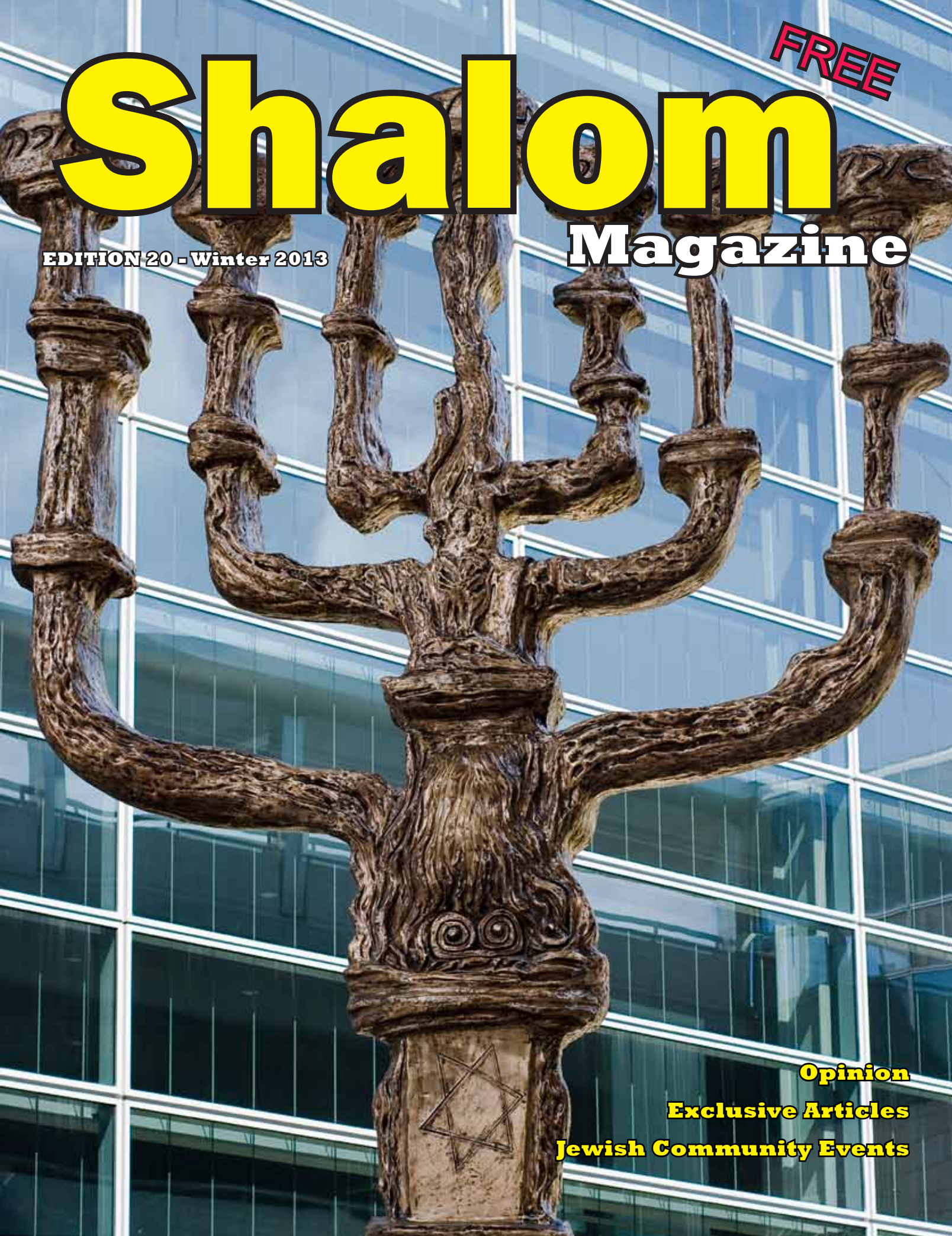


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**EDITION 20 - Winter 2013**

**Magazine**



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# Listen to the People

**Shalom Magazine 2013**  
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**Editor & Publisher:** Shirley Nigri Farber  
**Marketing Director:** Scott A. Farber  
**Copy Editor:** Susie Davidson



- Contributors:**  
 ADL New England  
 AJC Boston  
 Rabbi Katy Z. Allen - Ma'yan Tikvah  
 Rabbi Susan Abramson - Temple Shalom Emeth  
 David Bedein - Israel  
 Rabbi Moshe Y. Bleich - Wellesley Chabad  
 Susie Davidson  
 Marco Fogel - London  
 Dr. Saul S. Geftner - Brazil  
 Vivian Honig - Feedmebubble.com  
 Dr. Rebecca Housel  
 Steffi Aronson Karp  
 Sid Leifer - Mishkan Tefila  
 Larry Ruttman  
 Daniel Pomerantz - Israel  
 Alex Ryvchin - www.JewishThinker.org  
 Judy Sacks - Jewish Vocational Services

**Contributing Photographers:**  
Steve Schuster  
**Design:** Farber Marketing

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Inside this winter edition of *Shalom*, you will find a snapshot of what is happening in the local Jewish community. Our contributors took part in a variety of events all over the state promoted by many Jewish organizations. From honoring young Jewish leaders and celebrating our holidays to discussing immigration, our people are portrayed widely in the pages of *Shalom*.

As the only Jewish magazine to comprehensively cover the entire state of Massachusetts, we make every effort to include as many organizations as possible. Thanks to our advertisers, we are able to bring *Shalom* magazine at no cost to thousands of readers, including the nonaffiliated.

We hope you get a chance to thank our advertisers for their support. When an organization or business advertises in *Shalom*, not only do they wish to reach out to our readers, they are showing support for our community's media.

Not many people recognize the importance of the Jewish media. It is amazing to see that organizations still use 18th century methods of communication by posting their event flyers on walls and handing out pamphlets. A strong Jewish media means that people get a chance to learn about what is going on, as it also opens up a channel for members to get engaged, and exchange ideas. Social media is here to help us get connected, and it is important for all in the community to converse. But it is not about posting, it is about interacting in an effective and expedient manner.

We need leaders who are able to listen as much as they are able to talk. We need organizations that are able to connect with people at any level. At a time when the Jewish community is facing the somber Pew research prognostic, we should take the opportunity to engage in discussions and listen to new ideas. If Jewish organizations had an ombudsman, he or she might uncover why it is that the same people tend to become involved in the community.

Sometimes *Shalom* hears people kvetching and wishing for a new Jewish organization. When people are not satisfied, they seem create a new group, instead of trying to improve upon the existing one. Maybe if we embrace new members and new ideas, we will all gain from a diverse and larger community. Stay warm, and connect with us on [www.facebook.com/shalommagazine](http://www.facebook.com/shalommagazine).

*Shirley Nigri Farber* - Editor

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# Community Event Listings

## Winter Solstice Shabbat

**Saturday, December 21**, 7 a.m. at Half Moon Meadow Brook, Boxborough - This year, the shortest day of the year falls on Shabbat. Are you interested in an early-morning winter solstice adventure? We will join the Sudbury Valley Trustee's Winter Solstice Sunrise, led by SVT Member George Krusen. On the shortest day of the year, we will view the winter solstice sunrise through the stone structures (allegedly Native American ceremonial stone structures) at Half Moon Meadow Brook. The sunlight bores through the stones for a magnificent viewing. It's a beautiful way to start the winter. Afterward, we'll have a short Shabbat morning service, and then gather for breakfast at Robyn's home in Bolton. You need to sign up for this through SVT. Click here to sign up. (<http://sudburyvalleytrustees.org/events-calendar/winter-solstice-sunrise-1>) Also RSVP to Ma'yan Tikvah, [rabi@mayantikvah.org](mailto:rabi@mayantikvah.org). Cloud cover changes the service to a regular Shabbat morning in Wayland.



GOVERNOR DEVAL PATRICK AT A CHANUKAH CELEBRATION

## Temple Shalom

**Friday, January 3** at 5:45 p.m. - Families with Young Children Shabbat Dinner: Meet other families and connect over pizza and salad (\$10 per family please). Bring your own wine, too! Grown-ups can chat, and babysitting services are available beginning at 6:15 p.m. Shabbat Halleilu services begin in the Sanctuary at 6:30 p.m. If you have any questions, contact Danna Perry at 617-969-3518 or at [dperry@templeshalom.org](mailto:dperry@templeshalom.org). No RSVP is needed.

**Saturday, January 11** at 10 a.m. - Tot Shabbat: Families with children (age 1 month through pre-kindergarten) are invited to join us for music, stories, art, and movement, and an appearance by our Tot Shabbat puppet, Oof-Oof. Our interactive service is followed by a snack and an age-appropriate art project. Email Danna Perry at [dperry@templeshalom.org](mailto:dperry@templeshalom.org) for more information.

**Monday, January 20** from 10:30 a.m. to noon - Josh and the Jamtones concert: Please join us for this kid-friendly and wonderfully enjoyable

concert! For more information, contact Johanna Perlin, Temple Shalom Nursery School director at [jperlin@templeshalom.org](mailto:jperlin@templeshalom.org). Temple Shalom is located at 175 Temple St, Newton. Click here to RSVP today! <https://www.eventbrite.com/event/8833638651>

## Temple Hillel B'nai Torah

**Shabbat Book Club** - open to all at 12:45 p.m.

**December 21** - "The Exile Book of Yiddish Women Writers" with guest speaker Freida Freeman

**February 8** - The Hookers Daughter: A Boston Family's Saga by Dale Stanten

**Windows and Doorways into Jewish Prayer** - **February 1** from 10:15 - 11:45 a.m. - What is prayer and why and how do Jews pray? We'll learn, discuss, sing, and meditate on the words as we journey together in this informal and open exploration of Jewish prayer.

Temple Hillel B'nai Torah is located at 120 Corey St. West Roxbury., [hbtooffice@templehbt.org](mailto:hbtooffice@templehbt.org) or 617-323-0486.

## Asaf Avidan

Israeli artist Asaf Avidan will be performing for the first time in Boston on **Saturday, February 22**, at 8 p.m. at the Somerville Theatre, 55 Davis Square, Somerville. Singing primarily in English, Avidan's powerful voice is unmatched. He has been called a "force of nature" and "the love child of Dylan and Joplin." Tickets at 617-876-4275 or [www.worldmusic.org](http://www.worldmusic.org); \$28 (see coupon on page 30).

**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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# YLD's CHAI SOCIETY EVENT

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Shirley Farber and Joshua Malina



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# YLD's CHAI SOCIETY EVENT



John Rich

The honorees

More than 250 people turned up for Combined Jewish Philanthropies' first ever Young Leadership Division Chai Society Mega Event, held on November 19 at The Westin Boston Waterfront. The event recognized 18 young adults, ages 22-45, in Greater Boston, who made a contribution of \$118 or more to the Annual Campaign of Combined Jewish Philanthropies. Among the "Chai in the Hub honorees" elected by CJP members are influential young leaders, humanitarians, educators and social activists.

Keynote speaker Joshua Malina of the hit television shows Scandal, The West Wing and Sports Night talked about how to make it in "the industry," and still be a *mensch*. Malina talked about his time in Yeshiva, how Jews in Hollywood tend to stay away from openly supporting Israel, and joked about filming a pizza commercial during Passover. The night was emceed by Boston's own Jonathan Soroff of the Improper Bostonian magazine.

Chai in the Hub honorees are: Sarah Abramson, Guy Ben-Aharon, Carrie Bornstein, Dan Brosgol, Danielle Eskow, Seth Fox, Stas Gayshan, Alex Goldstein, Alex Klibaner, Meggan Levene, Laura Mandel, Liana Mitman, Jessica Myers, Adam Riemer, Emma Samuels, Ben Sigel, Karla Van Praag, and Josh Zakim.



Joshua Malina and guests

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## ***Shlomo Carlebach's Successor at Adams Street Shul***

"Let's get down to our roots and not be divided by our branches," says Rabbi Sammy Intrator, Shlomo Carlebach's hand-picked successor, who came to Newton to lead a spirited Chanukah event at the historic Adams Street Shul on Sunday, November 24. Over 50 people attended. You can watch a video of his presentation, "The Hidden Lights of Chanukah," at <http://AdamsStreet.org/event/HiddenLights>.

Rabbi Intrator was the longtime assistant and concert manager for Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, who himself gave a presentation of music and learning to a packed Adams Street Shul in 1993. Before he died in 1994, Rabbi Carlebach selected Rabbi Intrator to succeed him at the Carlebach Shul, on New York's Upper West Side, which Rabbi Intrator then led for six years. Since 2000, "Reb Sammy" has designed and taught inspirational programs that combine Kabbalistic and Talmudic teachings, as well as ethical and psychological insights.

The Adams Street Shul is Newton's oldest synagogue, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and now in its second century of service to the community. For more information about the shul's history, community, events, and classes, visit the synagogue's website at [AdamsStreet.org](http://AdamsStreet.org).

## ***Idan Raichel Project***

The Idan Raichel Project will be performing at the Berklee Performance Center, 136 Massachusetts Ave., Boston on Thursday, May 8, at 7:30 p.m. Producer, keyboardist, and composer Idan Raichel became a world music icon with The Idan Raichel Project, a multi-ethnic tour de force that changed the face of Israeli popular music. The project has enchanted audiences worldwide with entrancing fusions sung in Hebrew, Arabic, and the Ethiopian languages of Amharic and Tigrinya. The group's albums shattered sales records in Israel, making Raichel his country's biggest musical breakthrough. Raichel's 2013 release, *Quarter to Six*, once again demonstrates his passion for intercultural collaboration. Tickets at 617-876-4275 or [www.worldmusic.org](http://www.worldmusic.org) (see coupon on page 30).

## ***Mahaneh Emunah Shabbat Experience at Temple Emunah***

There is an exciting and innovative program taking place at Temple Emunah in Lexington this year. Building on the success of last year's Mahaneh Emunah Friday Night experience, Temple Emunah is proud to offer a series of evenings specifically geared to the special needs community that is open to everyone in our community and beyond.

Mahaneh Emunah begins with snacks and schmoozing at 5:15 p.m., followed by a joyous and dance-filled Kabbalat Shabbat service typical of the Tikvah program at Camp Ramah at Palmer. Following Kabbalat Shabbat (during Ma'ariv), our youngsters will have special story time with our rabbis, and then we will all gather together for dinner. After dessert, our Ramah Service Corps Fellow will lead us in song, Israeli dancing, games, and other camp friendly activities.

Our work program was highlighted in the Ruderman foundation's Zeh la Zeh blog and this program is sponsored by Jewish Family and Children's Service of Boston (JF&CS) and the National Ramah Commission.

We are hoping to create more spaces for all members of the Jewish community to come together to celebrate Shabbat in a joyous and inclusive manner. The upcoming dates for this program are: January 10, March 21, and May 2, 2014.

For more information, don't hesitate to contact us! Please email Program Director and Family Educator Jodie Parmer: [jparmer@templeemunah.org](mailto:jparmer@templeemunah.org).



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# ADL YOUNG LEADERSHIP CELEBRATION



Joe Savitch

ADL's Young Leadership Celebration (YLC) Committee Co-Chair Marissa Goldstein, Honorees Diego Portillo and Tanya Shnaydman, YLC Committee Co-Chairs Scott Bookman and Robert Rudolph.

On November 9, The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) New England Region held its 11th annual Young Leadership Celebration at the W Boston Hotel. ADL's Vice Board Chair David Grossman presented Diego Portillo and Tanya Shnaydman with the Krupp Leadership Award. Over 300 attendees joined ADL for the evening's celebration.



Kimberlee Bachman, KateLynn S. Plotnick, and friends



Leah and Daniel Lasry, Debora Heller, Renato Duek, Ilan Kaan and a friend



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# ADL YOUNG LEADERSHIP CELEBRATION



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# Governor Visits JVS



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Secretary of Health & Human Services John Polanowicz, Governor Deval Patrick, MORI Exec. Director Josiane Martinez, JVS CEO Jerry Rubin, Secretary of Housing & Economic Development Greg Bialecki, and MIRA Coalition Exec. Director Eva Milona

In October, Governor Deval Patrick came to Jewish Vocational Service to proclaim immigrant entrepreneurship month in Massachusetts. The Governor toured the agency and met clients from the Massachusetts Refugee Entrepreneurship Achievement Program and other JVS programs. Also attending were Secretary of Health & Human Services John Polanowicz, Secretary of Housing & Economic Development Greg Bialecki, Senator Linda Dorcea Forry, Representative Dan Cullinane, Representative Tackey Chan, Senator Eileen Donahue, MORI Exec. Director Josiane Martinez, MIRA Coalition Exec. Director Eva Milona, and staff from the JCRC.



Staff from JVS and JCRC join their colleagues from Shiluvim

In late October, Jewish Vocational Service (JVS) was pleased to host visitors from the Shiluvim Program in Haifa, Israel. The program's goal is to empower the Ethiopian Israeli community and help them fully integrate into all aspects of Haifa society. Since 2007, JVS has partnered with Shiluvim to help Ethiopian Israelis find jobs, establish employer partnerships, and integrate vocational language lessons into Hebrew courses. Shiluvim colleagues spent three days at JVS, observing services for refugees, including vocational ESOL classes, customer service training, and new-arrival orientation.

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# Bar Mitzvah Tutors

Jewish learning must be fun, engaging, and meaningful. My name is Rabbi Danielle Eskow and it is this belief that led me to create MyBarMitzvahTutors.com, an online Jewish learning program specializing in Hebrew reading, Hebrew School at Home, and Bar/Bat Mitzvah training. I, along with my sister and co-founder Marisa Gobuty, founded MyBarMitzvahTutors with the goal of reaching out to all types of Jewish families, affiliated or otherwise, who are looking for meaningful Jewish learning opportunities to fit their hectic schedules. Due to competing responsibilities and obligations, many people are unable to commit to the strict schedules that often come with educational programs. Our program offers a unique and flexible approach to Jewish learning. It is my belief that Jewish learning is not optional; rather it should be flexible, so that it can fit into the lives, hearts, and minds of every Jewish student and family.

One of my many students in Massachusetts is Ryan from Natick. Ryan began the program over a year ago, never having read a Hebrew letter before. In a short time, Ryan has not only tackled the complicated Hebrew alphabet, but he now engages in deep discussion about Torah topics, tradition, ritual, and even Hebrew grammar! After only a month of reading classes with MyBarMitzvahTutors, Ryan was already spelling words in Hebrew, including "Red Sox," his favorite baseball team, or "gymnastics," his favorite sports activity. It is exciting as a teacher and a rabbi to watch a child's eyes brighten while studying Torah. I was especially touched this year, after our Sukkot lesson, when Ryan sent me a picture of the sukkah he built by himself in his backyard in Natick, working hard to ensure all of the rules were met.

Ryan is able to learn from the comfort of his own home, often with a snack after one of his many after-school activities such as competitive gymnastics and basketball. According to Astrid, Ryan's mother, "My son truly looks forward to his lesson each week, and we are amazed at his progress. The variety of activities is interesting and engaging, the homework is never overwhelming, and scheduling for missed lessons is very flexible!"

It is our goal to engage the entire family in the experience of Jewish learning. It is important for students and their families to feel comfortable and confident in Jewish experiences. We hear from families that they finally understand the meaning of Hannukah, or understand what all of the foods symbolize on the Seder plate. Through our unique approach, we are connecting Jewish people back to their Jewish roots in a way that is accessible, flexible, and open to all forms of Jewish expression.

My sister and I created our program to meet the needs of today's ever-changing Jewish family. We do not believe in turning away students

with the desire for a Jewish education, regardless of hectic schedules or immense time constraints. Previously, for many families who are unaffiliated, overbooked, or live far from a synagogue, there were no alternate options for Hebrew School or Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation. We felt it necessary to create a program with the purpose of filling the void in Jewish learning and providing a meaningful Jewish education, in the most convenient way possible, through online learning. The program has become a perfect solution for students such as Ryan, who do not attend Hebrew school in person, but still want to acquire the skills to become a Jewish adult, learn his people's story, and read

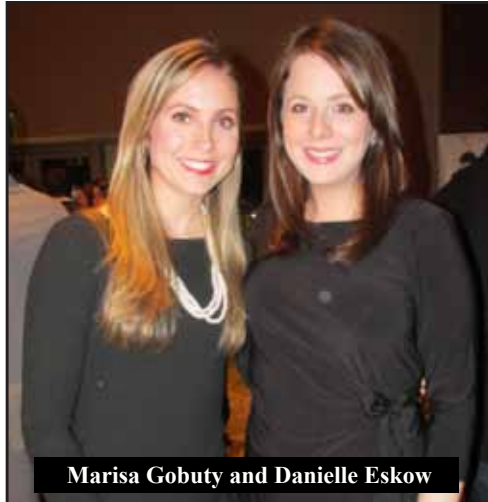
from the Torah on his Bar Mitzvah day. It is our goal to reach families who are otherwise unconnected, overscheduled, or just have not found the right fit for their family. It is our aim to help Jewish families and students feel connected and passionate about their Judaism.

Students like Ryan thrive using our unique format in our fun and welcoming online classroom. Using Skype and screen sharing, students are able to engage in interactive customized learning activities with a live teacher, strengthening their Jewish identity and having fun while doing it. Ryan said, "I like how things are taught at the right pace for me. I enjoy listening to the Torah stories and learning Hebrew in a fun way. [Rabbi] Dani is knowledgeable and nice. Skyping is as good as being face-to-face." As a rabbi and a teacher, the greatest joy comes from watching students fall in love with

Judaism and our tradition, which I get to experience each and every day. It is our goal to ensure that students have fun while doing it, so they grow up having positive Jewish experiences.

For more information on MyBarMitzvahTutors visit [www.mybarmitzvahtutors.com](http://www.mybarmitzvahtutors.com).

*Rabbi Danielle Eskow is the co-founder of MyBarMitzvahTutors.com. She graduated from the Jewish Theological Seminary with a master's in Midrash and lives in Brookline with her husband.*



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The Wedding and Bar/Bat Mitzvah Expo was organized by Walter Perlman at Sheraton Needham Hotel on November 3



Nancy Liverman from Pie on the Fly

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# *Descendants Gather to Celebrate the Founding of Boston's Only Remaining Immigrant-Era Synagogue at the Vilna Shul*

The Vilna Shul celebrated its first ever Descendants' Day on November 24 with a warm and emotional gathering in its historic sanctuary. The Beacon Hill synagogue welcomed over 100 guests to honor the founders of Anshei Vilner Congregation, or the People of Vilna Congregation, who built the Shul in 1919 after formally organizing back in 1893.

Over 100 years ago, the West End and the North Slope of Beacon Hill became a center of learning and prayer for hundreds of Jews from Eastern Europe. Throughout the past year, genealogists have been researching and tracking down descendants of the many members who contributed to establishment of both the synagogue building and the congregation.

Guests had the opportunity to tour the historic property and learn what life was like for their immigrant ancestors in the early 1900s when Beacon Hill was a very different neighborhood than it is today. Each family also received historical documents, including census records and naturalization papers, as well as a map of the area to locate where their family actually lived in the neighborhood during this time.

More than 170 people are now connected to the Shul's original founders who prayed for 65 years at 18 Phillips Street before life rapidly changed in the 1950s. At that time, city of Boston destroyed the West End in an urban renew project. The demolition left the Vilna as one of the only synagogues in the area. As most of the Jewish community had long since left Beacon Hill for more desirable neighborhoods and open space, the Vilna Shul became a synagogue for those "left" on the Hill.

Today, the Vilna Shul is Boston's Center for Jewish Culture. It is a community center and a host to cultural, educational, and spiritual events including High Holiday and monthly Shabbat services. The Shul honors the past, educates future generations, and is dedicated to fostering Jewish identity and culture in greater Boston.

For more information on the Vilna, visit [www.vilnashul.org](http://www.vilnashul.org).

*Photo by Melanie Ludlow*



*Joy Jartman (left) discovering her family's naturalization documents together with her parents, Cynthia and Marc Jartman*



*Descendants learn about their ancestors from Vilna Shul board member and genealogist David Rosen*



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# Yom Chesed

On Sunday, November 10, close to 500 students, families, faculty and staff gathered at Maimonides School to kick off Yom Chesed, a community service initiative. After davening and breakfast, the participants dispersed to 15 projects, helping a wide range of community organizations who serve those in need. The projects, which took place in the school as well as in the broader community included: Alex's Lemonade Stand, Boston Children's Hospital, Brookline Police and Fire Depts., Brookline Parks, Center Communities of Brookline, Family Table, Friends of the IDF, Hebrew Senior Life, Helping Hands, Gift of Life, Gittel's Kitchen (kosher soup kitchen), Jewish Family and Children's Service, Project RIGHT, Yachad and Rofeh.





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# Shabbat Candles at the Winter Solstice

**Rabbi Katy Z. Allen**

The winter solstice is not a holiday in the Jewish cycle of the year. However, entering into the rhythm of the Jewish calendar involves entering into the rhythm of the Moon and the Sun, for our calendar is a combination of a lunar calendar - for the months - and a solar calendar - to keep the months falling each year at the same season.

This year December 21, the winter solstice, falls on Shabbat. At this darkest time of the year, it is easy to fall into a slump at a minimum, or worse, despair or depression. Even without the darkness outside, all we need to do is watch or read the news and consider the widespread personal and governmental violence that wracks our world, the millions of people who live in grinding poverty every day, the super storms and droughts and heat waves that remind us that climate change is ever more surely impacting the Earth and all that lives upon it, and we can easily sink into despair. Despair can also readily overcome us as a result of personal experiences - chronic or severe illness, family members suffering from substance abuse, financial hardships, work that is not fulfilling, losses of one sort or another, and so much more. And all of this so much the more when the nights are long and dark and cold.

There are many messages in Jewish tradition that can be helpful in combating darkness and despair. One of these is that we are enjoined to take our time when we recite a blessing before doing a mitzvah (commandment). "Time should be taken to pause and consider the kindness of G-d or the gift of a mitzvah opportunity in which one is about to be involved." (*Mishnah Berurah, Siman 5:1*) In other words, we asked to pause and remember the importance of the Mystery in our lives, the Mystery that brings light into our hearts and our souls, through all of Creation. Whether by day or by night, alone or with others, we best and most fully experience that Mystery when we take a moment to stop, breathe deeply, and notice all that is around us.

So, when we get ready to light Shabbat candles on the evening before the winter solstice, or to recite the blessing before eating bread, let us remember to pause and reflect. Let us focus in that moment on trust and faith. Not trust or faith in anything, but as a state of being. Living with trust. Living with faith. Doing so is a moment-by-moment experience. It is being in the now with confidence, security, and a sense of well being. It is setting despair aside and opening our hearts and minds to find new ways of being, new answers, new avenues forward.

Some of us may attribute such feelings to faith and trust in G-d, while others of us may experience them differently. No matter how we describe the experience or to what we ascribe it, when we feel a sense of trust and faith in our hearts, it feels just right. Lighting Shabbat candles at the darkest time of the year, and taking a moment to pause before we do so can help us find the trust and faith we need to make our way through the darkness.

*Rabbi Katy Z. Allen is a chaplain at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Rabbi at Ma'yan Tikvah - A Wellspring of Hope.*

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## The Whipping Man



BY MATTHEW LOPEZ  
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# Hanukkah Stocking

**Rabbi Susan Abramson**

Having just celebrated Thanksgiving, American Jews are facing the prospect of a long month of December focused solely on the anticipation of Christmas. We all know that every year we endure this month having to hear Christmas music in every store, every TV commercial, every time we turn on any sort of media, every time we drive down the street. Most years we can at least mitigate this onslaught with the prospect of our Jewish holiday. But this year it is undiluted.

Over my many years in the congregational rabbinate, I have advocated with local school systems to keep Christmas out of the classroom. When I first came to Burlington, 30 years ago, there were Christmas trees in every classroom. The local Catholic priest ribbed me for years about my attempts to evolve the annual Christmas music festival to a seasonal event. Every year I educate the secular communities I serve about the differences between our two holidays. I am always bombarded at this season with calls from congregants about indignities they have experienced at work with assumptions that are made about their Christmas observance or lack thereof.

But with each successive year it has also become clear to me that more and more members of the Jewish community celebrate Christmas in some manner. As interfaith marriage becomes more prevalent and the number of children of two-faith households increases, the barriers to the observance have been lowered. In an increasing number of households it has become more desirable to find the common denominator of the two holidays and integrate the two. Hanukkah symbols on Christmas trees, Hanukkah menorahs that have tree-like candle holders. Elf on a shelf? Meet Mensch on a bench. This year, the first thing I saw in the Hanukkah display at Bed, Bath and Beyond was big, furry, blue and white stockings to hang on a mantle. Forget the meaning of either holiday. For an increasing number of people, both celebrations have become occasions for family parties, the exchanging of gifts, togetherness, and love, instead of a celebration of the birth of Jesus, the Christian messiah, or the Jews' victory over their Syrian Greek oppressors, the regaining of their religious freedom and the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem.

This year it will be interesting to see how people navigate the clear separation of the two holidays. It is a bigger stretch this year to celebrate both at the same time. As easy as it was for families of all

backgrounds to celebrate Thanksgiving with turkey and latkes, that's how difficult it will be to observe Chrismukkah with Stars of David on Christmas trees.

Ironically enough, the issue of assimilation was a major bone of contention in Maccabbean times. Some say that the conflict between the Greeks and Jews in that era was actually a civil war between the Hellenized Jews who had adopted Greek culture, and the traditional Jews who refused to adulterate their practices.

When I was growing up in the 1960's, there were many ways in which Jews sought to acculturate themselves within American society. Plenty of American Jews, my family included, tried to help their children feel accepted by bringing symbols of Christmas and Easter into their homes. But today, when one parent, two sets of grandparents, and extended family members are not Jewish, the integration goes a step further. It is easy to just blend holiday traditions, find the common denominator, and minimize the differences.

As onerous as the Christmas season is for us Jews, particularly this year, we can find solace in the fact that we care enough about our unique place in society that it bothers us. Appreciating the holiday with our family and friends is the gift which our freedom as equal members of an open society affords us. Taking on the celebration as our own, and diluting it into something which symbolically moves us from our own faith tradition, is a sign that we need to look at what happened in Maccabean times a little more carefully.

*Rabbi Susan Abramson is the rabbi of Temple Shalom Emeth, Burlington, MA and the author of the Rabbi Rocketpower Series of Jewish holiday books, [www.rabbirocketpower.com](http://www.rabbirocketpower.com).*

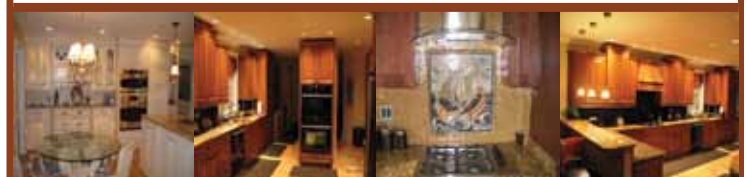


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## Time For Soup

This year was unusual - celebrating Thanksgiving and Chanukah together was a once in a lifetime occurrence.

I hope we all had plenty of turkey and latkes. Now to prepare for, let's hope, a reasonably good winter.

My family, especially when the children were younger, did not care for vegetables. So I made my own version of pea soup.

I added slices of frankfurters, and that did the trick. I cooked various vegetables in my pea soup, put them all in a blender, and created a delicious soup with the addition of sliced frankfurters. The children loved it and it inspired a contest to see who got the most slices of frankfurters in their bowl of soup.

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## Yellow Pea Soup with Frankfurter Slices



- 1 tbs. olive oil
- 1 cup yellow split peas, rinsed
- 2 low-sodium beef bouillon cubes
- 1 peeled carrot, thickly sliced
- 1 peeled parsnip, thickly sliced
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 1 small potato, cubed
- 2 celery stalks with leaves, sliced
- 7 cups of water

In a large stock pot, on medium heat, add olive oil, and sauté the vegetables for one minute while stirring. Remove, with a large spoon, to a plate.

Add water to pot and bring to a boil. Add yellow peas, stir, and bring back to a boil. Put cover on and reduce heat, simmer for one hour. Stir often so that the peas will not burn.

Add bouillon cubes after one hour. Stir simmer for 30 minutes more, then add all vegetables.

Bring back to a boil over high heat, then reduce to simmer for 30 minutes more until vegetables are tender.

Puree in blender in batches (be careful not to put too much in the blender in one time). Pour each batch of pureed soup into a large bowl until finished. Then pour back into the pot.

With the heat on low, add sliced frankfurts and stir, or heat individual bowl of soup with several slices of frankfurt in a microwave oven. If too thick add a little boiled water or broth.

### Note: Optional:

Add 3 sprigs of fresh parsley or dill

Add 3 frankfurters, cut into 1/2 inch slices

Salt or pepper to taste

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# The hidden star

Famous people are not born overnight. Every star had someone in their life that was dedicated to them and had a positive perspective on their great potential. The Jewish people are compared to the stars shining in the heavens. Each person shines and could shine even brighter. Every Jew, man or woman, possesses enough moral and spiritual strength to influence friends and acquaintances, and show them the star that is also in them.

A times, it is difficult for one to notice the stars that are so close to us. The story is told of how the Rosh Yeshiva of Porat Yosef, Rabbi Ezra Attiya, saw the potential in one of his students. One day, one of his young scholars suddenly stopped coming to yeshiva for several days. Rabbi Attiya decided to visit the home of his missing student, and was shocked by the poverty that he saw that they lived in. The student's father explained that he ran a small grocery and needed the boy to work for him. Rav Attiya attempted to convince the father of the importance of Torah learning, but to no avail. The next morning, when the father entered his store, he found Rav Attiya standing there, wearing a work apron. The Rosh Yeshiva explained that he had come to the store early that morning when the student was opening up. He told the student that he had found a substitute worker who would work without pay, and sent him back to Yeshiva. "You said that you needed someone to help and could not afford to pay. I am that someone. Your son's learning is more important than my time!" he told the father, who finally agreed and allowed his son to continue learning in yeshiva. That student continued to excel in his learning and became the Chief Rabbi of Israel - Rav Ovadia Yosef Z"L.

We each need to see the potential stars that we have near us, and provide them with opportunities to excel. Every mitzvah and good deed reveals the great potential one has, and inspires other to do the same. Let us shine the world by revealing the stars that are in us and around us.

**Rabbi Moshe Y. Bleich**  
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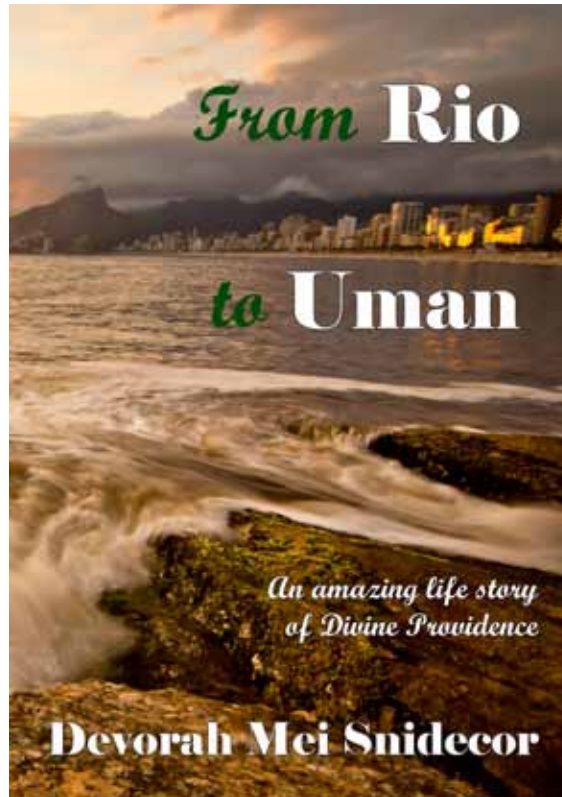
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# The Journey from Christianity to Hasidism

A new book, "FROM RIO TO UMAN," by Israeli author Devorah Mei Snidecor, has just been launched for an international audience and is available on Amazon.com in both the English and Spanish languages.

Through an autobiographic vehicle, the author relates her life's journey and G-d's miracles that have occurred in her own life, beginning in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to her ultimately finding the origins of her family and then her spiritual fulfillment in the land of Israel. Raised and educated in a Catholic family, the book takes the reader on an exciting adventure from Devorah's birth and childhood in Brazil and Argentina through her immigration to Holland, her marriages, education, the trials and tribulations of motherhood, divorce, her association with Dutch Christian protestant churches in her search for the essence of her identity, and the shocking discovery of her Jewish ancestry, culminating in her re-marriage to an American-Israeli professor and finally her settlement in Israel, where she has lived for the last 15 years, currently in northern Israel at a Moshav on the Golan Heights near the Syrian border.

In the recent past, the world has experienced the miracle of the establishment of the State of Israel some 60 years ago, and the ingathering of the Children of Israel from the four corners of the Earth as prophesized by Isaiah. Since 1948, the world continues to discover the many diverse peoples that have identified themselves as being of Jewish origin, from the Falashas of Ethiopia and the Lemba of South Africa to the Chinese from Harbin, persons and groups yearning for recognition today as Jews and desirous of rejoining their people. One of these groups is known as the B'nei Anusim in Brazil, "children [of the] forced [ones]," a term that refers to the children and all descendants of Anusim, who are Jews, who according to Halacha or Jewish law, were forced against their will, to convert to another religion, and Marranos in Latin America and in other regions who are descendants of Jews victimized during the Inquisitions in Spain, Portugal and Brazil. These are Jews descended from those who were forced to either flee the lands of their birth or convert to Christianity, and many have continued to hide their Judaism during the past half century. Those who didn't flee or forcibly convert to Christianity were tortured, imprisoned or burned



at the stake by the Holy Office of the Inquisition, who considered them to be "heretics" because they refused to give up the faith of their forefathers.

Devorah Mei Snidecor discovered during her time in Holland that she is one of these B'nei Anusim, and through her book, she brings a powerful message of faith and courage to her people and to the world.

The author is and has always been a rebel with a cause. Uncomfortable with her childhood and Catholic upbringing in Niteroi, a city across the Guanabara Bay from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, her Christian religious education and social status, she ran off as a young bride to Holland later, during her 30-year sojourn there, to suffer the trials and tribulations of unhappy marriages, divorce, and struggling to obtain an education while supporting herself and her children as a single mother. All the while, she was searching for spiritual fulfillment as well, finally finding her roots and family origins in XV Century Portugal during the Inquisition, when thousands fled expulsion from the Iberian Peninsula and forced conversion to arrive in the New World, including Brazil.

In Israel, Devorah and her husband, Dr. Michael Snidecor, have become active members of the Breslevers community, a

branch of Orthodox Hasidic Judaism founded by Rebbe Nachman of Breslov (1772-1810), who was a great-grandson of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Hasidism.

Devorah Mei is truly an "Eshet Chayil" - A Woman of Valor. Our sages have said that our mission is to gather in all the divine sparks wherever we find them in this world, and that he who saves one life is counted as having saved the whole world. Mystics would say that hers is undoubtedly an "old soul" who along with the rest of Israel at Mount Sinai heard, accepted and vowed to comply with the word of G-d so many years ago. Devorah's life and work will certainly encourage others to find their own way home to their people and Israel. May her words and thoughts be an inspiration to other B'nei Anusim, and to us all. Her life's story is an inspiration for those lost souls.

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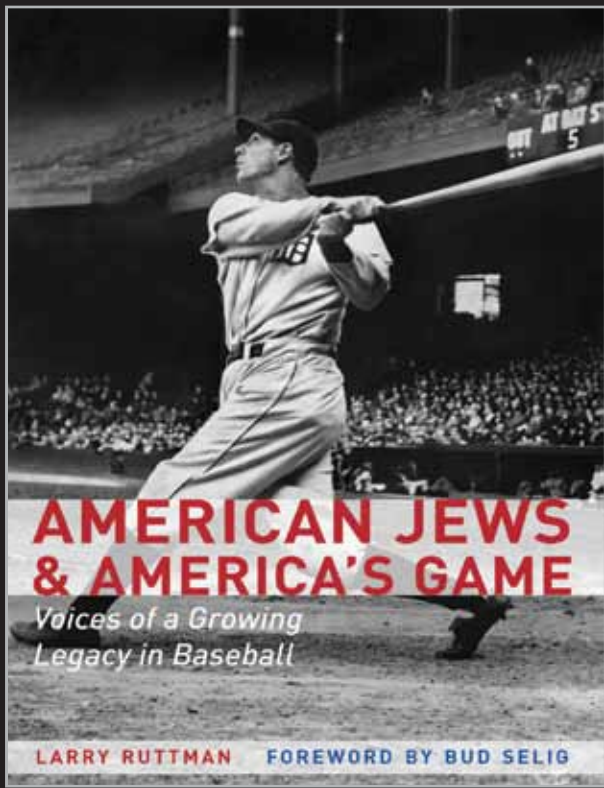
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I am thankful to my publisher, the University of Nebraska Press, for producing this extraordinarily handsome book—replete with eighty illustrations, carefully chosen to convey my message and those of the fifty people highlighted.

I am thrilled that my book may find a home in many varied places—in synagogues, libraries, the homes of Americans of all backgrounds, and the bookshelves of people of all ages who enjoy baseball and are inspired by its participants.



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Larry Ruttman presenting 'the first copy' of *American Jews and America's Game* to Commissioner of Major League Baseball, Allan H. Bud Selig, who wrote the Foreword for the book, at Fenway Park just prior to the second game of the 2013 World Series between the Boston Red Sox and the St. Louis Cardinals.

# Jewish American Youth, Israel, and J Street

It is tough being a young Jewish American these days! Under the present conditions on college campuses, where Zionism is often appallingly equated with racism, and the accusation that Israel is an apartheid state is casually tossed around, it is difficult for a young student to nourish and maintain a strong attachment to Israel. At the same time, many young Jewish Americans who grew up loving Israel, the nation, might themselves have serious problems with specific policies of the government of Israel toward the Palestinians.

About five years ago I attended a talk in Newton by one of the most respected figures in the Boston Jewish community, Leonard (Leibel) Fein. Fein is well-known for his human rights activism, advocacy for supplying the basic necessities to the needy, and fighting for justice for the Palestinians while maintaining Israel as a secure, democratic and Jewish state.

During the Q and A session an audience member rose and asked, "what is the main thing that we can do to hasten the goal of peace in the Middle East?" Fein answered with a rhetorical question, something like: "Look around you. Do you see anyone who doesn't have gray hair? Go out and get young Jewish Bostonians involved!"

Well, it has taken five years, but Fein's challenge has finally been met.

I was privileged to attend the 4th J Street National Conference that took place in Washington D.C. at the end of September. To my delight, the large throng of 2800 attendees included 900 students, many from the Boston area, including a contingent of 50 from Brandeis.

This enormous turnout of young Jews at the conference was not a fluke - J Street has active chapters on 15 campuses in New England, including three in Greater Boston - Harvard, Tufts and Brandeis.

For an answer to the question of "why have young Jews flocked to J Street?" we might start with a cogent and influential article written in 2010 by Peter Beinart, an associate professor of journalism and political science at the City University of New York. He famously wrote, "For several decades, the Jewish establishment has asked American Jews to check their liberalism at Zionism's door, and now, to their horror, they are finding that many young Jews have checked their Zionism instead." The major mainstream Jewish organizations, as Beinart put it, "have refused to foster - and indeed have actively opposed - a Zionism that challenges Israel's behavior in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and toward its own Arab citizens." It's hard for young Jews who

grew up with the liberal values, taught to them by their parents, for racial equality and justice for minority groups here in America, to accept what they perceive as oppression of "the other" in the Palestinian territories, not to mention confronting their peers on college campuses who dismiss Zionism as racism.

Well, no longer need American Jewish youth (not to mention gray-heads like me) feel alienated; they have clearly finally found a home in J Street. J Street provides an alternate voice in the Jewish community and allows American Jews to love and care about Israel while still being critical of specific policies, and addressing the unfair treatment of Palestinians. As a grandparent, I have been concerned that my grandsons may grow up with no attachment to Israel. Now I have hope that through the efforts of groups like J Street, when they grow up they may inherit an Israel that they can be proud of.

J Street has its finger on the pulse of American Jewry. Its long-standing positions on Israel - made concrete by its advocacy work within the Jewish community and in Washington in support of a two-state resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict - are in line with

the recently-released "2013 Pew Survey of American Jews." This survey shows that the majority of American Jews (60%) support President Obama's handling of the nation's policy toward Israel at a significantly higher rate than the US population as a whole, and 54% believe that current support for Israel is "about right". The survey also finds that 61% of American Jews believe that there "is a way for Israel and an independent Palestinian state to coexist". Of particular interest concerning the questioning of Israeli policy, 89% of American Jews think that "a person can be Jewish, and strongly critical of Israel's policy."

A statistic from the Pew study that should be worrisome to those concerned about continued Jewish American attachment and support for Israel is that 53% of those 65 and older say caring about Israel is essential to being Jewish, whereas only 32% under age 30 express this view.

Clearly, we have to show young Jews a way to positively engage with Israel while not abandoning their liberal values. But, the 900 students who rallied at the J Street National Conference have demonstrated that J Street has pointed the way.

**Stan Fleischman - Newton Highlands**

*(The writer is a member of the J Street Boston Executive Committee)*



Advocacy meeting with Rep. Joe Kennedy on Capitol Hill as part of the J Street conference



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# Center Makor to Open in Natick

The Center Makor is pleased to announce its second location in Natick. "Everyone has been waiting for this, and we are glad we could find the resources, time, and the ability to combine our efforts to open this new cultural center," said Vladimir Foygelman, President of Center Makor, a Russian-Jewish Center that provides services for the Russian Jewish Community of Eastern Massachusetts. "Our younger community has been moving West, and therefore, so do we," he said.

Young Russian-Jewish families are settling in Framingham, Natick, Ashland, Southborough, Hopkinton, Holliston, Sudbury, Wayland, and surrounding areas, and the Center's leadership felt they could not close their eyes to this migration. They chose a primary location on 81 Speen St., where they hope to attract families with young children. "Center Makor is inclusive, although, our prime target is Russian-speaking families," said Foygelman, who stressed that they invite everybody to participate in their events and activities. "It's not a secret that the Russian School of Mathematics, which is a partner of Center Makor, has been providing great math alternative studies to American families, and has been recognized far beyond Russian Community," he said, adding that other Russian-born educational programs are popular as well, providing a solid knowledge platform to their students. "Center Makor sees great value in continuing education, rather than in scattered classes in art and math," he said. The Natick location will offer such concentrated educational approaches, with students learning each subject in depth, including history, a variety of academic disciplines, hands-on workshops, and more. Foygelman said that the Center would be adding new and exciting classes all the time, but its initial focus will include Math, Chess, Art, Music, Dancing, Russian, Hebrew and Science.

Center Makor will also be functioning as a Community Center in collaboration with the Russian Jewish Family Network, which targets families with children aged 0-5. Sasha Grebenyuk, a Russian Jewish Family Network Program official, will serve as the new Program Director of Center Makor in Natick. In her new position, she will help to connect area Russian Jewish families to one another. Grebenyuk will be responsible for identifying new as well as retaining the participation of existing Russian-speaking families in the MetroWest area and beyond, and she will also design and implement programming and weekly/monthly events for parents and children. She will report to Nancy

Fried-Tanzer and Malka Young of the Jewish Family Network, and to Vladimir Foygelman of Center Makor. The Jewish Family Network of MetroWest and other non-profit organizations will gain the opportunity to schedule and conduct their events at Center Makor in Natick.

In addition to its School and Community Center, Makor will be also providing space and opportunities to a number of local small businesses, including but not limited to photographers, artists, and children's organizations.

"We hope it'll be more of a community center and less of a revenue-focused site," said Foygelman. "It's a non-profit, so even if we make anything, it will go back to the programming, so that the children of participating families can enjoy more, and also less expensive classes, activities, supplies, etc." While children are taking classes, parents and friends can sit in a quiet room, have tea, coffee, conversation, use the Center's wifi network, and relax. "Siblings should not be bored either," he said. "While parents relax, they can play games or listen to a Russian story in another room, told by our wonderful teachers." This, he said, is the long-term goal. "We'll start out small, and hopefully will grow fast."

Center Makor will be holding our first Open House at the new location on Sunday, Dec. 15 from 5-8 p.m.

"But before the event, since we need furniture and supplies, I would love to ask interested supporters for a tax-deductible donation, either monetary, or of items such as school supplies, folding tables and chairs, computers, and furniture," said Foygelman.

For information on classes, donations, volunteering opportunities and community hours, please contact Sasha Grebenyuk at [Sasha@jfsmw.org](mailto:Sasha@jfsmw.org), or call 508-951-3944.



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## Mind the Gap on Iran: A Time to Reassure Allies and Rebuild Trust

David Harris  
November 24, 2013

Israel appears to have come up with the short end of the stick in the just-announced Iran deal.

While President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry are going to great lengths to say that Israel ought to feel safer, at least for the life of the six-month agreement, Israel's top leaders clearly don't agree.

In fact, official American and Israeli views couldn't be further apart right now.

Washington believes that while the deal entails risks, it offers the first chance in years to move Iran in a more constructive and peaceful direction. The administration further challenges its critics to suggest an alternative path that would not lead inevitably to war.

Jerusalem, on the other hand, asserts this accord is an error of historic dimensions, likely to turn into a permanent arrangement that enshrines Iran's right to enrich uranium and keeps intact the \$100 billion-plus nuclear architecture that Tehran has been steadily constructing.

Obviously, only time will tell which side is closer to the truth.

Meanwhile, despite repeated American claims of unprecedented cooperation on the Iran issue between Washington and Jerusalem, it is evident there were limits.

Israel must now take into account that the U.S. held backchannel talks with the Iranians over many months, and barely, if at all, kept it in the loop as those talks proceeded.

It's also not clear how much the Saudis, Kuwaitis, Emiratis, and other American allies were in the know, or, for that matter, our closest European partners.

Moreover, Israel -- and the Gulf nations -- must grapple with the fact that their oft-expressed concerns about the direction of the Geneva-based negotiations went largely unheeded, despite their belief that the U.S. considered them vital partners whose perspective was worth taking into account.

Having effectively been told to keep quiet and trust Washington, they must now feel quite abandoned.

Former senior State Department official Nicholas Burns may have captured this realpolitik view best in the New York Times (Nov. 23), saying: "[I]t's in the American national interest to try to make this negotiation work. If it's not in the Israeli interest or Saudi interest, so be it."

Yet, how can Israel -- and the Gulf nations -- roll over and play dead when what happens affects them far more than any of the P5+1 nations?

After all, it is Israel that has been the most frequent target of Iran's anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic venom. It is Israel whose very existence has been questioned by Iran's current leaders. It is Israel that has felt the long arm of Iran through Iranian-backed Hezbollah. And it is Israel that Iran seeks to wipe off the world map.

Yet those who wish the Israeli prime minister to stop speaking up conveniently distort his government's position.

First, had it not been for Israel's perseverance, there might not have been the global attention to Iran's nuclear program we see today.

Second, if Iran was on the ropes because of crippling sanctions, this was in no small measure because Israel pressed for escalating measures, and called especially for targeting specific sectors of the Iranian economy. These efforts were, shall we say, not always universally popular in some P5+1 countries.

Third, Israel has not called for war against Iran. Those who suggest otherwise are reframing the Israeli position to serve their own interests.

Rather, Israel has consistently said that, precisely to stop Iran's nuclear program without a military strike, two elements are essential - tough

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# Mind the Gap on Iran: A Time to Reassure Allies and Rebuild Trust

sanctions and a credible threat of the use of force. As it watches the sanctions being somewhat relaxed post-Geneva, that remains Israel's position, while, rhetoric to the contrary notwithstanding, the credible threat of force erodes.

Israel's position recalls Winston Churchill's decades earlier. The British leader wrote: "One day President Roosevelt told me that he was asking publicly for suggestions about what the war should be called. I said at once, 'The Unnecessary War.' There never was a war more easy to stop than that which has just wrecked what was left of the world from the previous struggle."

In other words, Churchill believed the Nazis only understood strength. Yet, in the years leading up to the outbreak of war in 1939, when he was out of power, they encountered eagerness, at times bordering on desperation, for a deal. Netanyahu doubtless views the Iranian regime similarly -- it will only respond to a determinedly stiff spine, not a bout of bonhomie and acts of goodwill as advance payment from its adversaries.

Meanwhile, what lessons do the Saudis and other Gulf nations draw from the latest developments?

Their options seem quite stark.

They could band together in a secret alliance of convenience with Israel, and see where that gets them against their most despised enemy, Iran. Or they could use their wealth to go nuclear by turning to, say, Pakistan, triggering precisely the arms race that everyone fears in the Middle East. Or they could try to cut their own deal with Iran, improbable as that may seem. Or they could seek to diversify their foreign policy, relying less on the U.S. and more on others, including -- gulp! -- Russia and China. Or they could opt to place their full trust in Washington, but that seems increasingly difficult for them to do. After all, the U.S. handling of Egypt and Syria hasn't exactly heightened the confidence of Gulf nations in America's grasp of regional issues and policy direction.

So maybe we are at the proverbial fork in the road, and perhaps Ambassador Burns captured it best: America has its own national interest. If it doesn't converge with nations we've called allies till now, even on issues of existential importance to them, so be it.

For many, though, it would be a tough pill to swallow. That's why I hope Washington will use the coming days and weeks to reaffirm that Jerusalem and our Gulf friends, and the essential quality of American alliances, do continue to matter -- and remain a fundamental tenet of America's national interest.

*David Harris is the Executive Director of the American Jewish Committee. This article was published in The Huffington Post and The Jerusalem Post.*



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*Joe Savitch*

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On November 19, The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) New England Region hosted an expert panel to discuss the topic of Immigration Reform. Over 200 attendees came together at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, for the program, appropriately titled, "America - A Nation of Immigrants: Where We Stand Today," after President Kennedy's book, "A Nation of Immigrants." Panelists included Jose Vargas, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, filmmaker, and the founder of the Define American campaign, Ali Noorani, Executive Director of the National Immigration Forum in Washington D.C., and Reverend Cheng Imm Tan, Director of the Mayor's Office of New Bostonians. The panel was moderated by John Willshire-Carrera, Co-Managing Director of the Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinic at Greater Boston Legal Services and Clinical Instructor at Harvard Law School.



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# Rabbi Ovadia Yosef of Blessed Memory

## Rabbi Moshe Y. Bleich and Rabbi Menachem Posner

Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, a former Sephardic chief rabbi of Israel, pre-eminent authority on Jewish law and political mentor to many in Israel's Sephardic Jewish community, passed away on Monday, Oct. 7. He was 93

After the announcement of his death, anguished cries were heard in synagogues and yeshivahs throughout Israel and abroad; men, women and children were seen weeping on the streets; and roads were clogged throughout the country as an estimated half-million mourners made their way to the funeral procession in Jerusalem.

A widely published author on Jewish law, Rabbi Yosef was considered by scholars of all backgrounds to be a rabbinical authority with a rare grasp of nearly every area of Torah scholarship.

Born in Baghdad, Iraq, on Sept. 1, 1920, he immigrated with his family to British Mandate Palestine in 1924, settling with his parents in Jerusalem. He went on to study at the Porat Yosef Yeshivah under the tutelage of Rabbi Ezra Attiya. There, he was widely admired by both peers and faculty for his devotion to learning and his legendary retention of texts.

In 1940, the 20-year-old Yosef received rabbinical ordination. After a stint as head of the Cairo Rabbinical Court, he returned to Israel in the late 1940s.

He served on the Jerusalem rabbinical court and taught Torah in a number of yeshivahs. "I remember walking past his Jerusalem apartment in the wee hours of the morning," recalls Rabbi Mordechai Ashkenazi, chief rabbi of Kfar Chabad, Israel, "and he would be standing and learning, immersed in the Torah."

The two would meet again in 1972, when Ashkenazi published an index of sources cited in the Shulchan Aruch HaRav, the code of Jewish law of the Alter Rebbe, the first Chabad-Lubavitch Rebbe.

"I brought my book to [Yosef], who was already chief rabbi of Tel Aviv at that time, and we sat for many hours talking about Torah topics and other matters," says Ashkenazi. "He had a head like a computer. Whatever went in never went out. He was familiar with the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch backwards and forwards - as he was familiar with all parts of the Torah."

That year, Rabbi Yosef reciprocated and paid a visit to the rabbi in Kfar Chabad, delivering a class on the laws of Passover.

Shortly thereafter, Rabbi Yosef was elected Israel's chief Sephardic rabbi, a post he held until 1983. As founder of the Shas political party, representing immigrants from Arab and North African nations who comprise almost half of Israel's Jewish population, he based its platform on a return to religious tradition and framed it as a counter to a political establishment that had been dominated by Jews of European ancestry.

He was known for his encyclopedic knowledge of a wide swath of halachic texts, ranging from the well-known to the most obscure. In his halachic rulings, he would often list dozens of previous rulings and then decide in accordance with what he perceived to be the majority opinion.

Much of Rabbi Yosef's copious work fills two multi-volume collections. His first, *Yabia Omer*, printed in stages since 1954, tackles a wide range of issues, from the use of solar-heated water on Shabbat to the halachic ramifications of Operation Entebbe, the daring hostage-rescue mission carried out by Israel Defense Force commandos in Uganda on July 4, 1976. Many of the responses fill dozens of pages with hundreds of citations.

*Yechave Daat* - his second work, six volumes in all - is comprised of shorter responses to practical questions posed on his radio program, *Pinat Hahalacha* ("the Halachah Corner"), which he hosted during his tenure as chief rabbi.

He had the distinction of being one of the select few contemporary scholars to be cited in the *Likkutei Sichot* of the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, (vol. 33, *Shlach III*).

Rabbi Yosef's spiritual authority enabled him to become a leading figure in Israeli political life and to marshal a renaissance of Sephardic pride and a return to tradition that, along with his Torah works, will continue long after his passing.

Rabbi Yosef was predeceased by his wife, Margalit, and a son, Rabbi Yaakov Yosef, who was a Chabad Rabbi in Jerusalem. He is survived by six daughters; and five sons, including Rabbi Yitzchak Yosef, who was elected last month as Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel.

*Rabbi Moshe Y. Bleich is the rabbi at Wellesley-Weston Chabad. Rabbi Menachem Posner is a lecturer, freelance journalist and writer.*



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# The Cookbook Project

## Adam Aronovitz

Service and Charity? Tikkun Olam and Tzedakah? Like many 14 year-old suburban Jewish males I didn't have a clue about anything happening beyond the boundaries of my own little town, and couldn't comprehend the challenges that many human beings confronted on a daily basis in an effort to survive. I was preoccupied worrying about which pack of baseball cards I should buy or which friend I should invite to go hang out at the mall to start thinking about saving the world. Around this time, I joined the Beth El Synagogue Junior Youth Group in Sudbury, MA expecting friendship and fun, group outings such as roller-skating, bowling, and Boston Scavenger Hunts among other unique social opportunities. (Full

Disclosure: Meeting the young ladies from neighboring communities that I had consistently seen during the high holidays but didn't have the nerve to talk to with their parents around may have been a major contributing factor.) Something I did not anticipate was the expectation that everyone in the youth group would be required to 'serve.'

In retrospect despite being in the midst of massive hormonal shifts and my personal transition to 'adulthood' the most transformative process at this point in my life was an initiation into a life of service and a greater understanding of global realities inspired by the study and practice of Tikkun Olam. For the first time, I felt empowered by the idea that I could personally devote my time, energy, and resources towards the alleviation of suffering locally and globally. From soup kitchens in middle school, to volunteering with urban youth and Senior Citizens during high school, to orphanage service in Vietnam, Kenya, and India during college I began to understand why I am on this Earth and how I can heal the world. After graduating from Tulane University in New Orleans and finishing my Master's Degree at the University of Westminster in London I began teaching in the Boston Public Schools and leading international month-long service-learning programs for high school students during the summer. Today, I am the co-founder and Education Director of The Cookbook Project (CBP), an international health and cooking education organization based in the United States and I have found my personal path to heal the world.

CBP's mission is to reverse the rise of preventable chronic lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes, obesity, heart disease and certain types of cancer. We achieve our mission, step by step, community by community by leading hands-on experiential education programs focused on cooking and we train community leaders worldwide to be our Local Leaders. CBP programs inspire change at the grassroots level and empower communities to take advantage of the resources and wisdom that they are have at the local level. From Vietnam to New York, and from Haiti to Kenya, we have had the opportunity to work with urban American youth, orphans, street children, and young women rescued from brothels and human trafficking.

In all these places, communities are suffering because they have started to shift to eating a 'western' style processed diet. Realizing that the United States is exporting one of the worst and most dangerous cultural

norms to the rest of the world was both shocking and heartbreaking. As communities worldwide are increasingly adopting these eating habits they are witnessing a rise in chronic lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes, obesity, and heart disease that lead to suffering and premature death.

As I write this I am currently in Mysore, India working with an in-



Adam Aronovitz in Uganda



Shashi in the middle

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# The Cookbook Project

credible group of young women rescued from human trafficking on their healthy sweets business called *Sattvic Sweets*. *Sattvic Sweets* produces sugar-free and dairy-free raw sweets appropriate for an Indian population with skyrocketing rates of diabetes and currently provides part-time employment for 10 young women. There is one young woman in particular named Shashi who we have been working with for the past 4 years. There is one photo I love of Shashi that shows her in awe of a peer cutting a papaya which is a pretty simple culinary task here in India. Over the course of the project that year Shashi became interested in natural cooking and expressed her desire to become a chef. When we returned the following year Shashi ran up to Alissa, the co-founder of CBP, and excitedly told her she was now the head cook of the community and had saved up enough money to buy a pair of jeans!

I hope you've enjoyed my personal account of Tikkun Olam in action in my own life and would love to hear from any readers interested in this mission of CBP. We are a 501c3 tax-exempt non-profit organization, whose programs and impact are generously supported by volunteers and generous donors who believe in the healing power of food and cooking. To get involved in the support of these transformative programs, please visit our website: [www.thecookbookproject.org](http://www.thecookbookproject.org), or email us at [info@thecookbookproject.org](mailto:info@thecookbookproject.org) to find out how you can become a part of the solution locally and globally.

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Nathan Chow

Chai Center Ice Menorah lighting in Brookline

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# LIGHTS AND STRIKES



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Nathan Chow



More than 600 young adults came together to celebrate Chanukah at Lucky Strike Lanes in Boston on December 4. The event, organized every year by Rabbi Mayshe and Shifra Schwartz of the Chai Center with the help of other Jewish organizations, included a special menorah lighting ceremony, bowling, drinks and cocktails.



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# Thanksgivukkah Celebration with Seniors



**Holocaust Survivor Ita Sender loves the children's visit**



**Stephanie Lowenthal meets old friend Elaine Hochman after 30 years**

Volunteers from the Chai Jewish Center in Canton spent the Sunday morning before Chanukah and Thanksgiving singing and dancing with the residents of the Fireman Community in Randolph. Participants clapped and hummed as they enjoyed a joyful children's choir, singing prayers and holiday songs. Seniors and their volunteer buddies then participated in a conversation about what they were most thankful for during this holiday season. "I am thankful for my family and friends," was a refrain most often repeated by many of the participants. Chai Buddy participants snacked on Dreidel Challot, and homemade brownies. The residents of the Fireman community greatly appreciate all the volunteers who take the time to join them on the last Sunday of every month, to participate in games and conversation. If you would like to become a Senior Buddy Volunteer, please contact Rivka at the Chai Jewish Center by calling 781-929-1455 or email JewishCanton@Gmail.com.



Chanukah Wonderland, a project of the Canton Chai Center, gathered parents and their kids at Canton High School on December 1 for a fun afternoon with a magic show, arts and crafts, latkes, and sufganiot (donuts). The free event is organized every year by Rabbi Mendy and Rivka Horowitz, with the help of volunteers.



**Rabbi Horowitz lights the Chanukyah**

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The AJC Boston Annual Meeting: A Celebration of Global Leadership took place at Temple Emanuel in Newton on October 16. Pictured above: David Harris, AJC Executive Director; Michael Tichnor, Immediate Past President; Mel Shuman, President; Rob Leikind, AJC Boston Director



Teens from Beth Menachem Chabad of Newton created personalized medals and cards to express their appreciation for the soldiers in Israel. They were delivered by Rabbi Chaim and Nechama Prus to the soldiers stationed in the holy city of Chevron.



*Rada Roda*

Rada Roda of Sharon, owner of Jerusalem Pita and Grill in Brookline, was a guest on the Bate Papo com Shirley Farber TV show that taped in late October. Roda brought a variety of food from her kosher restaurant to the show, such as kebobs, kubeh and Moroccan cigars, and explained the ingredients to the audience.

David Rudnick, owner of Kiddie Academy in Stoughton, was a guest on the Bate Papo com Shirley Farber TV show in late November. Rudnick spoke about the various activities offered at his preschool and after school program. He also invited guests to tour the facility and enroll their kids in its winter camp. The Bate Papo com Shirley TV show is a bilingual talk show hosted by journalist Shirley Farber that since 2005 has been broadcasted on more than 30 local stations in Massachusetts. The show can also be seen on Comcast on Demand at Get Local/ Brazilian in more than 400 cities Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maine and Vermont.



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# The Meandering Family Tree

## Shirley Nigri Farber

I'm not the kind of person who instinctively likes to research the roots of my own family. I love interviewing people and writing about them, but sites such as Ancestry.com never really engaged my attention. I did try it once, but when it began asking me for the names and dates of birth of my family members, I stopped. I did not want to feed them with information. I was not looking for anything and I felt that nothing that I would find would make a difference in my life.

Everybody loves it when they learn that their great-great-grandfather was a billionaire. But what do I care, if I did not inherit anything? Others love being related to famous people. But unless Oprah calls me saying that she is my relative and invites me for a family gathering, having a famous family member would not make my day.

One thing that I am interested in, however, is learning about Lebanon, where my parents and grandparents lived. It is a place that I always wanted to visit, and have always heard stories of the life there, but personally know very little about. I do know that at the moment, Jews are not welcome there. So when I started to read the article "The History of Jewish Community in Saida (Lebanon)" by Nagi Georges Zeidan on Facebook, it caught my attention. I searched for a familiar

in helping the Jewish community. What was most interesting for me to find out was that prior to the creation of the State of Israel, Jews who were living in Palestine got together with Jews from Lebanon to discuss areas that should be included in the State of Israel. The research mentions that Jews from Saida (Sidon) in the South of Lebanon wanted their area to be part of the new Jewish state just as it is in the Bible, the land of Canaan.

I do not know why, but reading about this affected me. Another article I read mentioned that in 1907, Mourad Nigri was at the meeting in Sidon representing the chief Rabbi, along with Zionist leader Chaim Weitzman, who came from Europe to discuss the issue. It also recounted how Weitzman wanted to raise money in Europe to help the Jews in Lebanon establish themselves, so that when the state of Israel was to be created, they would already be there. That year, my grandfather was only 25 years old, and since there are many cousins with the same name, I'm not certain if it was him. On the one hand, the idea of my grandfather as a young Theodore Herzl discussing the creation of a future Jewish state is fabulous. On the other, though, it seems as if Jews did not want to move out of Lebanon, but rather, felt that they were already in the Holy Land anyway, as per biblical frontiers. If you



*Knisset Eliyahoo, Mumbai*



*my grandmother Rachel Chattah*



*Rachel Sassoon Beer*

name. It was one of those afternoons when you have a lot of work to do, but you still want to spend time on social media, probably as an escape from work.

Then I the article mentioned the name of my grandfather Mourad Nigri, and his involvement in the Jewish community in Lebanon. My grandfather Mourad died one year after I was born, so I don't remember him. I heard relatives say that he used to smoke on Shabbat as an example as how far he was from Orthodox, but also about how he helped build a synagogue in Rio de Janeiro, and was always involved

look at a map, Sidon is a about one hour by bus to Safed, and at that time, as my father once mentioned, people would move freely from one country to another.

There is a question that I asked my parents: Why did they move from Lebanon to Brazil, and not to the bordering Israel? Both families, on my mother's and father's side, moved to Brazil in the late 50s and early 60s. The reason they gave me was that at that time, Brazil was a land of opportunity where they could make a better living, and they did not want their children to be drafted by the new Israeli army and not

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# The Meandering Family Tree

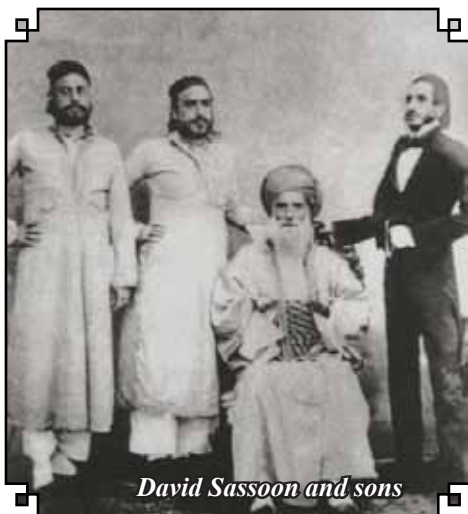
work to support the family. Also, they heard reports from friends and family of poverty in Israel. My grandfather Mourad even went to Brazil in the early 1900 before he got married.

When I finished reading the article online, I contacted the researcher, Nagi Zeidan and the owner of the the website that contains the Genealogy of the Major Sephardi Families, [www.farhi.org](http://www.farhi.org), Alain Farhi. Up until then, the family tree I knew went only as far back as to my great-grandparent's names, and no more. Now, these researchers sent me a family tree that included my great-great grandmother from my mother's side. That was the shocking part. It turns out that she was born in Bombay, India, circa 1854, to a very well-known family named Sassoon. She had my Hebrew name Rachel, the same as my grandmother. According to the family tree, Rachel Sassoon was married to Rabbi Eli Diwan, who was born in 1833 in Turkey. At that point, I am thinking: forget about Lebanon, let's find out how Jews got to India. Then I think that maybe that is why when I go to Indian places they start speaking to me in a language that I do not understand.

So I started to Google "Jews in India," and found the famous and wealthy family Sassoon. Gotcha! Looking for a family tree is not fun unless you find someone rich and famous. I don't know what I was thinking, how I would find my great-great-grandmother on Google, but I typed her name: Rachel Sassoon. To my surprise, there were many entries with that name, including on Wikipedia.

*From the Jewish Women's Archive (jwa.org): Rachel Sassoon Beer (1858 – 29 April 1927) was an Indian-born British newspaper editor.*

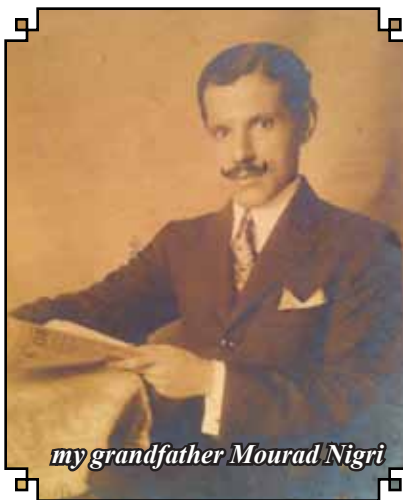
*She was editor-in-chief of The Observer and The Sunday Times. Rachel Sassoon Beer was the first woman to edit a national newspaper when she simultaneously owned and edited both The Observer and The Sunday Times in England in the 1890s. Born to the illustrious Sassoon family in Bombay, she was the only daughter of Sassoon David Sassoon (1832–1867), who was the third son of David Sassoon (1792–1864).*



*David Sassoon and sons*

*Rachel's mother Farha, later known as Flora (1835–1919), was the daughter of Solomon Reuben of Baghdad. The first of the Sassoon brothers to settle in England, S. D. Sassoon moved to London in 1858 shortly after Rachel's birth. His family followed soon after. Rachel's father was very active in Anglo-Jewish communal life. In 1863 he bought an estate at Ashley Park in Surrey. He died suddenly at the age of thirty-five in 1867, leaving his wife to bring up Rachel and her three brothers: Joseph (1855–1918), Alfred Ezra (1861–1895) and Frederick Meyer (1863–1889).*

The roller coaster continued for days while I read more about this fascinating relative who was the editor of not one, but two large newspapers. I love the similarities with my life. As immigrant from India became an editor of two English papers, and was a Jewish woman ahead of her time. This was very exciting to learn. The whole family of Sassoons from India trace back to David Sassoon, who was born in Bagda. He was an Orthodox Jew who moved with his family to Mumbai (called Bombai then). Known as the "Rothschild of the East," the Sassoon family became very wealthy by trading cotton and opium



*my grandfather Mourad Nigri*

in the region. (Now the scariest part of the roller coaster: is there a drug dealer in the family? Actually, one article I read mentioned that opium

was legal in some countries.) Nonetheless, the family left an imprint in India that continues today, because the patriarch built synagogues named Magen David and Ohel David that are still open today, as well as a hospital. While I still do not have the names of the parents of my ancestor Rachel Sassoon and have no idea if she was related to the famous Rachel Sassoon Beer, I know that they were both born in the same city at around the same time. My Rachel moved from India to Lebanon, and the other to England. I will keep searching on both sides of the family. I loved learning about Jews around the world. At that time, only the wealthy and privileged kept good records with diaries and photographs, so my quest is certain to be challenging.

In the end, I was to uncover that, in fact, the two Rachels were just that, two separate Rachels. But it was fun while it lasted. Sadly, the story of the famous Rachel Sassoon Beer includes an unfortunate turn of events. At the age of 29, she married a wealthy Anglican Christian named Frederick Arthur Beer, who was the owner of two newspapers. When she converted, her family disowned her. She did not have children, and died at the age of 69. There is a book on her that I plan to read: "The First Lady of Fleet Street," by Eilat Negev and Yehuda Koren. While my ancestor Rachel Sassoon was very Orthodox, was married to a Rabbi, and lived until 1945, dying at the age of 91 in Lebanon.

**Resource:** Nagi Zeidan articles, [www.farhi.org](http://www.farhi.org), Jewish Encyclopedia and Wikipedia. Many thanks to Alan Farhi and Nagi Zeidan for providing the family tree and the articles and to aunt Lilian Nigri for connecting me with Zeidan. Recent photos from India by EMGanin, others from Wikipedia and family archive.



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# Women of Valor Luncheon



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On October 24, The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) New England Region held its 7th Annual Women of Valor Luncheon honoring Susan Briggs M.D., Senior Surgeon at the Massachusetts General Hospital and Director of their International Trauma and Disaster Institute, and Sandra Fenwick, Chief Executive Officer for the Boston Children's Hospital.



Toy Drive event at Beth Menachem Chabad of Newton



Women's Pre-Chanukah Evening at Beth Menachem Chabad of Newton



Avi Shemtov, owner of The Chubby Chickpea and his mother Diane. The kosher Bistro is now open in Canton at 120 Jackson St.

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# A Mother's Cry for Immigration Reform

My name is Debra Laub and I am Rachel Custodio's mother. We are a Jewish family from Lynn. For many years, we were members of Temple Beth El in Swampscott. Rachel attended the Hebrew school, graduated Summa Cum Laude from Salem State.

In 2007, she fell in love with a wonderful man named Paulo. My husband and I took an instant liking to him. We could see how much he really cared about our daughter. In April 2009, six months after my cancer operation, Rachel and Paulo had a small intimate wedding in our home. It was beautiful. Paulo came from Brazil and he was undocumented, so as they were now married, they decided to correct his status. In 2010, they prepared to go to Brazil for a year and a half to wait out the immigration process. They were given an interview at the JFK building in Boston, which was to start the legalization process.

Paulo was approved, but their happiness was short-lived. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was waiting in the foyer for our son-in-law. I will never forget the fear in Rachel's voice that day. As her mother, I couldn't feel worse than I did at that moment. They were married for a little over a year, and no one should see their husband taken away in handcuffs.

Paulo was detained for four and a half months, which seemed like an eternity. At that time I was walking with a cane, because I needed double knee replacement. When we would visit Paulo in prison they would take my cane away; they would make us empty our pockets, and then walk through a scanner. One day while walking through, I lost my balance. The guards in that horrid place didn't seem to care.

When we would go to see him for one hour every Sunday, I cried with my daughter after every visit because the place was so despicable. To this day, I cry when I think about what we all went through. Conditions were so bad that he opted to be deported. He left in September, 2010. Shortly after that, Rachel made the heart-wrenching decision to leave her life here and moved to Brazil to be with her husband. It broke our hearts. She is our only child, but we understood. Why should she have to make this choice? She's an American citizen. The scales of justice are not balanced in this country!



*Shirley Farber, Rachel Custodio and Debra and Milton Laub*

We sought the help of mainstream media, but it seemed like they didn't want to get involved with immigration issues. That's why we sought the help of Shirley Farber, the publisher of Shalom and Bate Papo Magazine. Shirley understands our predicament. She immediately got us an interview on her Bate Papo com Shirley television program, that is seen all over Massachusetts and in four other neighboring states, through local stations or Comcast On Demand. She also published an article on my Rachel's story in her Brazilian Bate Papo Magazine and connected my daughter with a retired US Ambassador in Brazil who is also an attorney.

While Rachel and Paulo were in Brazil, their lawyers were trying vigorously to get their case moving again, but immigration would not accept the waiver package that they offered. I find it very disheartening, because I am ill. I have a genetic disorder which predisposes me to developing cancer. I lost two siblings to this disorder. Also, my husband had recent surgery, and there are only the two of us. I can't believe our own government could treat our families so terribly, especially when immigrants already here are, by comparison, treated so graciously. My husband and I are in our older years and to imagine not seeing our family for 10 years is unthinkable to us. When we go to Temple, we miss our daughter. There are so many memories, because she put her heart into everything. We still pray for a good year, but yet we don't know what lies ahead for us. All I know is that we have all suffered enough! We brought our daughter up with love, faith, hope and to never give up. Three years later, we're still holding to that.

*Debra Laub*

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## ***UNRWA: Impediment to Peace in the Middle East***

**David Bedein, Director, Israel Resource News Agency and the Center for Near East Policy Research**

A Middle East peace process ensued 36 years ago, when Egyptian President Anwar Sadat made an unprecedented Middle East peace effort, when he proclaimed a new policy of peace and reconciliation with Israel.



The 1979 Israeli Egyptian peace treaty and the subsequent 1994 Israeli Jordanian peace treaty which emanated from the seminal Sadat initiative ignited hopes that the Israeli Arab war would finally come to an end, while outstanding issues of the 1948 war would finally be resolved. Festering issues from 1948 still include the vast property claims of nearly one million Jews from Arab countries who left almost all possessions behind, along with the claims of the descendants of half a million Arab refugees from 1948 war who left behind hundreds of Arab villages.

While Jewish refugees from Arab countries were absorbed into Israel, nearly five million descendants of Arab refugees from the 1948 war continue to languish in 59 United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) "temporary" refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem and Gaza, now funded to the tune of 1.2 billion dollars per annum by 38 western democracies, with the US government donating 25% of the annual UNRWA budget.

Official UNRWA reports, published in November 2013, describes the destitute situation in the UNRWA facilities, which UNRWA officials contrasted with the tremendous economic growth of neighboring Arab cities of Ramallah, Jenin, Bethlehem, Hebron and more.

Yet despite its plague of poverty, UNRWA makes no effort to seek any long term solutions for descendants of Arab refugees who have wallowed in the indignity of refugee life for more than 60 years, UNRWA could adapt the principles of UNHCR, the United Nations High Commission For Refugees, to rehabilitate thousands of its clients.

After all, UNHCR has recently gained experience in its efforts to relocate thousands of Arab refugees who it had rescued in Iraq, placing them in eleven nations around the world beginning with Chile.

In contrast, UNRWA instills millions of Arab refugee descendants with the false hope that they will be repatriated to their 1948 villages, even though these villages no longer exist.

UNRWA teaches a "right of return through the armed struggle" curriculum in the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, and UNRWA facilities boast maps of Palestine which replace Israel, where all Israeli cities are described as Arab cities.

This past summer, our agency filmed UNRWA sports camps for children where the dominant theme was the "right of return" to the villages of their great grandparents.

The film that we produced is called CAMP JIHAD, which depicts how the UNRWA school system's call to join the armed struggle to realize the "right of return" has transformed UNRWA camps into a breeding ground for terrorists.

It is therefore no coincidence that Hamas terror groups won their fifth consecutive election last year to take charge of the UNRWA trade union and the UNRWA teachers union in Gaza.

In other words, those who thought that by helping UNRWA they would advance Middle East peace are in for a surprise.

**For more on this subject visit: [www.israelbehindthenews.com](http://www.israelbehindthenews.com).**

## ***Thinking of Warmer Days***



**Red Jacket Beach Resort**

I believe that the best way to forget the cold is to think about the summer and start to prepare for it. It is never too early to look for places to go when the weather gets warmer, or to begin making your reservations. Last summer, my family and I visited Red Jacket Beach Resort in South Yarmouth, Cape Cod. I passed by that resort many times in the past, envying the people sitting at its private beach, while we drove to the crowded parking lot of the nearby public beach.

At the resort, we stayed in an oceanfront lawn room with a nice porch with a chaise lounge, from where I had a beautiful view. I wanted to sleep with the curtains open so I could enjoy the scenery in the morning. After our all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet, which was very reasonable priced, we relaxed on the beach, and skipped lunch by snacking on Cape Cod potato chips and Nantucket Nectar drinks. My 9-year-old son made some new friends and took advantage of various games such as ping pong, while we went from the indoor pool to the jacuzzi. The resort has great amenities that include a full-service spa, a restaurant, and a very friendly staff. During the summer, Red Jacket offers supervised kids' activities. The resort has 150 guest rooms as well as cottages and townhouses, so you could bring the whole family and feel like you have a home with access to a private beach. Room amenities include refrigerators and wireless internet, and sports activities include golf, tennis, kayaking, and jet-skiing. The resort is just a few minutes from Hyannis where one can enjoy the night life, shopping, mini-golf, arcade and cultural activities.

So don't just dream of warmer days - prepare for them!

**For more information on all 5 resorts which are part of the Red Jacket Resorts of Cape Cod, visit <http://www.redjacketresorts.com/our-new-england-resorts.php> (S.F.)**

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# Jerusalem in IMAX at the Museum of Science



The movie "Jerusalem" will be showing at the Museum of Science's Mugar Omni IMAX Theater through the end of June. Through the narrative of its residents, "Jerusalem" explores how the city became the center of three major religions: Jewish, Christian and Muslim. The 43-minute giant screen film gives the impression that the viewer is soaring high above the holy city. Even tourists who have been to Jerusalem will be impressed by the spectacular aerial images of the Holy Land. Admission to the Mugar Omni Theater is \$10 for adults, \$9 for seniors (60+) and \$8 for children (3-11). For information on tickets and show times, please call 617-723-2500, 617-589-0417 (TTY), or visit the Museum's web site at [www.mos.org](http://www.mos.org).

Photo above: The sun rises over the Mount of Olives, framed between the Al-Khanqah al-Salahiyya Mosque on the left and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher on the right. Courtesy of Dustin Farrell.

# LIMMUD BOSTON



Photos by Shirley Farber

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# LIMMUD BOSTON



lecture given by teens



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Hundreds of people of all ages gathered at Congregation Mishkan Tefila on December 8 for a day of Jewish learning at LimmudBoston. The annual, volunteer-run, day-long conference included a variety of simultaneous lectures, activities and entertainment. To learn more, visit [www.limmudboston.org](http://www.limmudboston.org). Some of the organizations present at the event were: American Jewish Historical Society, Eim Chai, New England NCSY, Kahal B'raira, J Street, Jewish Big Brothers and Volunteers for Israel.

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# COMMUNITY NOTES & EVENTS

## *Boston Jewish Film Festival announces Audience Award winners*



Life According to Sam documentary

The Audience Award winners for the 25th Boston Jewish Film Festival are “The Jewish Cardinal,” a French film based on the real-life story of a Jewish-born cardinal, for Best Feature Film, and “Life According to Sam,” an inspiring documentary about a pair of Jewish doctors searching for a cure for their son’s rare and fatal disease, for Best Documentary.

“I’m very happy for this great audience prize, especially for this film built around the idea of reconciliation, between Jews and Christians, father and son, past and present,” said Ilan Duran Cohen, director of “The Jewish Cardinal.” “The Jewish Cardinal” is based on the true-life story of Jean-Marie Lustiger (1926-2007). Born to Polish Jews and saved from the Holocaust, Lustiger later joined the Catholic priesthood and became the Cardinal of Paris and confidante of Pope John Paul II. The controversial Lustiger referred to himself as a “Catholic Jew.” “Life According to Sam” is a documentary about two married Foxboro doctors, Leslie Gordon and Scott Berns, who race against time to save their only son, Sam, from the accelerated-aging disorder, Progeria. Gordon and Berns’ efforts led to the first testing of an experimental drug that could prolong the life of Sam and other children. Sean Fine and Andrea Nix Fine, winners of the 2013 Oscar for Best Short Documentary for “Inocente,” directed the film.

The Gordon and Berns family attended the Foxboro, Mass. screening. “We don’t often get the opportunity to celebrate a local family that is working so hard to treat a fatal disease that affects children throughout the world,” says BJFF Executive Director Jaymie Saks. “Leslie, Scott and Sam bonded instantly with the 300 community members who had come to hear their story, and everyone was impressed by Sam’s intelligence and eloquence.”

The 25th Boston Jewish Film Festival screened 48 films from around the world from Nov. 6-18 at 12 theatres in the Greater Boston area.



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## *Glatt Kosher in Canton*

Lisa and Josh Ruboy of Sharon are the new owners of The Butcherie 2, located at 15 Washington St. in Canton. The Butcherie 2 is now Glatt Kosher under KVH supervision. The store also sells prepared food, Chalav Israel milk, and groceries.

## *Temple Beth David, Canton*

“Looking for love in all the wrong places” - Boston-based actor/singer Brandon Grimes will perform an evening of songs and stories about the ups and downs of everyone’s favorite pastime: romance. Whether you’re single, married, or “its complicated,” this show has something for everyone! Join us on Saturday, February 8 from 8-11 pm at Temple Beth David of the South Shore, 1060 Randolph St., Canton. All are welcome. For further information, visit us on the web at [www.templebethdavid.com](http://www.templebethdavid.com) Deadline: February 3. Tickets: \$14 per member; \$16 per non-members.

## *Chai Center Brookline*

Kosher Pickle Making Show with Rabbi Pickle on Sunday, February 9 at The Chai Center, 105 St. Paul St. Contact [info@getchai.com](mailto:info@getchai.com) for details.

## *School Open House*

First Look Friday at Kehillah Schechter Academy: Come visit us in action, tour the school and meet the staff on December 20 anytime between 8:30-10:30 a.m. Reservations are not required. Contact Margie Klayman for more information at: [mklayman@ksa-ne.org](mailto:mklayman@ksa-ne.org), or 781-769-5555.

## *Hebrew Play Brookline*

March 9 from 10-11:30 a.m. - Hebrew Play Live - Pre-Purim Festivities at Kehillath Israel, 384 Harvard Ave. Brookline. Join us for an interactive experience with Israeli performers. In addition, we will enjoy songs, stories, (kosher) snacks, and a craft activity in Hebrew for children 0-5. More details - [www.hebrewplay.net](http://www.hebrewplay.net).

## *Letters to the Editor*

### **Jewish Partisans of the Soviet Union**

“Did the Jews “walk like sheep to slaughter” during the Shoah? No, they did not. Over 25,000 Jews fought in the Soviet Partisan forces and more in other groups such as in Yugoslavia, France, and Italy. They are our modern-day Maccabee; my father and mother were among those fighters--in the Max-Kruk Otryad, the third largest after Bielski and Zorin. They fought in northwestern Ukraine from 1942-1945. I am a child survivor of those partisans who fought in the forests and swamps to avenge our people. Please see my book “Jewish Partisans of the Soviet Union During World War II”. You can order by calling me in Newton at 617- 965-8388 or email [jack.porter1@verizon.net](mailto:jack.porter1@verizon.net), or visit [www.drjackporter.com](http://www.drjackporter.com). **Dr. Jack Nusan Porter, Research Fellow The Davis Center for Russian Studies Harvard University**

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