crafty Brad Ausmus, a catcher whose MLB career spanned eighteen seasons and three gold gloves. Spain played under the leadership of Mauro Mazzotti from Milan, Italy, a veteran player and highly successful manager in Italian and Spanish baseball. Indeed, as it turned out, those two teams were the only ones left standing when the deciding game came around.

Israel's hopes were buoyed by the slugging ability of heavyweight and super tall first sacker Nate Freiman. Hailing from Wellesley, Massachusetts, Freiman was the author of four prodigious circuit shots in his first two games, the last one a low buzzing line drive which knifed through the heavy air to disappear to some unseen land far beyond the marker on the fence in dead center field, which reads "400."

As the crowd attended the first pitch in the first game between Israel and South Africa, the Israeli team and their South Florida adherents probably felt pretty confident this one would be a laugh.

And when Nate unloaded his first wallop in the first inning, that confidence grew. Although the game remained close until the late innings, a base-clearing double sealed the deal in favor of Team Israel.



Nate Freiman



Shawn Green

Next up for the Israelis was Spain. Many shouts were heard when big Nate cracked his above-described screamer, which insured Israel's victory in this game. It looked like the experts' predictions would come true, and Israel would go to the WBC finals next March. But this is a double elimination format which requires a little mathematical expertise to untangle – suffice to say it fairly gives a team that is losing the chance to still get to the final game and cop the gonfalon [a winning flag or banner].

Mauro Mazzotti and his guys accepted that challenge, did not lose again, and Spain rose again to confront the talented Israelis, whose ranks included not only Big Nate but also Shawn Green, whose MLB heroics and homers had earned him a hundred million dollars. So it looked sort of one-sided.

The aptly-named Israeli team's strength/conditioning coordinator, Dan Rootenberg, had his charges' biceps bulging. A late coming addition to the roster, speedster Adam Greenberg, who was severely beamed in 2005 by the only Major League pitch he ever saw - and on the very day this is being written was signed by the Miami Marlins to bat at least one more time this coming week - was set to patrol center field, if needed. General Manager Peter Kurz, an American

expatriate early on experienced at stickball in New York City, but long since resettled in Israel, figured he had assembled a winning team. Shlomo Lipetz, the giant relief pitcher who had gone in the other direction, from growing up in Tel Aviv to directing music at a Manhattan wine bar and performance venue, City Winery, awaited in the bullpen.

Art Shamsky, outfielder for the 1969 "Miracle Mets" and Israel's "hardball" ambassador to this WBC qualifier, awaited victory and a chance to be diplomatic toward the defeated. Team Israel's

public relations guru, Marty Appel, even more famous as the author of twenty books, waited to trumpet victory to the world.

Was this to be payback after five hundred twenty years for Ferdinand and Isabella expelling the Jews from Spain in 1492?

Not so quick! As said before, this is baseball. There was the tanned and fit Mauro, looking as much like a matinee idol as a baseball manager, again expertly guiding the Spaniards, and looking up to the baseball gods for a reversal of fortune.



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# Team Israel's Gallant Effort at the World Baseball Classic

Here was huge Cuban shortstop and Pirate prospect Yunesky Sanchez and his cohorts standing athwart the Israelis.

The game was hard fought and long, spanning nearly five hours. The Israelis took an early lead, but Mauro's charges kept pecking away, taking the lead in the eighth, only to see the Israelis tie the game in the same frame. Dramatically, the game went into extra innings.

In the top of the tenth, Yunesky's fourth hit, struck off Israel's seventh pitcher in this game, impressive Astros prospect and 6' 5" Josh Zeid, plated Rangers prospect, Dominican outfielder Engel Beltre and infielder "Paco" Figueroa, out of Miami on the Spanish team with his brother Daniel, with the tie-breaking runs. "Paco, Paco, Paco" could be heard all over the ballpark when Paco was at bat, chanted by his South Floridian fans.

Southpaw reliever Ivan Granados, hailing from San Carlos, Venezuela by way of his latest team in San Marino, the tiny and picturesque republic completely surrounded by Italy, blinded Israel for the third straight inning in the bottom of the tenth for the victory. To get there, Ivan had to deal with mighty Casey at-the-bat, that being Angels prospect, big Casey Haerther, whom manager Brad Ausmus had earlier dared to send up to bat for the almost mythic star Shawn Green, in a lefty-righty switch. Mighty Casey, true to the poetic muse, struck out!

The baseball gods had handed down their decree to the true believer, Mauro Mazzotti. Spain wins and goes to the WBC finals next March!

That Sunday night there was happiness in Team Spain's clubhouse, sadness and disappointment in Israel's. Would the tensions of the long, five-day competition spark some controversy, worse yet some acted-out acrimony, when the teams returned to the hotel, or met at breakfast the following morning?

Not to be. The spirit of goodwill and fellowship that marked the week held. Maybe everyone didn't go home as happy as they might have been, but everyone there from South Africa, France, Spain, Israel, and wherever else, went home feeling something good had transpired!

Bud Selig's 'hope and faith' that baseball would continue its peaceful march around the globe was realized yet again.

*Copyright 2012 Larry Ruttman*

*Larry Ruttman, a lifelong resident of Brookline, is the author of American Jews and America's Game: Voices of a Growing Legacy in Baseball, to be published in the spring of 2013 by the University of Nebraska Press.*

Artist Ron Lewis, who has specialized in fantasy "groupings" (like baseball's 500 home run club), has put together 26 living Jewish baseball players (plus the late Hank Greenberg), in a limited edition lithograph. It ranges from 1950s star Al Rosen to active players like Kevin Youkilis, Ryan Braun, and Ian Kinsler. The center subject is of course, Sandy Koufax, considered by many America's greatest living pitcher. A number of Jewish "fans" appear in the background, like Larry King, Billy Crystal, Rob Reiner, and the former Red Sox general manager Theo Epstein. The print is autographed, and ordering information and other details can be found at [www.Jewishbaseballplayer.com](http://www.Jewishbaseballplayer.com).

*Top row (l-r), Richie Scheinblum, Gabe Kapler, Norm Miller, Sam Fuld, Joe Horlen (seated), Craig Breslow, Norm Sherry, Scott Feldman, Ross Baumgarten. Middle row: Ruben Amaro Jr., Adam Greenberg, Art Shamsky, Ike Davis, Brad Ausmus, Jason Marquis, John Grabow, Mike Epstein; Front row: Al Rosen, Ian Kinsler, Kevin Youkilis, Steve Stone, Hank Greenberg, Sandy Koufax, Ryan Braun, Shawn Green, Ron Blomberg, Steve Yeager.*

*Some of the "faces in the crowd" include Theo Epstein, Larry King, Billy Crystal, Rob Reiner, and Marvin Miller.*



# Conservative Judaism for a new era: The Path of Partnership

**Rabbi Leonard Gordon**

On Thursday night October 25th, Mishkan Tefila hosted three leaders of the Conservative movement at the Alan J. Tlchnor Memorial Symposium on the future of Conservative Judaism. Chancellor Arnie Eisen of the Jewish Theological Seminary, Rabbi Steve Wernick, President and CEO of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, and Rabbi Julie Schonfeld, Executive Vice President of the Rabbinical Assembly, articulated a shared conviction that the movement's message is not only one of abiding relevance but also that it has special power as a vibrant, centrist religious vision in an age of polarization. Each spoke personally and anecdotally about what that message means to them and the promise of Conservative Movement institutions for meeting future needs and challenges. Chancellor Eisen offered the most specific proposals for change, proposing, for example, that synagogues move towards shorter and more participatory services.

The Symposium reminded us that the Conservative Movement creates a big tent, has a serious commitment to Judaism - our laws, traditions, and people - while accommodating social change. I received that reminder as a challenge to consider our own changing synagogue landscape here in the Boston area. Thinking about what we have been and what we should become, mindful of past grandeur, I have been giving some thought to what we might adjust to maximize our usefulness and effectiveness.

The story of the Jews of Boston has been one of building and moving, from Boston to Newton and Brookline and out to the surrounding towns and suburbs. In each area of settlement we have built imposing structures, and then we have faced a decision: as the centers of Jewish life have moved and become less centralized, how should the community respond? Today, congregations like my own (Mishkan Tefila in Chestnut Hill) are facing similar challenges. I can summarize the challenge in simple terms: We have built large buildings, with space for religious school, pre-school, education and social life, large sanctuaries and large parking lots, but our membership is aging and shrinking. Young families are moving further away, and our services, once filling our seats to capacity, are now more sparsely attended.

At the same time, there are other trends that tell a more positive story. Young Jews are exploring new forms of affiliation, and interest in Jewish learning and culture is at record levels. Empty nesters, especially the baby boom generation, are not leaving our area for Florida or the Southwest; they are retiring in place and seeking meaningful second acts in their lives, including volunteer opportunities and lifelong learning. We are a community of people who seek meaning and opportunities to grow even as we age. What if our synagogues could become life centers to meet the needs of that generation?

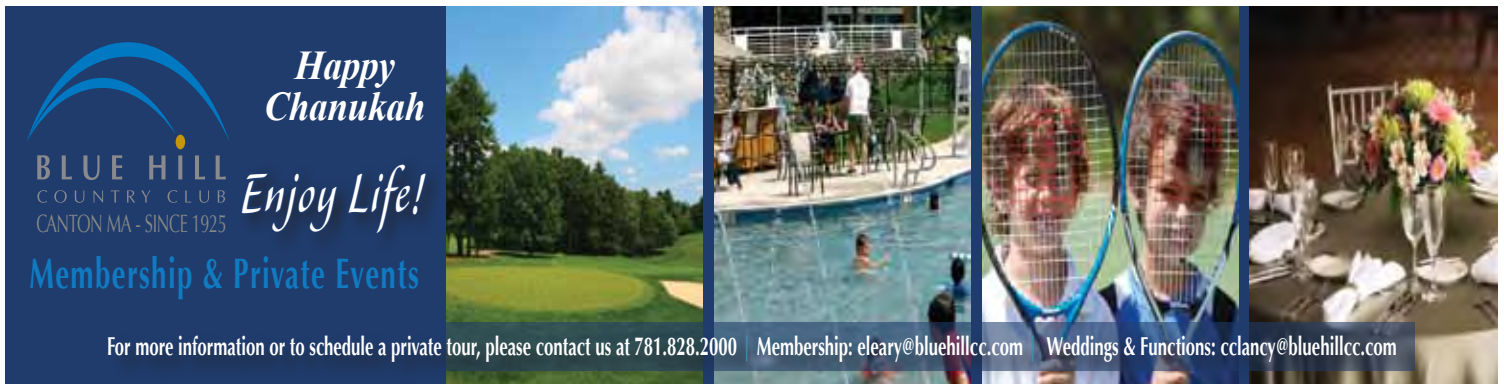
To meet the needs of that expanding generational cohort, synagogues need to reimagine themselves as cultural centers, offering a wider range of programs and activities seven days a week. Shabbat needs to be reimagined as a time for prayer and study, meditation and yoga, discussion groups and walking clubs. Our program during the week should include serious adult learning, partnerships between our empty nesters and our pre-schoolers, family services, more youth and teen programs, and shared meals. Our sanctuary spaces, which may no longer be well designed for the participatory services this generation demands, are perfect for weekday concerts and lecture series. Mishkan Tefila has an historic organ that should be in use for more than the High Holidays.

While our congregations shift to meet the needs of an expanding baby boomer cohort, we also need to reach out to young families, singles and people in their 20s and 30s, a group that is increasingly delaying marriage and childrearing. One way to do that outreach is through partnerships. No one synagogue can do it all. At Mishkan Tefila we have invited a non-denominational religious school, a program for students with special needs, a Reconstructionist Havurah, and our neighboring synagogue youth programs to join with us in creative collaborations. The first fruits of these projects are already making a difference. Partnerships have enabled us to host a variety of styles of Friday night service this year, our Simhat Torah celebration was the largest and most festive in years, and our education program includes teachers with ordination from the Jewish Theological seminary, the Hebrew Union College, and the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College.

The old model of growth through increased membership and dues payments needs modification. Success for our synagogues will need to be measured in increased programmatic vitality and communal energy, and funding will come through partnerships that increase building usage and bring in fees and donations and so our kehillot do more that engages the community and its philanthropic leaders. The concept of membership itself may need to be redefined, and people shift to a fee for service model.

Despite the challenges, synagogues will survive and denominations will continue to matter. Conservative Judaism affirms that God's will is made known through the lives of the Jewish people as our people continue to creatively interact with the texts of our tradition. That vision promises ongoing creativity. This year the United Synagogue celebrates 100 years since its founding. Conservative Judaism remains the vibrant, pluralistic center of North American Judaism and it is well positioned to re-create its institutions and serve God and the Jewish people for the next 100 years.

*Leonard Gordon is Senior Rabbi at Congregation Mishkan Tefila in Chestnut Hill, MA. He also serves as chair of the Kehillah Strengthening and Transformation Committee of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.*



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*Rabbi Gordon with event speakers and members of the Tichnor family at the Alan J. Tichnor Memorial Symposium hosted at Mishkan Tefila on Oct. 25*



*Guest speakers: Rabbi Steven Wernick, Prof. Jonathan Sarna, Rabbi Julie Schonfeld and Chancellor Arnold Eisen*



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## Israeli Superstar & Singer of the Year, Miri Mesika, to Perform In Boston

By HaKeshet

It is true that Boston is not as large as New York, but the HaKeshet organization ([www.hakesheronline.com](http://www.hakesheronline.com)) endeavors to bring a diverse mix of quality Israeli entertainment to the Greater Boston area. This was resoundingly evident by their October 28 collaboration with Teev Events that featured Israeli singer, songwriter, and composer Rami Kleinstein, who touched the souls of the old fans and new listeners alike with his entertaining and heartfelt music that has often been compared to Billy Joel and Elton John.

On Saturday, December 15 at 8 p.m., the Greater Boston audience is in for a true musical treat at the Berkeley Performance Center – HaKeshet is proud to collaborate again with Teev Events to bring the highly acclaimed artist Miri Mesika, and her band to Boston for the first time.

Mesika is one of Israel's most beloved and multi-talented artists, whose singing range extends from Pop to Rock and Ethnic music in Hebrew, Arabic, and French. She was voted Israel's 2012 Singer of the Year for the third time in her seven-year recording career, which has included the release of five albums and a DVD as well numerous theater and film appearances as an actress. Her debut self-titled album, released in 2005, hit record stores to great acclaim, and her first hit, "Le Sham," won the GalGalatz "song of the year" award. The album reached platinum, and she was awarded Israel's Singer of the Year title. Her second album, "Shalom La Emunot," (Goodbye to the Beliefs) came out in 2007 and quickly rose to platinum status, earning her a second national award of Female Singer of the Year.



Her following album, "Hadashot Tovot," (Good News), broke all her previous records and went double platinum. Her fourth album and DVD, "Live and Unplugged at the Zappa Club," were released to critical acclaim, and in 2011, Mesika's fifth album, "Melech," (King) instantly became a huge success.

That year, she was awarded the honor of serving as a judge on "Kochav Nolad," Israel's version of American Idol.

A native of Israel, Mesika studied at the leading art institutes Rimmon School for Music and Sofi Moskovich School of the Arts. This strong and diverse background led her to take part in many theater and film productions including "The Dybbuk" and "Three Mothers." In 2004, she took part in her first national production at Habima National Theater, which won the award "Musical of the Year," and in 2009, she returned to Habima for the lead role in "Joseph

and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat."

For those of us who can't visit Israel now, HaKeshet is happy to bring a piece of Israel to you. With great hope that the situation in Israel continues to ameliorate, come light the last candle of Chanukah together with Miri and her band.

Tickets are available at [www.berklee.edu/events/miri-mesika](http://www.berklee.edu/events/miri-mesika) and by phone via HaKeshet, Inc. at 617-738-5038. E-Mail [annette@hakesheronline.com](mailto:annette@hakesheronline.com) for more info.

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# Rami Kleinstein in Boston



Rami and his father



Almost 400 people (mostly Israelis) gathered at Pine Manor College on the pre-storm evening of Oct. 28 to enjoy the performance of Israeli singer Rami Kleinstein. The event was produced by Hakesher (Annette Zrihen) and Teev. Guests were asked to donate money to support the organization Larger Than Life that assists children in Haifa and Northern Israel. That same night, the organization raised over \$12,000. In the audience was Rami's father, to whom Kleinstein dedicated the song "Forever Young."

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# Bar Mitzvah Expo

Guests had a chance to meet vendors and try their food. Many enjoyed Sweet Streams' chocolate fountain



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The Bar Mitzvah Expo promoted by Walter Perlman took place on Nov. 4 at Sheraton Needham Hotel



David from Eureka Puzzles



Jozsef Halajko



It was a nice opportunity to meet Shalom Magazine readers and hear their positive feedback

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# Not A Thing Of The Past: The Stubborn Phenomenon of Anti-Semitism

By Jeff Robbins

The original charter of the Anti-Defamation League, formed exactly 100 years ago, is “to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” When I assumed the Chair of the ADL’s New England Board a few months ago, I privately held the view that anti-Semitism was essentially passé in this country, and that one had to stretch to find meaningful instances of it.

In the last several months alone, however, unambiguously anti-Semitic incidents across New England, including in New Bedford and at Wheaton College in Norton, have demonstrated to me that I was incorrect. Indeed, quite apart from the swastikas and the anti-Jewish epithets that have been reported from Massachusetts to Maine since the summer, some of the most disturbing evidence that anti-Semitism is very much a thing of the present and not consigned to the past comes from people who take me aside and confide that they have recently either observed or experienced plainly anti-Jewish statements or conduct but chose not to tell anyone about it, out of embarrassment or a disinclination to “go public.”

Regrettably, all that anyone rosy-eyed or credulous on this subject has to do in order to receive a dose of reality is to read the comments posted after articles about the Palestinian-Israel conflict on the websites of reputable media outlets like the Boston Globe, CNN or the Washington Post. The proliferation of comments deploring the purported Jewish domination of the media or of Congress, or describing the supposed comparability of Israeli efforts to reach a two-state solution with its neighbors to the Holocaust, will quickly disabuse those with a false sense of comfort that traditional anti-Semitism is a thing of the past.

It is of course true that just because someone is sharply critical of Israel, even relentlessly sharply critical of Israel, doesn’t mean that he is anti-Semitic. By the same token, his relentlessly sharp criticism of Israel does not provide dispositive proof that he isn’t.

Others who are more insightful than I have struggled for clever-sounding definitions of instances where criticism of Israel morphs into, or perhaps reflects, anti-Semitism. In that regard, I note that our State Department has issued a Report on Global Anti-Semitism which has concluded:

*The demonization of Israel of vilification of Israeli leaders sometimes through comparisons with Nazi leaders, and through the use of Nazi symbols to caricature them, indicates an anti-Semitic bias, rather than a valid criticism of policy concerning a controversial issue.*

On one hand, there are those who believe that Israel’s supporters freeze or intimidate critics of Israel by holding a kind of sword of Damocles over them, in the form of the unjust label of anti-Semitism.

But on the other hand, one wonders whether or not there are those who are essentially over-the-top in their criticism of Israel and largely untethered to the facts, who have manipulated their way into getting a bye, a pass, because of the freezing and the intimidation,

actually works the other way. In other words, instead of calling out critics of the Jewish state as suffused by bias, or hypocritical, or simply factually wrong, there are some defenders of Israel who worry that if they do, they will be accused of unfairly labeling the critics as anti-Semitic - even if it is entirely accurate to point out that the critic is suffused by bias or hypocritical or simply factually wrong.

Put another way: have critics of the Jewish state, whose bias is so profound and so constant, succeeded in blocking others from pointing that bias out by trotting out the line, “You accuse everyone who criticizes Israel of being anti-Semitic?”

I am a mere lawyer, not a psychiatrist, so I am content to steer clear of what does or does not constitute anti-Semitism. I am satisfied to describe the state of being untethered to the facts, and always reflecting a perspective that is hostile to the Jewish state, as “Banana.” I would prefer to simply call it “Banana,” and to confine myself to noting that when it comes to the Israel-Arab conflict, we appear to have a serious Banana problem.

In the Middle East, at least, the intractability of the conflict seems inextricably linked to the poisonous anti-Jewish stuff that fills the region.

The ADL’s Arab Media Review on Anti-Semitism features anti-Semitic cartoons that are rampant throughout the Arab and Muslim world, with anti-Semitic caricatures and themes, including demonic depictions of Jews that include big noses, black coats and hats and large skull caps, and promoting age-old Jewish conspiracy theories including Nazi symbols, blood libel themes and animal references that are typically snakes, octopuses and scorpions, to portray Israel in a sinister light and to depict Jewish control over the American media and political institutions.

This isn’t just a matter of cartoons. The Palestinian Media Watch has compiled archives full of video and audio, detailing wave after wave of official Palestinian broadcasts about Jews, about the importance of killing Jews, about the need to destroy the Jewish state and the rest of it, going on month after month and year after year. To deny that this is being spewed out is impossible. To deny that this has an effect on chances at resolving the Mideast conflict seems ludicrous.

One take-away from a survey of the current scene is that while there is no cause to “go looking” for anti-Jewish bias - by whatever name - there is also no basis, unfortunately, for ignoring it, or waving it aside. It is natural that one assumes that prejudices so crude will dissipate with the passage of time. The problem is that, sadly, such an assumption may be colored by wishful thinking. This does not justify a sort of reflexive “jumping of the gun.” But it does mean that a certain clear-sightedness may be in order, even on the part of those of us who had thought that this phenomenon had drifted away.

*Jeff Robbins is an attorney at Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C. in Boston, and is Chairman of the Board of the New England Region of the Anti-Defamation League.*

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# LimmudBoston 2012



Barbara Gaffin (Zamir Chorale director), Joshua Jacobson (conductor) and Steffi Aronson Karp (event co-chair)

LimmudBoston took place on Dec. 2 at Congregation Mishkan Tefila presenting more than 100 sessions. An "open sing" led by Zamir Chorale culminated the day's events



Lecture on Arab-Israeli conflict by Scott Lasensky



Camp Limmud



Bible Stories with Ronnie Levin



Cecilia Kremer of Chromatile, responsible for the community art project



Rosian Zerner and John Coleman



Susie Davidson gave a lecture on her book *The Music Man of Terezin*

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# My Accidental Career As A Jewish Vegetarian Cookbook Writer

**Roberta Kalechofsky, Ph.D.**

Having been a fiction writer for thirty years, it was a surprising detour for me to write cookbooks. It started by my answering distress calls from concerned mothers who wanted to know how to cook for their vegetarian children.

I became a vegetarian about thirty years ago after reading a description of the factory farming system in Richard Schwartz' book "Judaism and Vegetarianism." I ate kosher meat at the time, and I couldn't believe that Richard was describing kosher meat. I called

my butcher and read a page from the book to him and asked him, "Where does our meat come from?" His answer changed my life: "Mrs. Kalechofsky, all commercial meat comes from the same place and is raised the same way. We just kill the animal differently." It was a shock to everything I had believed about kosher meat. I read the passage to my husband, told him what our butcher had said, and uttered the words that changed our lives: "We're never going to eat meat again."

Like everyone else at the time, I believed the propaganda from the meat and dairy industry that stated that meat was the best source of protein and dairy was the best source of calcium.

Like everyone else then and now, I needed an education in nutrition, as well as in the relationship between meat and global warming.

We have just experienced a major hurricane that left friends of mine on Long Island living in the dark and the cold for nine days. Insurance companies are now rethinking home and flood insurance, because climatologists predict that we will see more storms like Sandy. Global warming is real. Believe it! And believe that much of it is caused by our agricultural policies. In 2007, when Al Gore won the Nobel Prize for his work on global warming, scientists

from the Food and Agricultural Division of the UN also won a Nobel prize for their work on how meat contributes to climate change. The study is called "Livestock's Long Shadow," and can be Googled. But the argument was ignored, and it may take more catastrophes like Sandy for the public to pay attention. Also the opposition - -the Jewish Vegetarian Cookbooks' agricultural lobbies - have tremendous power. Finally, the arguments are complex, and cannot be reduced to a headline.

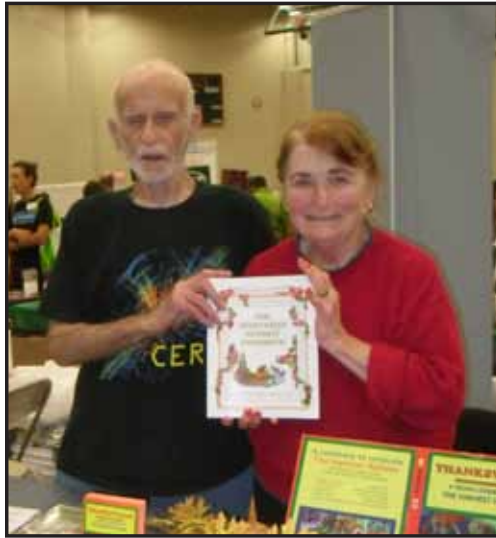
For example, about 65 per cent of antibiotics are used in the meat industry because chickens and cows are raised in dreadful conditions that include overcrowding as well as being frequently subjected to diseases that only the constant use of antibiotics keeps in check. As far back as 1964, Rachel Carson had already expressed alarm at this situation in her introduction to Ruth Harrison's book "Animal Machines: The New Factory Farming Industry":

"As a biologist whose special interests lie in the field of ecology, or the relation between living things and their environment, I find it inconceivable that healthy animals can be produced under the artificial and damaging conditions that prevail in these modern factory-like installations....Diseases sweep through these establishment, which indeed are kept going only by the continuous administration of antibiotics."

Doctors and virologists have warned for decades about the consequences of over-use

of antibiotics and we see those warnings in the emergence of antibiotic resistant diseases like gonorrhea, which is now classified as "incurable."

E.coli infection is another terrible meat-based disease. While it is sometimes found in produce, like the outbreak of e.coli in spinach, its source is cow feces. We all have variants of e.coli in our gut, but this e.coli is produced in the stomachs of sick cows who deposit



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# My Accidental Career As A Jewish Vegetarian Cookbook Writer

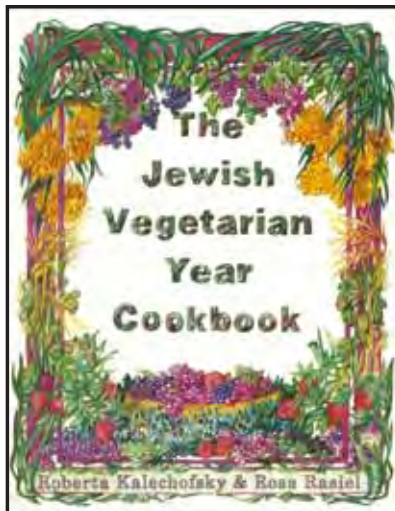
their feces in pastures and in streams that wash over farmlands. The disease consequences of a meat-based diet are accumulating in outbreaks of e.coli, and can be seen in the dizzying increase in cancer rates, obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease, and global warming as well.

There is nothing delicate about the link between animal agriculture and the climate.

In addition to her feces, the cow farts, and they are composed of methane gas which contributes to about 20 percent of global warming, while the meat industry itself contributes to over 50 percent of global warming in its use of fossil fuels. Given these stark statistics, people must reduce their meat consumption by at least half, and rabbis should convey this to their congregations.

As friends became aware of the problem, they began to ask me what they could eat for the holidays, and I realized the need for a Jewish vegetarian cookbook. At the time, the only one available was by Rose Friedman from "The International Jewish Vegetarian Society" in London, which often took three months to arrive. I decided to write a Jewish vegetarian cookbook, which could be available at any time, and asked Rosa Rasiel, the cooking columnist for The Jewish Journal, if she would co-author the book with me. Rosa said yes, and taught me everything I know about how to write a cookbook.

Our collaboration was wonderful, given her background in the New England Women's Culinary Guild and my conviction about vegetarianism. However, when I told Rosa the book would be vegan and would not include eggs, dairy or butter, she responded by saying that you can't make a good dessert without those ingredients. Well, yes, you can. We researched and developed wonderful vegan desserts like chocolate pecan cookies, banana fudge rolls, and a chocolate matzoh roll with fresh berry garnish for a Pesach dessert for The Jewish Vegetarian Year Cookbook.



My guiding principle was to develop recipes based on foods that Jews love. For example: our "Mock Chopped Liver," made from lentils, walnuts and sautéed onions, and our Golden Glow Shabbat soup, made from yellow split peas and a cup each of chopped parsnips and chopped carrots, bay leaves and salt. In The Vegetarian Shabbat Cookbook, there are two recipes for vegan challah by Jim Feldman, whose photographs of the loaves make mouths water. For Yom Kippur breakfast we recommend, among other dishes, a molasses-orange bread, couscous salad, and chocolate tofu pie; and for Sukkot, a stuffed acorn squash, polenta with leek and mushroom topping, and molasses cranberry pudding. The Vegetarian Year Cookbook is a Jewish festival year of great eating.

I have since written The Vegetarian Pesach Cookbook and The Vegetarian Shabbat Cookbook with Roberta Schiff, who has a master's degree in Community Health Education from the University of Kansas and has served since 2002 as president, vice president and events chair for the Mid-Hudson Vegetarian Society. My wonderful covers were done by Sara Feldman, a Jewish artist who sympathized with my conviction that a meat-based diet is unsustainable in a world whose mostly urban population will soon be nine billion. Cows raised for meat now take up over one-quarter of the land mass of the entire earth - earth that is being contaminated by their presence, earth that could be used to raise enough fruits, vegetables and grains to feed all its inhabitants.

Check out my cookbooks at the website [www.micahbooks.com](http://www.micahbooks.com) - and join the food revolution with vegan food with a Jewish tam: Jewish Vegetarian Cookbooks.

*Roberta Kalechofsky, Ph.D., fiction writer, speaker, essayist, publisher. Micah Publications ([www.micahbooks.com](http://www.micahbooks.com)) is the source for Jewish vegetarian and animal rights books. See website for these and other titles.*

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# The Art of Blessing

*Excerpt from The Essential Guide to Jewish Prayers and Practices by Andrea Lieber, PhD. (Alpha Books 2012)*

It's so easy to rush through life without noticing the small miracles that take place all around us every single day. How often do we gulp down our meals in the car or while watching TV, hardly even tasting the nourishing food on our tongues? Who has time for gratitude? Who has time to experience wonder? It can be such a challenge to slow down long enough to appreciate the abundance of blessings in our lives.

In the Jewish tradition, the art of blessing is a unique and ancient spiritual practice that encourages you to slow down and wake up. Blessings are momentary, spoken prayers that cultivate mindfulness and gratitude in daily life. They are a formula, developed thousands of years ago, to help you deepen your appreciation for the simple gifts of the everyday.

A blessing is the smallest unit of prayer in the Jewish tradition. Taken in combination, blessings are the building blocks of all of Jewish liturgy. They can be recited anywhere - in the synagogue, at home, on a hike in the woods or at the market. In this chapter, you will see why learning the art of blessing is the foundation of Jewish prayer.

## Cultivating Gratitude

From earliest childhood, you were taught the social convention of saying "please" when you wanted something, and "thank you" when you received something. It's a script that good little boys and girls are expected to memorize and perform at the dinner table, at school and at their birthday parties. The goal, of course, is to teach manners. But, what about gratitude? How do we learn to feel grateful? Getting to the heart of gratitude involves taking the script to the next level—when you recite a blessing, you need say it like you mean it.

The custom of reciting blessings throughout the day reflects remarkable insight into the human psyche. Although Jews living way back in antiquity did not have nearly the number of distractions that we have in our lives today, the ancient rabbis knew that human beings need tangible reminders to help us connect with the divine presence in our world.

Blessings in Judaism are all about cultivating gratitude. It's a way of saying, "thank you" to God for a whole range of human experiences. But does God need this social nicety? Of course not! Expressing gratitude out loud, in the form of a blessing, builds awareness and increases sensitivity in our own hearts. It's a practice that can truly open you up to the wonders of the world. In short, blessings are Judaism's language of gratitude.

## A Blessing is an Act of Creation

A basic blessing is a verbal expression of thanks that has to be recited out loud. Just as God created the universe through divine speech, when you utter a blessing, it is also an act of creation. Your words create a pause in time that draws your full attention to what you are doing at that very moment. So, at the same time that a blessing is an expression of thanks, it is also an exercise in mindfulness.

It's not enough to taste a delicious piece of fruit and think to yourself, "Wow! That was amazing—what a privilege to eat ripe fruit in its season!" A blessing must be spoken aloud. Your lips must move, and your breath must utter the words. Although we'll never know if God actually "hears" our blessings or our prayers, one thing we do know is that we, ourselves, can hear them. And, that's what really matters.

## Finding the right words

In very ancient Jewish practice, not all blessings had a fixed formula. The words of a blessing would be spontaneous, free flowing, and come from the heart. At a certain point in history, however, the rabbinic sages thought it was a good idea to fix the language of blessings, to ensure consistency of practice among Jews who, by their time, had dispersed to many far-off lands. Once Jews started printing prayer books, it was easier to keep track of which blessing to say on a particular occasion.

This shift from spontaneous to fixed blessings has its pros and cons. On the one hand, I love the idea of spontaneous blessing. Spontaneity allows you to take in a unique moment without having to worry about whether you know exactly the right blessing to recite for that particular occasion. Instead, just

let your gratitude flow, speak from the heart, and whatever comes out is your blessing!

On the other hand, fixed blessings mean that those times when you are rendered completely speechless, you still have something to say! And, there is something very powerful about using words that have been passed down from generation to generation to mark the same milestones and special moments.

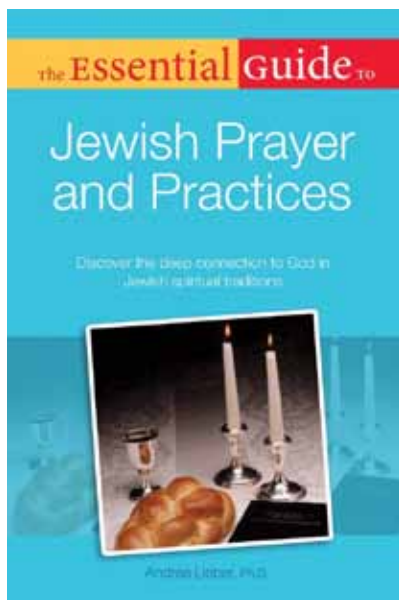
I think it's important to have balance - sometimes it's helpful to have the security of tradition to help refine your spiritual sensitivity. Relying on traditional blessings channels your sense of wonder through the wisdom of the ancient sages who composed these words. But, sometimes, you might just want to use your own language to bless an experience or a moment. You might just want to take a deep breath and whisper, "thank you."

## It all starts with wonder

There is a passage in the book of Genesis where the patriarch Joseph wakes up from a vivid dream that provided him with all sorts of insight. Upon awakening, Jacob exclaims, "Surely, God was in this place and I, I did not know!" (Genesis 28:16). Jacob "wakes up" to God's presence where he hadn't felt it before.

Blessings help us stay awake to God's presence in the world and they help us nurture our sense of wonder. Jacob's exclamation reflects his amazement that God had been in "this place" all along, only he hadn't been able to see it. Blessings help us do the same thing. When we taste that succulent fruit for the first time, instead of just swallowing it, we might savor it over a blessing, and use it to catch just a quick glimpse of eternity.

*Andrea Lieber, PhD is Associate Professor of Religion and holds the Sophia Ava Asbell Chair in Judaic Studies at Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA. She currently serves as President of The Silver Academy, in Harrisburg, PA, the only Jewish Day School in Central Pennsylvania.*



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Barbara Trachtenberg

Menorahs in Moroccan shop window

**Barbara Trachtenberg**, a narrative photographer and writer, visited Morocco this May, for the first time. Unaware of the complex 2000 years-old history of Moroccan Jews and their emigration elsewhere, she stood in front of an antique shop window, lured to the Judaica she beheld. The next day, another American Jewish traveler told her of Operation Yakhin. "As a secular Jew who travels, I'm always struck by the emotional pull I get when I face Jewish history outside my country," she said. "I find that I need to know more of the paths of Jews expelled first from Spain and then Portugal, and of the pogroms in parts of Morocco which helped spur successful middle-class Moroccan Jews to emigrate to Israel, even while they were said to be the most protected Jewish group in the Arab World."

Trachtenberg's training in ethnographic research and life stories has focused on immigrant mothers and their families. She lives and works in the Boston area. In January she will present a poetry and photography workshop for Boston's Big Sister Association. For more information on her work, please visit [www.Barbara-TrachtenbergPhoto.com](http://www.Barbara-TrachtenbergPhoto.com).



# ART

Elisheva Nesis

**Elisheva Nesis** is an Israeli artist who studied fine art at the Stavropol Art School in Russia and the Betsalel Academy of Fine Arts in Israel. She also holds a Master's degree in writing from Moscow Literature Institute, a D.M. degree, and conducted postgraduate work in psychiatry at the Stavropol Medical Academy. She was born in Russia and moved to Israel in 1990. She lives in Jerusalem and is a Fellow of Israel Professional Artists Association (IPAA). Over 200 of Elisheva's paintings are exhibited in private collections in the U.S., Germany, UK, France, Israel, Russia, Ukraine, Canada, Italy, Australia, Ireland and Greece.

She says that Jerusalem has a great influence on her work, but her inspirations are philosophical as well. "My main interest is looking for signs of mysteries in our life and studying evidences of their penetrations into the real world," she states on her website [www.artmajeur.com](http://www.artmajeur.com). "Almost all my paintings and books reflect this theme. So it was just natural to me to settle in Jerusalem, the most mysterious place in the world."

She doesn't pretend to grasp, or to convey it all in her art. "I know that some properties of certain things are beyond an ordinary comprehension, [but] I am sure that everyone can develop his ability to comprehend over the frame of five usual senses," she says. For more information visit <http://artmajeur.com/nesis>.



Barbara Trachtenberg



Chanukah



The Sisters

# Patching a Hole in my Knowledge of Glatt

Robert Levine

This past February, the Butcherie in Brookline, the Boston area's leading purveyor of kosher provisions, began preparing and serving only glatt kosher beef in its deli - beef from cows with lungs free of adhesions. The Butcherie's change marked a watershed institutionalization of the glatt standard in Boston, and comes as part of a rising insistence on *glatt* throughout the Orthodox movement. Boston's *Jewish Advocate* reported that the store went glatt to receive certification from the Vaad Harabonim of Massachusetts after its longtime independent *rav ha-makshir*, Rabbi Mordechai Twersky, retired. "There is almost no new Orthodox supervision for non-*glatt*," owner Walter Gelerman told the newspaper.

The website Judaism 101's article "Kashrut: Jewish Dietary Laws," by Tracey R. Rich, corroborates Gelerman's assessment: "... the stringency of keeping 'glatt kosher' has become increasingly common in recent years, and you would be hard-pressed to find any kosher meat that is not labeled as 'glatt kosher.'"

A few years ago over a *Shabbos* dinner, a group of friends and I discussed the growing stringency over glatt. Being in general of a Modern Orthodox bent, we bemoaned the trend as one more instance of *chumrah* being given the weight of *halakhah*, of the religiously uptight looking for one more way to be more-observant-than-thou. One friend, born in the United States but raised in Israel, said he only heard about glatt in passing growing up, and didn't see any restaurants in Jerusalem bearing glatt certification until he was 18, at the beginning of the last decade, after which *glatt* became more prevalent in Israel.

Inspired by the Butcherie's switch, however, I did some research on the *halakhic* principles behind glatt kosher meat, and discovered there was more to *glatt* than I had realized.

After kosher slaughter, *halakhah* requires checking the animal's internal organs for various defects as signs of its health before the meat can be deemed kosher. For cows, this includes ensuring the lungs do not have holes. Adhesions on the lungs that could have grown around holes to repair them frequently complicate this requirement; the holes may not yet have healed completely.

Consequently, the *Shulchan 'Arukh*, the legal code written by 16th Century Sephardic rabbi Yosef Caro, declares that a cow's lungs must be free of such adhesions. The practice had developed among some Jews to peel away the adhesions to check whether or not they concealed holes, which the *Shulchan 'Arukh* forbids in no uncertain terms: "... not like those who peel by hand and if [the adhesion] can be peeled depend on being lenient, and all those who practice this are as if they feed *treif* to Israel" (*Yoreh De'ah* 109:10). Sephardim therefore consider only meat from cows with smooth - *cholak* in Hebrew, *glatt* in Yiddish - lungs to be kosher.

But peeling lung adhesions must have been more widespread in Europe, because Rabbi Moshe Isserles, the Polish rabbi who introduced the *Shulchan 'Arukh* to the Ashkenazi world and whose commentary on it notes Ashkenazi practice, permits this practice.

There are those who permit feeling the *sirkhos* [the problematic kind of adhesion we've been discussing] and to peel them, and say

that a *sirkha*, if a person peels [it] ... and doesn't tear [the lung] ... they depend on being lenient and say it is not a *sirkha*, but a *rir* [a less problematic kind of adhesion] merely; and even though it is a great leniency, all the people of these countries already practice it, and one can't negate it after they have something to base it on ... (*Yoreh De'ah* 109:13).

Rabbi Dr. Ari Z. Zivotofsky, in an article from the website My Jewish Learning, observes that Isserles "himself expressed certain hesitations about aspects of this leniency ..." Isserles stops short of personally endorsing peeling adhesions: he says only that "there are those who permit" it and states that it has become too established to uproot. The emphasis on "great leniency" indicates Isserles finds the practice less than ideal and at heart concurs with Caro. Zivotofsky writes that "because it gained wide acceptance and did have a firm basis, he ruled that it could be followed," but the basis Isserles refers to is simply the wide acceptance itself, not *halakhic* logic, and his tone is that of resigning himself to an irreversible *fait accompli*.

Although non-*glatt* meat is kosher for Ashkenazim, then, the *glatt* standard really appears optimal for *kashrus* compliance. It's not an augmentation upon the *mitzvah*, but the original *halakhic* standard. Unlike other *chumros* that create a buffer against transgressing a *mitzvah*, such as seating men and women at separate tables for meals to ensure they (those not married to each other) won't touch, the *glatt* standard embodies following the *halakhah* itself of eating meat only from cows with healthy lungs to the fullest degree.

So why did it take until only relatively recently to become common among American Orthodox Jews? "Forty years ago, *glatt* kosher was practically unheard of in America," states the article about *glatt* on the OK *kashrus* agency's website. With pre-packaged meat carrying printed kosher certification rarer than today, "[o]bservant Jews were careful to buy meat from religious butchers upon whom they felt they could rely completely" and whom they trusted to attend to the details of *kashrus*."

Certainly, as the OK's article observes, the influx of ultra-Orthodox Jews who had always kept *glatt*, especially Eastern European Chasidim, arriving in the United States after World War II had a lot to do with it: they were the first kosher butchers to sell only *glatt* meat and market it as such. The pace of reversing the assimilation of American Jewry represents another probable factor. For most of the 20th Century, Orthodoxy comprised hardly more than a sliver of the U.S. Jewish population. Then, as the *ba'al teshuvah* movement gathered steam, most of those newly embracing Orthodoxy didn't jump from minimal observance to heavy stringency overnight; they adjusted more readily to following the basics of Torah without many *chumros* like *glatt*. It took until their children or grandchildren received the advanced religious education they never received - or until they themselves made up for this lack later in life - for the newly swelled ranks of Orthodox Jews in America to grasp the *glatt* standard's significance. My Israeli friend suggests that American Jews adopted *glatt* as an extra way to differentiate themselves from the surrounding culture (a reason why insistence on *glatt* took longer to catch on in Israel), which probably also plays a part.

Increasing my knowledge about *glatt* raised my appreciation of it, as should happen when studying any Torah topic - although I haven't (yet) taken the step of eating *glatt* meat exclusively. Even more importantly, I learned a broader truth about Jewish observance. What Judaism teaches regarding one's fellow human beings applies equally to particular religious practices, whether *halakhah*, *chumrah*, or *minhag*: you'd better know as much as you can about them before you presume to judge them.

Robert Levine is a writer living in Brookline. His poetry, book reviews, and nonfiction have appeared in several publications, including *The Baltimore Review*, *The Lyric*, *Poet Lore*, and *The Jewish Advocate*, as well as on the websites *Helium* and *Triond*. He has self-published two books of poetry, *The Account* and *Mystical Symphony*.



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## Ruderman Prize in Disability

This past June the Ruderman Family Foundation launched its Ruderman Prize in Disability. Ten organizations (four in Israel, three in the U.S., one in Russia, one in Mexico, one in the United Kingdom) received a grant to support their innovative work in the area of inclusion for Jews with disabilities.

Among the award recipients is Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters (JBBBS) of Greater Boston. Founded in 1919, JBBBS is the oldest youth mentoring organization in New England.

JBBBS received the honor for its Friend 2 Friend (F2F) program that matches adult volunteers with people with disabilities who are 18 or older and are looking to establish and sustain friendships. They meet individually with their F2F volunteer two to four times a month, with the meeting times flexible. F2F participants and volunteers plan their own outings and activities.

“Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters of New England and its F2F program represent the type of innovation in inclusion for people with disabilities that we seek to grow,” said **Jay Ruderman**, President of the Ruderman Family Foundation, which is located in Newton as well as in Israel. “F2F leads to a greater connection with the community for people with disabilities.”

“F2F is an outstanding model, and it was with immense enthusiasm and happiness that the Ruderman Family Foundation awarded Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters of New England a Ruderman Prize in Disability,” Ruderman said.

The mission of the Ruderman Family Foundation is two-fold: Promoting the full inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the Jewish community through meaningful programs and public awareness and in fostering cooperation and a stronger relationship between Israel and the American Jewish Community.

### Sharon JWV Post #735

The Sharon JWV Post #735 was honored by the presence of State Senator Brian Joyce as the guest speaker at their breakfast meeting on Sunday, Oct. 21. Sen. Joyce is serving his eighth term in the Senate, representing Avon, Braintree, Canton, East Bridgewater, Easton, Milton, Randolph, Sharon, Stoughton, and West Bridgewater. He is the Senate Chair of the Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets, as well as the Vice Chair of the Healthcare Financing Committee and Vice Chair of the Financial Services Committee. He is a member of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, and sits on the Economic Development and Emerging Technologies, Elder Affairs, and Transportation Committees. He was also appointed to the special Probation Reform Working Group. His speaking agenda included job creation, public safety, education, and issues impacting senior citizens and veterans. After his informative speech, the meeting was open to questions. There were many questions, and the Senator answered them in great detail, for which the attendees were very grateful.



Brookline quilter, **Miriam K. Sokoloff**, recently presented a slide show at the Brookline Senior Center as part of their Easy Travel series. Her subject was “The Many Faces of Jerusalem”, as depicted in quilts on display at Brigham Young University’s Jerusalem campus on Mount Scopus. The juried quilt show of 38 quilts was sponsored by the Israeli Quilters Association.

		<h2>Maimonides School</h2> <h3>75th Anniversary Speaker Series</h3>
JANUARY		<p><b>Sunday, January 13, 2013, 10:30 am</b>  <b>Rabbi Dr. J.J. Schacter</b></p> <p>Rabbi Schacter is University Professor of Jewish History and Jewish Thought, and Senior Scholar at the Center for the Jewish Future, at Yeshiva University. He is also the former dean of the Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik Institute.</p>
FEBRUARY		<p><b>Sunday, February 10, 2013, 7:30 pm</b>  <b>Rabbi Meir Soloveichik</b></p> <p>Rabbi Soloveichik is the Director of Yeshiva University’s Center for Torah and Western Thought, and Associate Rabbi at Kehilath Jeshurun in New York City. He gave the opening invocation at the Republican National Convention.</p>
MARCH		<p><b>Thursday, March 7, 2013, 7:30 pm</b>  <b>Rabbi Seth Farber</b></p> <p>Rabbi Farber, a former Maimonides teacher, is the author of <i>An American Dreamer: Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik and Boston’s Maimonides School</i> and the director of ITIM, an Israeli nonprofit offering information and direction on Jewish lifecycle events.</p>
APRIL		<p><b>Tuesday, April 23, 2013, 7:30 pm</b>  <b>Dr. Erica Brown</b></p> <p>Dr. Brown is a writer, educator, and scholar-in-residence for the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. She is a faculty member of the Wexner Foundation. Her organization, Leading with Meaning, offers leadership development for individuals, boards and professional staff.</p>
<p>All events are free and will be held at Maimonides School, 34 Philbrick Road, Brookline            RSVP to Mike Rosenberg: <a href="mailto:info@maimonides.org">info@maimonides.org</a> • 617.232.4452 x405</p>		

# Israel Activism On Campus

Rabbi Chananel Weiner

Aish Campus Boston, Hasbara Fellowships New England

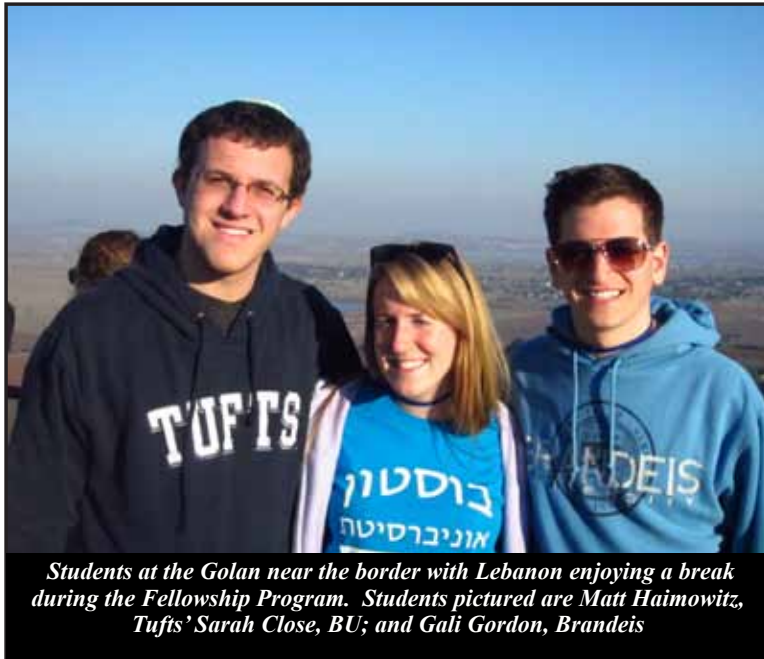
Hasbara Fellowships New England, a program of Aish Campus Boston, is a resounding success. With over 80 students trained to be Israel advocates on campus over the past two years, we can proudly say that we have changed the way Israel activism gets done in New England. Thanks to our partnership with the CJP's Israel Campus Roundtable, our efforts are fully integrated with the greater campus community, and we have been able to team up to accomplish great things. Hasbara New England students sit atop the Israel group leadership on their campuses and actively promote Israel in a variety of ways.

Highlights of previous semesters include carrying out Israel Peace Week - a week-long program dedicated to messaging about Israel's multi-faceted diversity and efforts for peace, holding an Israel Advocacy Awards Celebration for active students, and having students run hundreds of programs to educate their peers on why they should support Israel.

This past semester saw the People to People, Nations to Nations campaign, which outlines Israeli efforts to help the world in times of need, such as during earthquakes and other natural disasters. In addition, our students took to social activism during Operation Pillar of Defense, and along with holding special programs and discussions, were truly active in stating the case for Israel during the conflict on their campuses.

With our winter trip just around the corner, we are excited to educate a new crop of leaders and give them the tools, education, and confidence they need to stand up for Israel and the Jewish people, both now and forever.

Hasbara Fellows are currently active at Harvard, Tufts, MIT, Brandeis, BU, Northeastern, BC, Clark, Wellesley, and Wheaton Colleges. For more information: [www.aishboston.org](http://www.aishboston.org) or [www.hasbarafellowships.com](http://www.hasbarafellowships.com).



Students at the Golan near the border with Lebanon enjoying a break during the Fellowship Program. Students pictured are Matt Haimowitz, Tufts' Sarah Close, BU; and Gali Gordon, Brandeis

# Israel Defends Itself

By Shai Bazak, Consul General of Israel to New England  
Exclusive for Shalom

It is no secret that over the past few weeks citizens of Israel's southern communities have faced an endless barrage of rocket attacks from terrorists operating in Gaza. These groups, some of which have links to Al-Qaeda, have received the protection of Hamas, as they target innocent civilians day in and day out, preventing Israeli children and adults from going about their normal lives.

Sadly, these assaults are nothing new – this year alone, terrorists operating out of Gaza have fired hundreds of rockets with the sole intention of killing and injuring Israeli men, women and children. No nation in the world would stand idly by in the face of such a ceaseless and bloody assault, and Israel has now begun a defensive operation aimed at restoring peace to its border and ensuring that Israeli civilians can live their lives without fear of attack.

In 2005, Israel withdrew completely from the Gaza Strip, removing all settlements and leaving the people of Gaza to govern themselves in peace.

Unfortunately, the citizens of Gaza chose to elect a government led by Hamas, a violent terrorist organization which does not care how many innocent civilians – be they Israeli or Palestinian – are killed as they pursue their extremist agenda.

The Israel Defense Forces are not only one of the best-trained military forces in the world, but also the most careful when it comes to avoiding the loss of innocent life, something which stands in marked contrast to the ideals of Hamas and other terrorist groups in Gaza whose only goal is to sow death and destruction. Israel did not begin this conflict, but Israel is prepared to do what it must to restore peace to its borders.



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# Arab and Jewish Teenagers Grow Algae for a Greener Future

Tafline Laylin  
from [www.greenprophet.com](http://www.greenprophet.com)

Despite the many wounds that cripple cooperation between the Israeli and Palestinian governments, Arab and Jewish teenagers work side by side to further algae research in Israel. Established in 2008, the Micro Algae Educational Project packs two important imperatives into one succinct program for high school students: ecology and social healing. Conducted in the Eco Greenhouse on Kibbutz Ein Shemer, the project aims to establish the ideal growing conditions for algae and then foster a variety of real-world applications, including food, medicine, bio-fuels and water treatment. So far, more than 300 Arab and Jewish students equipped with little more than a curious mind and a healthy dose of tolerance have participated in the project, and many more are on track to do the same.

Initially a communal greenhouse established in 1977, the Eco Greenhouse evolved organically over the years until a non-profit organization was established in 2004 in order to forge a more concrete educational model that would benefit both the scientists and students who were drawn to the space. "From year to year the greenhouse expanded," Educational Manager Noam Geva told Green Prophet. "The number of teenagers grew, and more and more fields were added which one could study, build and develop."

"At the same time, the educational staff expanded and a complete didactic concept formed, based on project-based learning, teamwork and enabling the young people to choose and self-instruct."

Since 2004, roughly a dozen Arab and Jewish schools have become involved in the initiative and the fields of study have expanded further still. But perhaps none are so promising as the multidisciplinary Micro Algae project.

"In recent years, the field of single cell algae research is drawing attention among bio-tech industries, researchers and entrepreneurs – who wish to utilize their findings in fields of medicine, in fisheries, food industries, water treatment and energy industries," Geva explains.

"As educators, we see tremendous potential in the field – as it is a platform that integrates science, ecology, agriculture and sustainable social models. The Greenhouse staff has recently explored opportunities of integrating these themes into our work in fields of water research – and have found them inspiring and suitable for our educational model."

But tomorrow belongs to our youth, so involving them in the exploratory process is a crucial element of the program. Not only does this bode well for science, but fostering such intimate cooperation between the two religious groups transcends whatever political disaster has seized the day.

"One of the project's main goals is to grow the future researchers, entrepreneurs and scientists," said Geva, who strives to "Expose the students to global environmental challenges, enable them to research and deal with advanced scientific topics under the supervision of academic researchers and experts from the agricultural industry, and plant the seeds of curiosity."

One of the most advanced of its kind on earth, this fantastic green curriculum can be used as a prototype for similar educational institutions not only in Israel, but anywhere.



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# Let's Kibbitz!

By Susie Davidson

This column will highlight events, promotions, trips, program launches, arts, awards, appearances, and all manner of worthy doings, as well as nachas and simchas, and of course, finding out who was where, and when!



Dan Yonah Ben-Dror Marshall and Shira Price

**THEY DANCED AT THEIR WEDDING!** Local dance and arts impresario **Dan Yonah Ben-Dror Marshall** of Brookline is officially “taken.” On Sept. 9, he wed **Shira Price** in Kingston, New Jersey. The two met only several months ago, but it was dancing destiny.

Shira, a working gemologist and actress who is a great aficionado of song and dance, holds a bachelor’s degree in Communications from Rutgers University, a master’s degree in Arts and Teaching from Brandeis University, and a graduate Gemologist degree from the Gemological Institute of America. Dan, a business and high-tech consultant, actor, dancer, singer, producer, filmmaker, martial artist, educator, and co-founder/director of the Brookline Community Center for the Arts, earned a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from UMass Amherst, and is studying for a master’s in computer engineering from Northeastern University.

Shira and Dan’s wedding marked the culmination of their life-long, serendipitous parallel paths, which began in Jerusalem where they attended the same kindergarten, school, and synagogue, resumed in Greater Boston, and by divine providence, initiated their introduction to each other on Oct. 29, 2011, when they finally met face-to-face at the Boston wedding of Shira’s step-cousin Debbie Nagler to Dan’s Brookline High School friend Isaac Pourati.

Parents are Esther and James Ben-Dror Marshall of Brookline, Deborah and Fred Nagler of Teaneck, New Jersey, and Rabbi Ronald and Tziporah Price of Boynton Beach, Florida. Of course, *Shalom* was there, dancing!

**A SPECIAL DAY, HEARTILY ACKNOWLEDGED:** Most of us get a bunch of birthday greetings on our Facebook pages. But 260 of them? That’s how many well-wishers posted on **Darlene Rich**’s page on Nov. 21. “I responded to every one,” said the Randolph native. “Check out my page!” We did, and she certainly did respond to the multitude of greeters, a scant few of whom included Robyn Wolrich Brooker, Sheila Bell, Carrie Thompson Porder, Kandi Marsh Siegel, Ellen Jaukkuri, Brenda Emery Hass, Kelly Ann M-Desouza, and of course, Shalom!

Rich’s coworkers at Quincy Medical Center also had a cake ready. “They have remembered every year for the past 32,” she said. After work, her family gathered at her brother’s family’s MetroWest home. He would be none other than WBZ’s **Jordan Rich**, whose show is almost as popular as his sister!

Was it a nice round number? Actually, one beyond - this was her 51st. (Last year, the coworkers held a big surprise one at the Common Market for my 50th,” she said. 260 greetings would exhaust most of us. But Rich took it in stride. “It was heartwarming to receive all of them,” she posted on her page. “It made my day extra special. I feel truly blessed. Again, thank you all from the bottom of my heart. XXX000.” Birthdays around holiday times can sometimes get lost in the mix. But we will bet that will never happen to Darlene Rich!

And with the holiday season upon us, *Shalom* would like to highlight two local examples of our greatest traditions of chesed and lovingkindness.

One we could call **FREE T TIME LECTURES - WITH A HEART:** They began several years ago, and take place in Brookline several times a year. And according to **Ira Axelrod**, Spiritual Leader of Congregation Chesed V’Emes in Brookline, the next one will be on Shabbos Parshas Bo, January 18-19, 2013. “The exact time and the topic title are yet to be finalized,” he said, “but all events take place at the Congregation’s **Aishel Center** at 102 Salisbury Rd. “They are open to all men, women and mature children,” he quipped, adding that they are usually held in conjunction with a Shabbaton.

“The lectures, in easy and interesting English, usually deal with a topic relevant to daily Jewish living, usually presenting insightful and far-reaching points of view that are not usually found elsewhere,” he explained. On Friday nights and Saturday mornings, the agenda includes davening. “The Saturday morning davening is unique for several reasons,” said Axelrod. “For one thing, it gives people an intelligent opportunity to sleep, as it begins at about 9:15 a.m., one of the latest start times in the area. Secondly, *no mishe-bayros* are said during the *aliyos*, as we view that as just another method of fund-raising, and totally in opposition to our often-publicized goal of providing various services and facilities without a price tag,” he continued. “Third, every Jewish male above 13 is given a ‘*kibud*,’ as we also strongly oppose the creation of a ‘*shaina Yidden*’ class, where all Jews are supposedly equal, but some are more equal than others,” he said.

Clearly, Axelrod’s center takes a personalized approach where everyone’s needs are considered. “We have our famous community service hours as well,” he said. “We fully recognize that not everybody’s questions and problems end at 5 p.m. when offices close and secretaries go home.” His group therefore makes itself available from 10 p.m. to midnight to many individuals with concerns, at no charge.

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## Let's Kibbitz!

"We may not be able to call out to most individuals at those hours, but we sit here and field calls coming in - and boy, they do come in!" he said. He reaches out to all of them. "We try to deal with Jews of all kinds, stripes, sorts, etc." Axelrod said. "Any individual of good will is welcome here, regardless of his religious/political viewpoint, background or connection - or lack of same." They do pay particular attention to those whom he says don't have "yichus," to help them along. These, he said, would include, for example, *baalei t'shuvah* (those returning to observance) and *gerim* (converts).

Does he focus on any particular issues? "There are 2 areas in which I really wish that all well-meaning Jews would sort of defer to," said Axelrod. Those fields are *shidduchim* (matchmaking), which we do for free, and *geris* (conversion). How many conversions is he talking? "At our most recent event, which was our lecture on the Shabbos before the elections, on what to expect from the elections and how they might impact us as a traditional Jewish community, we had, as might be expected, a pretty good turnout," Axelrod said. "As I know and deal discretely with individuals' personal stories and backgrounds, what struck me was that, from beginning to end, we had a total of at least six individuals there with at least one non-Jewish parent (usually the mother)." Some, he said, had converted, and some were in the midst of conversion. "For that size crowd, six in that category is an astounding number!" he noted. "It obviously goes to show that, for many who have 'gone through the mill' in one fashion or another, they soon learn they can feel comfortable with us," he said. "In fact, I have often said that the subtitle of the Aishel Center (which, of course, implies hospitality) should be the 'Comfort Zone'".

For more informaton, please contact Axelrod during the community service hours of 10 p.m.-midnight at 617-731-8316.

**AN ANGEL NAMED JULIA:** **Julia Kahn** of Newtonville can often be seen driving around in her filled-to-capacity minivan, bringing numerous boxes of produce, pastries, sandwiches, dry goods, bread and other foods to varied shelters and housing sites. One of the proud volunteers involved with the Brookline Mobile Food Coop, which is run by Vicky Schnoes and Tom Capizzi, she picks up same-day donations from generous merchants that include Whole Foods Market, Cheryl Ann's Bakery, Starbucks, Chipotle, the Cheesecake Factory, Volante Farms, Longhorn Steak House and When Pigs Fly, and *schleps* it all to stops that include the Hebrew Senior Life buildings at 110 Centre St. and 1550 Beacon St. in Brookline, Brookline Public Housing sites, the Irving K. Zola Center for Persons with Disabilities in Newton, the Brookline Senior Center, and Housing Families in Revere, to name a few. This is all after her day job at Mass. General Hospital, or during her day off on Wednesdays. "I've worked at the MGH Department of Radiation Oncology since 1979," she told *Shalom*. Like the disease it treats, her position is complex. "I've had three jobs there," she said. "I'm a senior research technologist, but that doesn't begin to describe what I actually do."

Kahn is a lifelong resident of Newton. "My parents lived here when I was born, and I graduated from Newton South High School and the University of Arizona," she said. Married 23 years, she has two children: a son in college, and a daughter in high school. "I say we have a mixed marriage, as Rob is from the North Shore," she joked. Aside from doing good deeds, she indulges hobbies. "Besides being an avid photographer, I'm a skier and a cyclist," she said. "I ride to work regularly from March until October." And yes, she cooked for family and guests on Thanksgiving! How does she do it all? No matter how (and it does boggle *Shalom's* mind), hundreds of grateful recipients appreciate her efforts. But like a typical goodnik, she passes it off. "It's really Vicky and Tom who should get the credit," she said. "I'm only one of many volunteers."

And with that nod to the holiday spirit, a Chag Somayach to everyone, and Happy Kibbitzing!

To send information on events to *Shalom Magazine* please email: [ShalomMA@msn.com](mailto:ShalomMA@msn.com).

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Roy Cohen and his wife, Carole, with Shirley Farber and her son David

Stoughton Media Access Corp. hosted an appreciation night with a dinner to honor its TV producers. The event took place on Nov. 9 at Knights of Columbus Hall in Stoughton. Among the honorees were **Roy Cohen** (Community Forum producer) and **Shirley Nigri Farber** (Bate Papo com Shirley host and producer). They are both responsible for the station's longest running shows.

SMAC broadcasts in Stoughton on Verizon Channel 28 and Comcast Channel 9. Community Forum is aired on Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 6 p.m., and Monday at 8 p.m. Bate Papo ("chat") com Shirley is aired on Monday at 9 p.m., Tuesday at 1:30 p.m., Wednesday at 4 p.m. and Thursday at 5 p.m. Shirley's show is broadcast since 2005 and can also be seen in 25 towns in Massachusetts.



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## Historic Newton Synagogue Celebrates 100th Birthday

The Adams Street Shul opened with great fanfare during Chanukah of 1912. Exactly one hundred years later - on December 15 (the eighth night of Chanukah), the synagogue will host a gala event to celebrate its past and future.

Notable guest speakers include historian Ellen Smith, who will speak on the history of The Adams Street Shul in the context of Newton and Boston history, and Barry Shrage, president of CJP/Boston's Jewish Federation, who will speak of the current importance of Newton's oldest synagogue to the broader Jewish community. The synagogue, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, maintains an online historical tour at <http://AdamsStreet.org/history>.

The celebration includes a wine and dessert reception, live klezmer music, a Torah procession (as occurred at the opening 100 years ago), a Chanukah candle-lighting, and more. The event begins at 7 p.m. Advance reservations are required and may be made online at <http://AdamsStreet/event/Centennial>.

For more information, phone event coordinator Beri Gilfix at 617-332-6140 or email synagogue president Benyomin Fleischmann at [President@AdamsStreet.org](mailto:President@AdamsStreet.org).

*Shalom Magazine is published 4 times a year and distributed free of charge. If your congregation or organization would like to receive it, please let us know. We welcome contributions that will cover the printing and distribution cost.*

## Temple Beth Abraham and Rabbi David Paskin Announces CD Release

### T'filati My Prayer: A Musical Journey through the Siddur

The congregation of Temple Beth Abraham of Canton is thrilled to announce the release of Rabbi David Paskin's newest recording T'filati My Prayer. T'filati features eleven brand new songs and two new arrangements of earlier compositions.

The album can be purchased for \$15 plus shipping at [www.rocknrollrabbi.com](http://www.rocknrollrabbi.com). The album will also be available at iTunes, Amazon.com and the Temple office. The rabbi will be donating all profits generated from the sales of the album back to the synagogue.

The album is a joyful, inspirational, and prayerful musical journey through the siddur. Rabbi David delivers an organic, acoustic, almost Klezmer-like sound to the prayers that Jews around the world say regularly. "Through a collaboration with some of the most talented local artists in the area, we were able to bring a 'playin' and 'prayin' feel to the featured prayers. Each prayer will touch every person differently, and this is the essence of prayer - different prayers will speak to different people on different days," Rabbi David explained.

This opportunity was made possible through the generosity of long time congregant Susan Slavet. "With this CD, we will have created a tool, a legacy for education and inspiration."

Temple Beth Abraham's Rabbi David Paskin is an accomplished spiritual leader, singer/songwriter, entertainer and award-winning Jewish educator. Rabbi David, the "Rock n' Roll Rabbi," has produced six full-length albums and compilations drawn from other albums. His music is a mix of joyful, upbeat tunes and moving liturgical compositions. David's music is used around the country in religious schools, camps, synagogues and homes.

Temple Beth Abraham embraces the Conservative community in Canton and surrounding towns with a welcoming and spiritually enriching environment filled with song. Through religious, community service, educational, cultural, and social opportunities, our progressive, close-knit congregation serves the needs of the current and future community of Jews of the South Shore.

For more information on Temple Beth Abraham or T'Filati, visit [www.templebethabraham.org](http://www.templebethabraham.org) or [www.rocknrollrabbi.com](http://www.rocknrollrabbi.com).



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# COMMUNITY NOTES & NEWS

## Yad Chessed

Yad Chessed? Never heard of it, you might be saying to yourself. Yet for 23 years in a donated office space in Brighton, a small charity has been quietly giving away \$400,000 a year directly to Boston area Jews in need.

Yad Chessed translates as “hand of lovingkindness,” and for thousands of Jewish people in desperate situations, Yad Chessed has been just that. Founded in 1989 by Robert Housman, Yad Chessed came into existence to fill a gap in available assistance within the Jewish community. Bob had always been a person dedicated to helping others, having served in the Peace Corps and participated in numerous other *tzedakah*-related charities. Unlike so many of us, Bob identified an issue within the community and took it upon himself to do something about it. Bob’s wife Sue fondly recalls those years, saying that it was common for Bob to tell her that his life’s calling was to be a philanthropist. The one small problem with his plan, however, was that he did not have the money to give away. And so Bob set about helping people with money from loyal and dedicated donors, many of whom continue to give to Yad Chessed today as they did over twenty years ago.

The organization runs several programs for clients, including monthly food assistance, clothing assistance, and help with utilities and bills. Yad Chessed tries to preserve a client’s dignity at all points during the process. For example, rather than sending physical food or used clothing, Yad Chessed sends gift cards to local supermarkets and to clothing stores.

Yad Chessed also tries to ensure that all of its clients are able to celebrate the major *chaggim* and therefore distributes holiday food on Rosh Hashanah and Pesach. In addition, Yad Chessed runs a successful Purim *matanot l’evyonim* (“gifts to the poor”) program in over 50 Massachusetts synagogues, collecting and distributing over \$80,000 on Purim day alone every year.

Currently, Yad Chessed is helping over 500 families, an astounding number for such a small organization. Some clients come once with a solvable problem, and some come with a lifelong ailment or impediment requiring ongoing assistance.

Unfortunately, many people within the American Jewish community are not aware that poverty exists in our own community - poverty that is cold, hard, hungry and unforgiving. Yad Chessed has many clients who were previously middle class, but due to the economy have not been able to find employment. But Yad Chessed also serves people who are disabled, suffering from a long-term medical condition, or struggling with mental illness. Combined Jewish Philanthropies estimates that 8 percent of Boston area Jewish people are living in poverty. Anecdotally, Yad Chessed is seeing a tremendous influx of new clients, but it is unclear whether this increase is due to increased publicity or some change in economic circumstances impacting on local Jewish people. Whatever the case, Yad Chessed is committed to extending its hand of lovingkindness to whomever needs something or someone to hold onto.

In November, Yad Chessed honored Bob Housman upon his retirement. While Bob continues to play an integral role as President of the Board of Directors, Yad Chessed has hired a dynamic Executive Director, Dr. Sarah Abramson. Sarah is committed to ensuring that the values that make Yad Chessed so accessible to its clients remain constant, and that Yad Chessed’s profile is raised for the sole purpose of helping more people. Yad Chessed is determined to go from strength-to-strength as well as to work with other Jewish communal agencies to ensure that all who need help are able to receive it. For more information about Yad Chessed, please email Sarah@yadchedded.org or call 617-254-0077.



Maimonides School soccer team having dinner at Rubin’s Kosher in Brookline on Dec. 2



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# COMMUNITY NOTES & EVENTS

## Medved addresses ATS

American-Israeli venture capitalist and entrepreneur Jonathan Medved was the keynote speaker at the American Technion Society Annual Event on Thursday, Nov. 1, at the Waltham Westin Hotel. The title of his talk was "Start-Up Nation: The Party is Just Beginning." He told the story of Israel's economic success, and highlighted the Technion and its students, professors and alumni as producers of the high-tech engine that drives the economy; the Iron Dome and other defense innovations; and life-science discoveries that benefit Israel and the world.



Jonathan Medved and Sam Zales - N.E. Region ATS Board President

## Boston Synagogue

Family Chanukah Celebration. The Boston Synagogue, 55 Martha Road in Charles River Park. Sunday, December 9 at 11 am. Kids & families are invited to a festive Chanukah celebration with the synagogue's fabulous Hebrew School teachers Talia, Geoff & David. We'll have latkes, dreidels, arts & crafts & more! Contact us: office@bostonsynagogue.org or 617-523-0453 to RSVP.

Adult Ed. Discussion Group Mitzvot: Good Deed or Commandment? The Boston Synagogue, 55 Martha Road in Charles River Park. Wednesdays, December 5 & 19 from 7 to 8:30 pm. The discussion will be led by Rabbi Daniel Klein, the synagogue's Rabbi-in-Residence. Explore the relevance of different translations of the Hebrew word 'Mitzvot.' All are welcome to join us for one session or both. Synagogue members free/non-members \$5 suggested donation. Contact us: office@bostonsynagogue.org or 617-523-0453 to RSVP.

*Shalom Magazine offers free event listing to non-profit Jewish organizations in Mass. Preference to free or low-cost events. Please email us for more information: shalomMA@msn.com.*

*To place an AD call Scott at: 781-975-0482*

*Subscriptions are available for \$18 a year (4 issues). Please mail a check payable to Farber Marketing, 12 Edward Dr., Stoughton, MA 02072. Bulk subscription also available, please email us for more information.*

## Monday December 24th 45+ DESSERT AND WINE SOCIAL

Meet new friends at our dessert and wine social on Christmas Eve. Temple Beth Zion, 1566 Beacon St., Brookline, from 7:30 to 11 p.m. Cost of \$20 includes wine and desserts. Reservations appreciated. Email datemeimjewish@gmail.com or call Barry at 508-333-1466.

## Sunday, January 20th, 2013 MOHEGAN SUN TRIP WITH ROCK N' ROLL CONCERT

Join Date Me I'm Jewish for a singles 40+ trip to Mohegan Sun for a Rock n' Roll and doo-wop concert. \$75 package includes: round-trip chartered bus, concert ticket, \$15 dinner voucher, and \$15 in free bets. Couples welcome. Reservations required. Email datemeimjewish@gmail.com or call Barry at 508-333-1466.

## Saturday, February 16, 2012 40+ SWEETHEART SOCIAL AND DANCE

Meet new singles at our 40+ sweetheart social with dancing from 7:30-11p.m. at Temple Beth Zion, 1566 Beacon St., Brookline. DJ, ice breakers and free raffle prizes. Cost: \$15 if you bring dessert or wine to share, \$25 without. Info: 508-333-1466.

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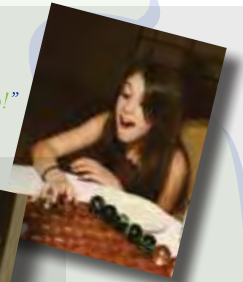
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