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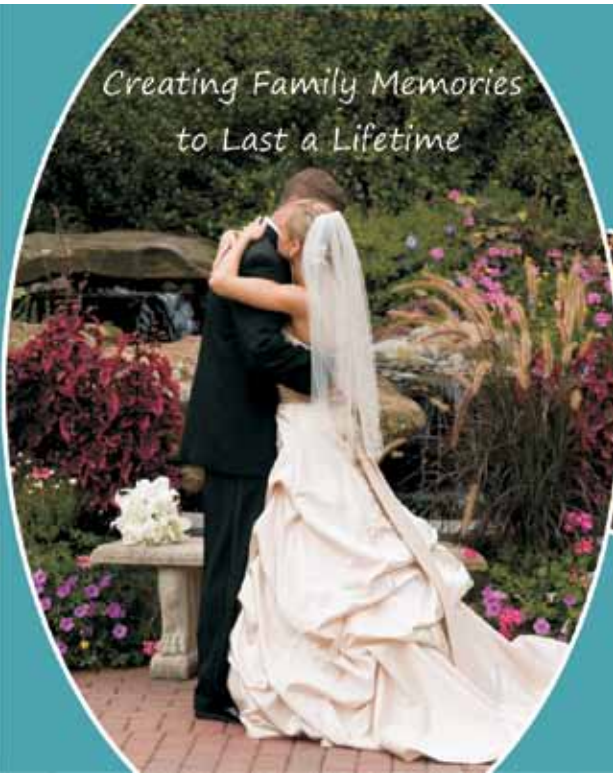
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# Happy Chanukah

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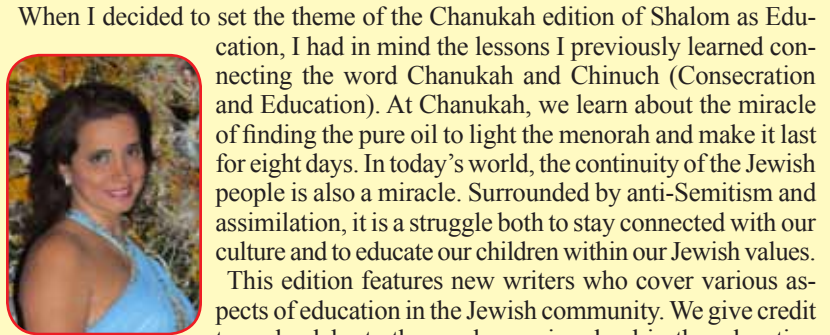
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When I decided to set the theme of the Chanukah edition of Shalom as Education, I had in mind the lessons I previously learned connecting the word Chanukah and Chinuch (Consecration and Education). At Chanukah, we learn about the miracle of finding the pure oil to light the menorah and make it last for eight days. In today's world, the continuity of the Jewish people is also a miracle. Surrounded by anti-Semitism and assimilation, it is a struggle both to stay connected with our culture and to educate our children within our Jewish values.

This edition features new writers who cover various aspects of education in the Jewish community. We give credit to and celebrate those who are involved in the education of children and adults with all their hearts and souls. In various sections of the Torah, we read that the children are our future, so it is of great importance that we instill in our future the lessons that we hold to be the foundations of Judaism.

In each edition of this magazine, I strive to contact various Jewish organizations in the local community, in order to help them publicize their events, past and future. While Jewish people often desire to participate in what is going on in the community, they sometimes keep wandering around without a place to go. On the other hand, event organizers have a difficult time spreading the word to a broader audience - and they keep attracting the same crowd.

This is why communication is such a crucial tool by which to connect the Jewish community. People are often embarrassed to attend an event at a temple or organization that they do not belong to. We need to be able to invite the whole community and make them feel comfortable and welcome. That is when the Jewish media can play an important role. It is either that, or completely rely on the century-old method of posting event flyers, like I often see on Starbucks' walls. Shalom Magazine is about connecting the various Jewish communities in Massachusetts, and it is a forum to exchange ideas that can inspire one another. Readers can stay in touch with us daily through our social media platform on Facebook and on my personal public profile. There, you will find out about events in the local Jewish community and view links to interesting articles. I would like to invite you all to post your events and express your opinion on our page as well: [www.facebook.com/shalommagazine](http://www.facebook.com/shalommagazine).

Happy Chanukah and happy holidays to all. *Shirley Farber - Editor*

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# Community Event Listings

## Hilulla of the Baba Sali

The Sephardic Community of Greater Boston cordially invites you to an evening of Spiritual Inspiration, in honor of the 31st *Hilulla* of the Baba Sali, Haadmor Rabbi Yisrael Abuchatzira. The event will take place on January 22, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. at 74 Corey Road, Brighton. Complimentary dinner with seating for men, women and children will be served. The food is provided by *Catering by Sylvia* and dessert provided by *Catering by Aliza* and *Jerusalem Pita*. A special thanks to everyone involved in the *Hilulla*. It is always a great success thanks to everyone who donates time and money, and the many people who choose to be anonymous but who help and support this great event. The event is free and all are welcome. Please bring a friend. All donations will support the Baba Sali Yeshiva of Netivot. Please RSVP: [amihud@yahoo.com](mailto:amihud@yahoo.com) or 617-201-7122.

## Rooftop Menorah parade through Boston to feature Mayor Walsh

On Dec. 23, a parade of four stretch Hummer limousines, with lighted menorahs on their roofs and filled with gleeful kids (and equally excited chaperones), will travel through downtown Boston. The procession will be followed by cars driven by parents and community friends, many also with rooftop Chanukiot.

This year's annual Chanukah parade, arranged by Shaloh House in Brighton, will be preceded by a ceremony inside the Brighton school and a menorah lighting on its lawn, presided over by Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh.

Shaloh House is located at 29 Chestnut Hill Ave. in Brighton. All events are free. To register your child (12 or younger) for the parade or to attend the Chanukah reception, please visit [Shaloh.org/Hummer](http://Shaloh.org/Hummer).



*Last year's event*



*2013 parade*

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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Col. (ret.) Bentzi Gruber, an expert in the field of ethics in battle, spoke to a crowd of approximately 90 North Shore residents at the Aviv Center in Peabody. Col. Gruber described in great detail the extraordinary efforts the Israel Defense Force (IDF) undertakes to avoid civilian casualties, and used stark and dramatic footage of actual battles to demonstrate the split second choices that soldiers need to make to ensure that only legitimate military targets are hit. Contrasting the IDF's respect for innocent life with the tactics deliberately employed by Israel's terrorist adversaries, Col. Gruber held the audience in rapt attention throughout his presentation and received a standing ovation when he concluded with a stirring affirmation of Israel's humanity.

On November 23, more than 150 people participated in a candlelight vigil in Boston in memory of the five victims of the Kehillat Yaakov Synagogue terror attack in Jerusalem. One of the victims, Rabbi Moshe Twersky, once lived in Boston. He was the grandson of a prominent New England rabbi, the late Joseph B. Soloveitchik, a founder of modern Orthodoxy. Photo by Larry Sochrin



This year's BIG (Boston Israel Group)'s Annual Fall Foliage Hike took place on October 19. A group of Jewish Israeli and American young adults came together to enjoy a morning of nature, community building and bagels in the Blue Hills Reservation south of Boston. During the hike, participants had a chance to see a beautiful view of Boston, learn more about fall foliage, but most important, to spend quality time together and make new friends. For more information on future events, check <https://www.facebook.com/BostonIsraelGroup>.



# Happy Hanukah

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# ADL KRUPP LEADERSHIP AWARD



Jessica Adler, Eric Wolkoff, Dana Benjamin, Erica Weinstein and Robert Rudolph

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) New England Region honored Dana Benjamin and Eric Wolkoff with the Krupp Leadership Award on December 6, at the annual Young Leadership Celebration. The Award is given to community members who demonstrate outstanding dedication and leadership on behalf of ADL. Over 250 attendees joined ADL for the celebration at The W Hotel in Boston. Event Co-Chairs included Jessica Adler, Robert Rudolph and Erica Weinstein.



Young and Old Masters of Israeli Art Exhibit at Temple Beth Am in Framingham in November.

ADL photos courtesy of Joseph Savitch.



David Grossman, ADL Regional Board Chair, with honorees



Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met in Jerusalem on November 24.

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# SHAS Pilots i-Pads & Students Soar!

Two years ago, Striar Hebrew Academy began examining technology in light of the 21st century educational model in which students drive their own learning based on their interests and needs. We asked ourselves how we could invite students to actively discover and improve the world, as well as to observe and ask why along the way. How could this process lead our students to be self-motivated, encourage them to act independently, and enable them to be aware of their roles in the local and global community? We pondered how we could individualize their learning in classes that are academically highly diverse. Our answer: the iPad.

Not only is the iPad versatile, easy to use, small and light, it offers numerous applications for learning and teaching. We perceive the iPad as the tool that can serve as the extra hands in the classroom, acting as assessor, attention riveter, and a key to developing skills for each child at his pace, her level, in a continuously interactive and engaging manner.

This fall at SHAS, we initiated an iPad pilot program in the kindergarten, second and third grades. Through the program, grades K, 2 and 3 have begun using iPad applications that:

- (1) address writing skills, including brainstorming, voice-activated writing, dramatic production, poetic verse construction, and puppeteering,
- (2) hone math problem-solving skills using games and puzzles that become more complex as the skills improve; these can range



*SHAS students using iPads during their free time.*

from counting to 10 to using money to buy items, to blasting off in rockets to outer space,

(3) encourage computer skills development by challenging students to delve deeper into applications, thereby learning how to use a keyboard, drop-down boxes and help function, in addition to other computer-literacy skills,

(4) engage students in social studies by examining events as they happen, such as uncovering election candidates' stances and real-time results, traveling the world through Google Maps, taking snapshots of images, marking the pages with comments, and making individual displays,

(5) allow students to develop their own artistry, making complex drawings using tools that help them to depict what they could not do by hand alone,

(6) bring sophisticated science discovery to the classroom by providing simulated experiment interaction so the student can discover how things work when actual experimentation is unavailable, and

(7) produce and cultivate social interaction in which students help each other and then enjoy together the rewards of their own discoveries.

Our students can often be heard shouting, "Come here - you've got to see this!" Our excitement will continue, as we tap

into the astoundingly enormous and creative iPad application pool and expand the options for our students, as they choose their own personal learning path.

**Happy Chanukah from our family to yours!**

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*Zoe Roda of Sharon celebrated her Bat Mitzvah with a party at her parents' restaurant, Jerusalem Pita in Brookline*



*Alexandra Koltun and Alex Lapshin with Koltun Ballet Students after their Nutcracker performance at Boston University Fitness and Recreation Center, on December 6.*



*Children at Hebrew School of the Arts, a program of the Brookline Chai Center, explore the Jewish holidays and traditions in a fun, hands-on way.*



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# Let's Make Hebrew School More Like Camp!

By *Ilana Snapstailer*

It is no secret. Jewish summer camps are the winners in the “building Jewish identity” challenge. In 2011, the *Foundation for Jewish Camp* released a study called “Camp Works - the Long-Term Impact of Jewish Summer Camp,” which stated, “Children who attend Jewish summer camp are 30 percent more likely to donate to a Jewish charity; 37 percent more likely to light Shabbat candles; 45 percent more likely to attend synagogue monthly or more, and 55 percent more likely to be emotionally attached to Israel.”

Furthermore, unlike many of the religious schools we may have attended as children, kids actually want to be there, playing games, making friends and immersing themselves in Jewish culture.

So what is the secret formula, and how can we “borrow” some of it to use during the school year? Short of moving all of our synagogues and schools lakeside, here is my best guess:

## Experiences

At camp children are constantly active: swimming, playing, singing, acting, making, creating. These “doing” experiences allow us to use multiple parts of our brain, and dramatically increase the likelihood that we will remember what it is we are learning.

“Experiential education” and “project based learning,” where students use their creativity, rather than just listening, were just entering the education jargon line-up when I studied elementary education at Brandeis University. When the first *Kesher* after-school program began in Cambridge in 1992 and in Newton in 2002, this kind of hands-on learning was at the forefront of their approach.

Today, most supplementary schools, day schools and other Jewish education providers are incorporating project-based learning and experiential education into their everyday curricula. The Brandeis

Design Lab teen fellowship is our community’s latest example of this growing and successful trend.

## Joy

I hear from too many Jewish adults that they “hated Hebrew school” as a kid. Because of this, some parents have been hesitant to send their kids to Hebrew school. For many of our students, Hebrew education

is something wedged between fun activities that they have chosen, such as gymnastics, hockey practice, drama.

So why can’t Judaism be one of the “fun” things they do as well? Some may ask, “if they are only having fun, how are they learning?” I believe that fun and joy are just as necessary in the atmosphere of a school as pencils and books. If there is joy involved, students will be much more attentive. If teachers exude excitement about what they are teaching, the kids will be happier to be there.

When I joined *Kesher* this past June, I was extremely impressed by how it has perfected the art of “fun Jewish learning.” In recent years, many synagogue religious schools and day schools have been taking this “joyful” game plan from the Jewish summer camp playbook as well.

## Friendships

No question about it: the most memorable part of camp is the friends we make. We hug them goodbye at the end of the summer. We count the days until the camp reunion when we can see them again. Therefore, many kids keep coming back to camp mainly because their friends are there!

When students arrive at *Kesher*, they do not go straight to a class. They have “zman chofshi,” or free time, to hang out, build Legos, or draw or read with friends. Many look forward to coming to *Kesher* because of the connections they begin to make the moment they walk in the door. Thus, we should not underestimate the power of “down-time” during Hebrew school hours. Bonding with Jewish friends, who share the same heritage and traditions as you do, can be just as important to building a Jewish identity as practicing your *Ivrit* (Hebrew).

## Community

*Kol Yisrael arevim zeh la-zeh* (All Jews are responsible for one another) is beautifully exemplified in the camp setting. All of the camps I have visited have always felt like one big family. Older campers and counselors look out for younger campers. Milestones and holidays are celebrated as a community. This can surely be replicated during the school year, and at *Kesher*, it is not uncommon to see a 5th grader helping the kindergartener peel potatoes during latke making, or a 4th grader helping a younger friend with their homework during free time.

1. Many area supplementary schools have been instituting *Madrichim* programs, some under the guidance of *Gateways* (*Access to Jewish Education*). Middle and high school students return after their b’nei mitzvah, to help teachers and tutor students. *Madrichim* is another way to strengthen our Hebrew school community, making it more memorable and meaningful for kids.

I am optimistic about the direction Jewish supplementary schools are taking. They are committed to making the Jewish learning experience more joyful, personalized and fun. In doing so, we are all building stronger Jewish identities among our students and, hopefully, creating a generation of Jews who do want to send their kids to Hebrew School because they loved it as a kid. All we have to do, it seems, is make our Hebrew Schools a little more like camp!

*Ilana Snapstailer is the Executive Director at Kesher Newton.*





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## Jewish education in America

*Sandra Lilienthal, Ed.D.*

Since the Pew Report on American Jews came out last year, several Jewish professionals and leaders have addressed the seemingly bleak future of the Jewish community in America. While some see it as inevitable, some as a process which can be reversed, and others yet think we are misreading the data, we must take into consideration the structure of Jewish Education in North America in order to understand the bigger picture. Why is it that for so many Jews, Judaism means so little? Where have we, Jewish educators, gone wrong?

While this is a topic broad enough to cover several articles and dissertations, let me try to summarize the issues we deal with:

1) **Early Childhood education** - all of us are moved by little children singing Jewish songs, celebrating holidays, and being the "abba" or "ima" at Friday morning Shabbat activities in preschool. We save the chanukiot our children made, as well as the haggadot, Kiddush cups, and more. While a Jewish early childhood education is very important in building a foundation, if not followed by more education it will be lost, in the long run. Singing *Dayenu* at the age of three does not lead to living a Jewish life as an adult, as much as singing Twinkle Twinkle Little Star *does not lead on to become an astronomer.*

2) **Day school education** - there is no question that day school education is an important indicator of future Jewish commitment. So why are we not all running to enroll our children in Jewish day schools? I can think of several answers, and I am sure you can too. A dual curriculum is not easy - it implies that a child needs to be in school twice the amount of time. Something will have to give: whether it is playing soccer after school, being in a marching band, or simply playing outside, if a child is to be in school from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Some parents are concerned with the over scheduling that day school represents. Many parents would not mind that, if - and this is a big IF - it were affordable! For many families, the cost of day school education is out of reach. And while many schools offer generous scholarships, it still represents a hefty investment if a family has two or more children. Further, in many areas, the public school system offers (free) high quality education, better than some of the day schools.

3) **Supplementary school** - while in the past supplementary education (Hebrew school, religious school) was quite effective, I am not sure we

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# Jewish education in America

can say the same about the past 30 years or so. Parents have pushed synagogues to reduce the number of hours children must attend. This has led to many students being exposed to Jewish learning for a couple of hours a week, about 36 weeks a year. In the most successful schools, students are learning, are happy, and absorb Jewish teachings. But let's be honest: how much Judaism can one learn in a couple of hours a week? Imagine how parents would react if schools decided to teach Math or Language Arts only a couple of hours a week (and with no homework). Synagogues are then focusing most to the education in preparing a youngster for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah service, which becomes the "end goal" for that family. Once the day comes and goes, the education gained is rarely relevant to the life of the teenager. Only a very small minority of students continue learning into their high school years and these certainly benefit much more from the education.

4) **Camps** - most research shows the impact of summer camp on Jewish identity. There is no question that summer camps of all movements are very successful in building identity and confidence in your youth. Why is that so? One of the main reasons for the success of summer camps is the immersion factor. Children live a completely Jewish life for a number of weeks. Everything in a Jewish summer camp revolves around being Jewish. Yes - there are sports, arts, hikes, games, and this is exactly the message camp sends: you can be like everyone else, do what everyone does, and be Jewish! While this might not seem such a revelation for most of us, it truly relays to children that being Jewish can and should be part of their life 24/7: when they wake up or go to bed; when they go to school; when they are outside playing ball, taking an AP test, or chatting with friends on Facebook. Programs such as *Genesis* and *BIMA* at Brandeis University achieve the same results for high school students. However, if this is not supported when they come back home, we give our children the impression that being Jewish 24/7 can only happen when you are in camp - it is a summer vacation "thing."

New initiatives have been sprouting around the country that offer interesting options to those who do not attend day school. In a combination of afterschool care and Hebrew School, programs such as *Edah* (Berkeley), *Jewish Kids Groups* (Atlanta) and a few others, including *Sulam* (Brookline), offer five-day-a-week programs. These initiatives

replicate, to a certain degree, the experience of immersion of summer camps, and allow for many more hours of Jewish education, when compared to the traditional Hebrew School. They have been successful in creating Jewish education that is both enjoyable and effective, and might be the answer for parents who want the best public school education paired with strong Jewish learning opportunities.

5) **Adult education** - we have not been able to bring a larger number of adults to Jewish education. In many cases, it is purely due to the lack of time, as adults are constantly busy. In my opinion, though, this is crucial at this point in the development of the Jewish community in America - we must attract more adults to Jewish education. We must offer them courses in which different aspects of Judaism are discussed in both intellectual and emotional terms, in which they find meaning for the important life questions, in which they can see practical applications of Judaism in their daily lives. We cannot afford to lose a generation or two. We cannot afford Jewish apathy. Parents and grandparents are role models for the young. We need to bring back the smell of Shabbat, the joy of being Jewish, the connection to our past, if we are to create a bright future. Programs such as the *Florence Melton Adult Mini-School*, *Me'ah*, *Wexner*, and the new *Pillars of Judaism* have been successful and have led adults to greater involvement in the Jewish community. New online initiatives (I am personally involved in two programs that are opening in 2015) are going to allow Jews in smaller communities as well as those who are homebound to connect online, live, with other Jews around the country, while at the same time, to have access to some of the best Jewish education programs available in America.

Jewish educators are constantly looking for ways to involve more people with Jewish learning. In a world where things are constantly evolving, we have an obligation to adapt to the new realities. A lot has been done, but there is still a lot more to accomplish. As we read in *Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers)*: "you are not obligated to complete the task, yet neither are you permitted to desist from it."

**Dr. Sandra Lilienthal is a Jewish educator with over 25 years experience. She holds a Masters in Jewish Studies and a Doctorate in Jewish Education, is the author of the Pillars of Judaism curriculum, and is currently working on developing courses for the Ingathering Circle - a live, online Jewish learning experience.**

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**Thursday, January 8, 6:15 p.m.:** From Kiddush to Kaddish - Jewish Rituals for Life Transition. A free five part Jewish learning class for beginners and the curious with Rabbi Sam Seicol.

**Thursday, January 15, 6:15 p.m.:** From Kiddush to Kaddish - Jewish Rituals for Life Transition. A free Jewish learning class for beginners and the curious with Rabbi Sam Seicol.

**Thursday, January 22, 6:15 p.m.:** From Kiddush to Kaddish - Jewish Rituals for Life Transition. A free Jewish learning class for beginners and the curious with Rabbi Sam Seicol.

**Friday, January 23, 6:30 p.m.:** Monthly Kabbalat Shabbat with Havurah on the Hill and Idit Klein of Keshet

**Thursday, January 29, 6 p.m.:** Scotch and Schmooze Networking Hour at the Vilna

**Friday, February 20, 6:30 p.m.:** Monthly Kabbalat Shabbat with Havurah on the Hill

**Sunday, February 22, 6:30 p.m.:** Join the Vilna for a special screening of "Rafting to Bombay," discussion, and edible delights from India

**Saturday, March 7, 7 p.m.:** Annual Interactive Megillah Reading and Purim Extravaganza with Havurah on the Hill

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*Three Generations Gather at the Vilna Shul's Second Annual Descendants' Day*

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On Sunday, November 23 the Vilna Shul, Boston's Center for Jewish Culture, held its second annual Descendants' Day at their 18 Phillips Street location. The energy and excitement were palpable as 250 descendants of the original founders of the Shul gathered in what was once Boston's West End. They came from New Hampshire, Maine, Connecticut, Vermont, New York and western Massachusetts, as well as the greater Boston area. They came to see their ancestors' names on the plaques and learn more about their lives in what is now Beacon Hill.

Two years ago, board members and genealogists David Rosen and Marilyn Okonow founded the Vilna Shul Genealogical Project; they systematically began researching the names written in Hebrew in four locations in the building, and through standard genealogical practices began locating living descendants of the founding members of the Shul. Most of the attendees had no idea that their grandparents or great-grandparents had worshipped at the Vilna Shul and lived in its vicinity in the early 1900s.

Rosen and Okonow found census records, naturalization records, ship manifests, and vital records for each family. The records indicated how the surnames had been changes as the Jews assimilated; many descendants did not know what the original name had been. Records showed dates of immigration, occupation, home values, and street addresses. Brandeis professor and historian Ellen Smith spoke about Boston's immigrant Jewish community in the early 1900's and the history of the Vilna congregation.

After the event, holding maps of the former West End, family groups fanned out through the streets of Beacon Hill, locating the exact buildings where it all started for their families in Boston before they prospered and moved to the suburbs. The descendants spanned four generations, and ages ranged from two weeks to 90 years. David Rosen even located a descendant of Rabbi Jacob David Kallen, the Shul's first rabbi when the congregation was founded in 1893.

Founded over 100 years ago by Jewish immigrants from Lithuania, the Vilna Shul is now Boston's Center for Jewish Culture.



# LIMMUD BOSTON



*Limmud Boston 2014 took place at Mishkan Tefila in Chestnut Hill on December 7. The volunteer-driven conference offered more than 80 segments, on topics from parenting to astrology to Israel and social justice. Hundreds of people traversed from lecture to lecture, beginning at 9 in the morning. Children in attendance also enjoyed the day at Camp Limmud, with activities supervised by Keshet Newton. Next year's event will be held on December 6, 2015. For more information, visit [www.limmudboston.com](http://www.limmudboston.com).*



**Rabbi Susan Abramson (R) and a Limmud volunteer**



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## AJC Boston Hosts First New England Diplomatic Marathon



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*Diplomats and AJC guests*

On Monday, November 17, AJC Boston hosted its first ever Diplomatic Marathon where AJC leaders and diplomats representing over 15 countries engaged in open discourse on issues relating to Israel's place in the world, the rise of global anti-Semitism, economic collaboration, and the threat of a nuclear Iran.

The AJC Boston Diplomatic Marathon began with a private breakfast with WBUR General Manager Charles Kravetz, who reflected on some of the challenges and issues that arose in reporting on this summer's Hamas-Israel war. The discussion was followed by individual consular meetings with diplomats representing Korea, Mexico, Germany, Canada, United Kingdom, Greece, and France.

The Diplomatic Marathon concluded with a new and innovative program where AJC brought together diplomats and local business leaders to examine the Israel-Massachusetts trade relationship as a model for expanding business between their respective countries and the Commonwealth. Speakers included David Goodtree, Author of "The Massachusetts-Israel Economic Relationship" and Global Venture Partner, OurCrowd; Joel Schwartz, SVP and General Manager, Global New Business Development, EMC Corporation; Aron Ain, CEO, Kronos Inc.; and Yehuda Yaakov, Consul General of Israel to New England.

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## Teaching Torah Through Challah

By Rabbi Susan Abramson

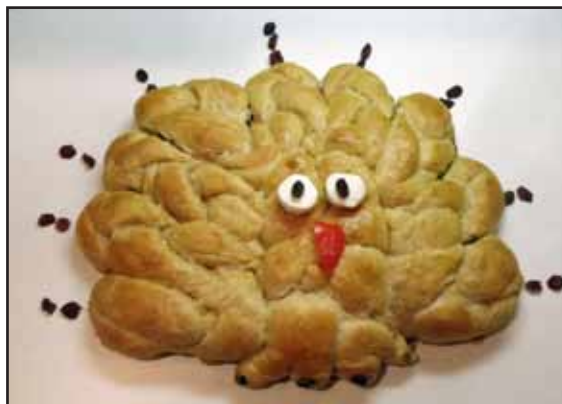
I have never been a cook. Just ask my mother, anyone in my family, or anyone in my congregation. Long-time temple members still laughingly recall my attempts to bake chicken or make mashed potatoes. When I was growing up in the 1960's, I was determined not to learn how to cook as a matter of principle. I strongly believed that a woman's place was wherever she chose it to be, not the kitchen. As one of the first 50 women ordained as a rabbi, I was happy for people to know me as a teacher, leader and role model, and not as a preparer of food. What happened? My son Aaron was born. I was intent on finding as many creative ways as possible to instill in him, and in all children, a love and connection with Jewish tradition, holidays and culture.

When Aaron was a toddler, we began a Tot Shabbat program at our synagogue to provide a fun way for children to connect to their Jewish identity. One month, a friend suggested that we braid our own challah as part of the program. She brought a tub full of dough and every family had a great time creating their own loaf. She also provided everyone with a copy of the recipe which she titled, "No Fail Challah." She informed me that even I, the non-baker, could make this myself. The following Friday I took her up on the challenge. Both Aaron and I were mesmerized by the yeast exploding in the water. We had a blast creating the dough and sticking our hands in the mixture to knead it. After a few weeks, the two of us making challah together on Friday afternoons became part of our family ritual. He and I would each have our own bowl and would create our own challah. For some reason, his always came out fluffier and more moist than mine.

When Aaron began Kindergarten at the Rashi School, a Jewish day school in Greater Boston, I came in to teach the kids how to make their own unique challah. As I began writing my *Rabbi Rocketpower* series of Jewish children's holiday books ([www.rabbirocketpower.com](http://www.rabbirocketpower.com)), Aaron and I began making challahs in the shape of holiday symbols, such as a Chanukah "menorallah" for Hanukkah.

Since then, I began making challahs in different shapes to teach Torah at my Shabbat table. Everyone would be surprised when we uncovered the challah, because no one knew what it would look like. For the week we learned about Noah, I made a Noah's arkallah. When we read about the Ten Commandments, I made challandments.

Over the past three years, I have baked a challah in the shape of something unique to each Torah portion. My goal was not only to publish a book to teach Torah through challah baking (*Challah: A Chewish Guide to the Torah*, now available), but to revive the art of challah baking as a way to connect people to their Jewish culture, heritage, holidays and traditions.



Over the past thirty-three years in the rabbinate, I have taught Torah to people of every age in different venues using many different methods. But this past week was my first foray into large scale challah baking with about 25 of my religious school's third through sixth graders. First we sat in our temple's social hall and learned about the Torah portion (Jacob wrestling with an angel who changed his name to Israel). Then we assembled in the temple kitchen, where organized chaos ensued as they teamed up in pairs to make the dough. During the 50 minutes it took for the dough to rise, we adjourned back to class to study.

When we came back together, the kids spread out at tables in the social hall. They divided their dough balls in half, so each person had full control over what he/she wanted to create. There was a lot of experimentation in the course of braiding and shaping the dough into whatever aspect of the Torah portion was the most meaningful for them. The end result were challahs in the shape of Jacob, animals he probably had with him, Jacob and Esau as babies, angels, a whale (?), images of what the stranger who wrestled with Jacob may have looked like. We also had a number of traditionalists who wanted to simply braid their dough into the customary oblong shape. The kids took their challah creations home to bake. The instructions included not only how to bake the challah, but to take a photo of them with their challahs and send it to me.

The results were outstanding. I have never seen the kids so excited. The smiles on their faces in the photos I received said it all. I have received many emails from parents informing me that their kids now want to begin the tradition of challah baking at home.

What's next? By the time you read this article, I will have had an interfaith challah baking experience with members of my temple and a local Episcopal church. I am in the process of working with area congregations, retirement homes and other venues, hoping that together we can raise this tradition as a way to help sustain the Jewish community. Experiential learning with freshly-baked bread and Torah is a way to positively engage us in an era where we knead to entice our people to connect to our Jewish roots.

The tactile experiences of mixing ingredients, kneading dough, braiding it into shapes, putting it in a warm oven, smelling the aroma permeating the house, and uncovering it as we say the motzi at the beginning of a Shabbat meal, are among the most profound ways of keeping our time-honored connections.

**Susan Abramson is the rabbi of Temple Shalom Emeth, Burlington, MA. She is the author of the Rabbi Rocketpower series of children's Jewish holiday books and *Challah: A Chewish Guide To the Torah*.**

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# Peaceful Jerusalem

Text and photos by Shirley Farber

Jerusalem is no doubt the holiest city for Jews all around the world. We turn in the direction of the Temple in Jerusalem every time we pray, and we ask for peace in the city. We even mourn its destruction. Unfortunately, Jerusalem is also holy for other religions, and because of that, it has always been difficult to connect Jerusalem with its name, "city of peace."

I like the idea of a "two-state solution," but sometimes I feel that those advancing this concept about dividing Israel know Jerusalem only from a 10-day guided tour. Given the expansive mix of cultures and peoples that make the beauty of the city, operating checkpoints in the middle of a busy street would be challenging, to say the least.

There are places I find peace in Jerusalem other than the *Kotel*. In my recent trip, I spent time at a site near the *Kotel* called Robinson's Arch which has been designated for egalitarian prayers because the *Kotel* is ruled by Orthodox laws that mandate separation between men and women, with no women allowed to hold the Torah or wear *Talit* (shawl).

I was there on a Friday night Shabbat, and I had the great experience of praying with my husband and son touching the wall that once surrounded the Temple, with nobody else around. It is a peace hard to describe in words, and better expressed in silence.

Another peaceful place in Jerusalem that I discovered in my last trip is the **Kibbutz Ramat Rachel**. Ramat Rachel hotel is the only kibbutz hotel in Jerusalem overlooking the spectacular views of the Judean Desert, the golden walls of Jerusalem, the historical churches and mosques, and Rachel's Tomb, for which the kibbutz was named.

When I mentioned to Israelis that I was staying at Ramat Rachel, the first reaction was to say that it had the largest pool in the city, as well as the best view. The kibbutz was founded in 1926 by a group of 10 pioneers, and today Ramat Rachel is home to over 400 adults and children of all ages.

We spent a few days at the hotel, where we enjoyed delicious meals everyday in buffet style. When I posted photos of the meals at Facebook my friends were all impressed.

The hotel is spread over about six acres of lawns, trees and greenery that feature swimming pools, a water slide, a Jacuzzi inside glass walls overlooking Jerusalem, a playground and a tennis court.

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# Peaceful Jerusalem



*Ramat Rachel Hotel view*

Ramat Rachel is also well known to host beautiful outdoor weddings and large conferences. The vacation resort completed a recent renovation that included adding Jacuzzis to some of its rooms.

Some of the highlights of the kibbutz are the Archaeological Park exploring the 3000-years old Jewish presence in the area, and the viewpoint *Mitzpe Yair*, with a 180 degrees view between Jerusalem's Old City and Betlehem. On Saturday morning, we went to the synagogue inside the hotel and then had our shabbat meal at their Kosher restaurant.

My son David did not want to leave the hotel to sightseeing; he wanted to spend time at the pool and water slide. We took family walks around the area and visited their archeological site. The hotel's country club is open to members and hotel guests, and is a great place to meet locals and discuss politics with Israelis.

Large groups find the hotel the perfect place to stay, and take advantage of their various-sizes function halls that can accommodate events from 25 to 1000 people. The hotel restaurant is open to visitors, who are usually on their way to nearby tourist attractions. There is a bus stop in front of the hotel that connects riders to the busy Ben Yehudah Street in 25 minutes. For more information on the Kibbutz Ramat Rachel hotel, please visit <http://www.ramatrachel.co.il>.



*hotel buffet*



*our room*



*Ramat Rachel Hotel view from the pool, there is no need to leave the hotel to see the city*

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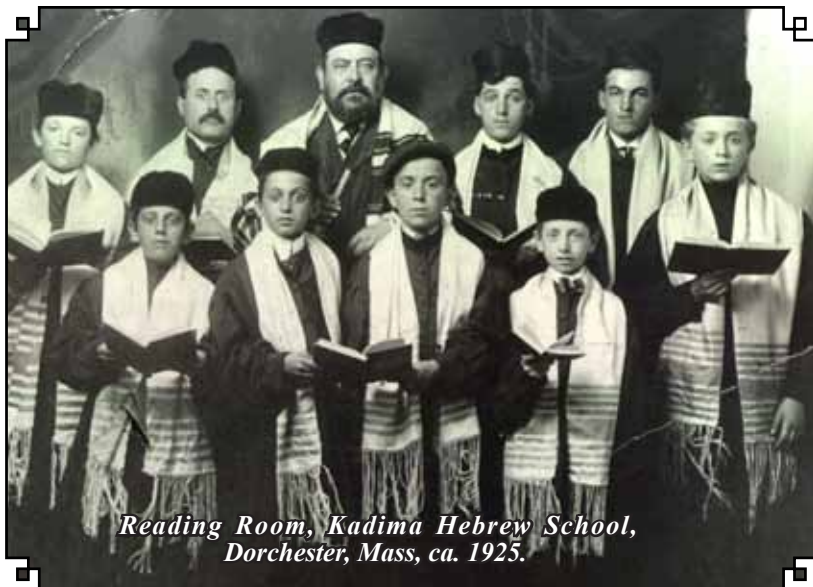
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# American Jewish Historical Society - New England Archives



*Reading Room, Kadima Hebrew School, Dorchester, Mass, ca. 1925.*

One of our largest and most interesting collections at the American Jewish Historical Society-New England Archives is that of the Bureau of Jewish Education (BJE). The BJE was founded in Boston, Massachusetts in 1920 when the Associated Boston Hebrew Schools and the Bureau of Jewish Religious Schools merged under the leadership of Louis Hurwich. While not the first centralized Jewish education organization in the country, the BJE was the first to receive support from its local Federation. From 1920 to 2009, the BJE provided consultation, evaluation and teacher training services using a variety of methods and tools. It worked closely with Jewish day schools, synagogue schools and non-traditional Jewish community programs to ensure professional standards and guidelines were implemented.

This collection contains meeting minutes, Jewish school directories, publications, reports, glass plate negatives and financial ledgers. For more information concerning this collection or any other collection please visit our website at [www.ajhsboston.org](http://www.ajhsboston.org) or contact Judi Garner at [judi.garner@ajhsboston.org](mailto:judi.garner@ajhsboston.org).

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*Bar Mitzvah class, Malden, Mass, ca. 1920s*

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# WHY WE NEED CHANGE IN JEWISH EDUCATION

By Dr. Rebecca Housel

Today, I had the most wonderful surprise. I met another Jew. In July, I moved to Atlanta to work at a local college. Sadly, after the start date was pushed back, funding fell through, and that was just the beginning of my Southern nightmare. Sickeningly sweet sweet tea, fried food and cheese grits are 15 lbs worth of depression-companions as one thing after another, after another - like a figurative domino set from Hell - continued to fall. The most recent of which, is a stalker-scare that required yet a third change of locks on my beautiful, serene home, complete with cathedral windows, that backs to the edge of a lush forest.

With the consistently beautiful pink-to-orange sky at sunset, Georgia is truly beautiful country. It is not the land of Jews though. There are Chabads here, temples, but the culture is permeated by God-fearing, "bless your heart" Christians. So, when I called a random locksmith this morning, I had no clue I was about to meet a Jew. And not just any Jew. An Israeli Jew.

This man was fast, and kind. He was professional, too. He had a Middle-Eastern accent; I detected Israeli but was unsure so said nothing. It wasn't until we were saying goodbye that I asked his name. His response was, "You couldn't pronounce it."

I laughed and said that I spoke five languages.

He laughed back, "Shachar," was his response.

"Ani m'daberet ivirit," was my immediate reply. And like two lost souls, we actually smiled, hugged, and began to immediately discuss Israel, American politics, global anti-Semitism, and the problem with too many Jews in one place.

Too many Jews in one place? Why would that be a problem???

According to Shachar, too many Jews means too many smart people in one place. And when you have that many smart, ambitious folks all together, there tends to be a problem. Shachar related it to the Torah, and, of course, Jacob.

If Jacob and his twin brother, Esau, had issues while in-utero... how do any of us stand a chance???

And let's not forget what Jacob's sons did to their poor brother, Joseph! Jews have a history of Jew-on-Jew jealousy. That's the real problem with Jewish education, too.

Instead of score-keeping, which any good relationship counselor would tell you is a no-no, there has to be a cohesion, a unity, to how American Jews educate the next generation. The loss of Hebrew from ironically named Hebrew schools is the thing that breaks my heart the most.

But it's not just that. It's the teaching of liberal agendas that push the next generation farther and farther away from the one thing that stops world-countries from wholesale Jewish killings: Israel.

Israel is necessary for Jewish survival. Period. When American Jews don't understand the very language of our people, can barely say the Chanukah brachot in Hebrew without looking at a transliteration, and vote for Presidential candidates who do not support Israel, we are out-smarting our very survival.

It's like Shachar said, "too many Jews in one place."

We can all agree that having a Holocaust curriculum is necessary. But the de-emphasis of the Hebrew language outside of Orthodox circles has to stop. And so does criticism of Israeli military tactics by American Jews who have never had shells explode over their heads. Or, have never had to worry about their children getting kidnapped while hiking. Or sons and daughters ensconced in what is (sadly) necessary mandatory military service.

Shachar was amazed to learn how much I cared for Israel, even though I am an American Jew. He was equally amazed at my mastery of the Hebrew language for the same reason. As well as my understanding of how the Israeli military must operate in order for the country to survive the surrounding sea of enemies. Meeting Shachar helped me better understand how Israeli Jews view American Jews. We're like the idiot big brother... the one who is pretty, but not very smart. Why have we let ourselves go? Why are we not fighting to keep the language that unites us with Jews across time and space???

How can we call a Bar or Bat Mitzvah complete when our children can only read their portion based on memorization—not actually reading of the Torah?

Two years ago, I was working in Philly. The Dead Sea Scrolls were on display. Thanks to my mastery of Hebrew through Yeshiva education,

I read and translated each and every portion to very excited museum-goers. The thrill for me was reading words written over 2,000 years ago by fellow Jews. That, though separated by millennia, I could understand them and they could understand me. I hope that my grandchildren know Hebrew in the same way and can feel that same sense of connection to their past. And, that they will have an opportunity to visit Israel, fall in love with their homeland, supporting it fully. But a cohesive curriculum is needed in Jewish education for that to happen. To insure a Jewish future. Otherwise, we may as well all convert to Christianity or Islam now. Personally, I'd go with the latter. At least Muslims don't eat pork....

*Dr. Rebecca Housel lives in New York and Atlanta. She is in her 20th year as a professor and is also a best-selling author in Wiley's Philosophy and Pop Culture series. You can read more about her at [RebeccaHousel.com](http://RebeccaHousel.com)*



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A memorial speaks today and it speaks tomorrow



# Ellen Weisberg and Ken Yoffe bring education and entertainment to the classroom

By Susie Davidson

Performers at the Northeast Comic Con, held December 6 and 7 at Shriners's Auditorium in Wilmington, included storytellers Ellen Weisberg and Ken Yoffe.

Weisberg, who holds an M.S. and Ph.D in Pharmacology, is a researcher in the field of leukemia at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. In addition to illustrating e-cards and print cards by Mountain Mist Productions, Weisberg has contributed prose and poetry to literary periodicals that include PKA's Advocate and The Writing Disorder, as well as magazines including Natural Solutions, Many Hands, Today the Dragon Wins, NH Mirror, and Working Mother Magazine.

Yoffe, who holds an M.D. and a Ph.D. in genetics, is a pediatrician in Billerica.

The couple, who live in Chelmsford with their daughter, Emily, belong to the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators.

According to their website, U.K.-based Chipmunk Publishing and Minnesota-based Galde Press have published several books they have both authored and illustrated, and their books have been featured on ABC affiliate KOMO-TV in Seattle.

"I need creative outlets," Weisberg told Shalom. "My husband and I have co-authored children's books that include 'Friends and Mates in 50 States,' 'All Across Canada,' and 'All Across China,' inspired by our 3-year-old daughter, Emily, whom we adopted from China," she explained.



Ellen Weisberg, Ken Yoffe and daughter Emily

The books, which focus on varied young characters who tell their own stories about their native countries, are being used in classrooms and libraries to teach children about geography. According to Weisberg, proceeds from book sales have gone to specific foundations that benefit heart disease, breast cancer, Parkinson's, and dystonia.

The couple routinely participate in circus-based performances that feature one of their published children's books, "Fruit of the Vine," an illustrated children's fantasy that advocates bystander intervention.

They founded a circus troupe called FACE-PAINT, an acronym for Fantasy and Circus Entertainers Partnering Against Intolerance.

"One of our regular circus troupe members, Dillon Stanger, is also Jewish, and very religious, actually," she explained. "The three of us have performed a few times together in recent months, and are presently putting on shows with an anti-bullying theme, primarily at Massachusetts-based Boys and Girls Clubs." Their presentation features the video adaptation of "Fruit of the Vine."

In addition to performing, the couple also traditionally donate copies of this, and several of their other published children's books (which are mostly geography-themed) as door prizes for a raffle.

Weisberg said she, her husband, and the troupe would welcome the opportunity to perform additional shows, for a nominal fee, at Jewish Community Centers and synagogues. "We do this for fun, and for a good cause," she said. For more information on Ellen Weisberg and Ken Yoffe, please visit <http://www.weisberg-yoffe.org>.



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# Teaching by Example

By Shirley Farber

When I decided to set the theme of the Chanukah edition as Education, I imagined presenting issues that I've been discussing with people in the community for years. I have been living in Massachusetts for 13 years, and in all this time I have listened to both parents with kids in Jewish day schools and Hebrew schools, as well as teachers. It was not my intent to publish articles reflecting complaints or blame. I wanted to hear about new ideas and solutions, and to open the discussion, rather than air a forum characterized by *kvetching*. But that lofty goal has proven elusive.

When I moved to Massachusetts, my first job was as a teacher's aide at a Jewish day school. Even though I had experience as a teacher, my English was not good enough to lead a class.

From there, I went on to work at four different Hebrew schools in the South Shore. I can recount my experience as a teacher, but I also

want to include my experience as a mother.

When my son was 3 years old, I sent him to a Jewish preschool. From there, he went on to attend two other Jewish day schools; both of which ended up closing. In total, from the ages of 3 to 8, he spent time in three different Jewish schools.

During all those years that I met Hebrew school parents, I never heard one single adult speak highly of the school. Rather, most of the time, I heard the sentence; "I hated Hebrew school." As a teacher, it was very hard for me to hear that from a parent who was now "forcing" their kids to do something they themselves did not like. If you didn't like it, how is your son or daughter supposed to like it?

I come from a very different experience than that of these American parents. I grew up in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where, within a small Jewish community, the majority of kids attended Jewish day schools. The idea of Sunday Hebrew school was unheard of. The only place

people would gather on Sundays was the beach. Up until the age of 14, I attended Jewish day school where I had a great time. In Brazil, public school is not an option, mainly because it is important for parents to have their kids involved in the community. Even today, when many are intermarrying, they still want their kids to go to Jewish school so that they can still be connected with Jewish friends.

I love teaching Judaism. It does not matter if it is to kids or adults; I want to share what I have learned. So for me to talk about the things that I love and get kids to love Judaism and Israel the way that I do, it is a pleasure. I don't think a teacher can teach if she does not have confidence in what she presents to a classroom, and I think it's difficult for students to learn from a teacher if she is not passionate about the subject. That is why I could not be a good science teacher, telling my students that once we were apes. But I can certainly talk about how G-d created the world.

In all my years of teaching, although I loved the kids, I had problems dealing with bad behavior. Some of them were simply not respectful in class. I did not understand why, until I spoke with their parents and learned that they did not care much about Hebrew school, as long as they could have a beautiful bar or bat mitzvah party at their Temple. I did not think that my job was to prepare them for a party - I wanted to make them ready to be part of the Jewish people. While I certainly cannot say that I succeeded every time, at least I tried to teach in a different way from how their parents were taught.

Kids arrive at Hebrew school mostly tired and agitated. It took me a while to understand why, until someone explained to me that various kids had Attention Deficit Disorder and took pills in the morning that would lose their effect in the afternoon. So I drew from my experience in theater and television, and instead of reading from a boring book, I would ask them to act out a story, while I would read as the narrator. They got excited when they acted out the roles of Sarah, Abraham and King David.

When teaching about Anne Frank, I made them hide under their desks in order for them to imagine the fear of being caught by a Nazi soldier. When it came to teaching them about the traditions of a Jewish wedding, I closed the school book, showed



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# Teaching by Example

them my wedding album, and talked about the tradition and customs.

I enjoyed the open discussions about G-d and Judaism, and let them reflect on how they felt about Judaism, and ask the questions that we might not have the answer for, but are worth talking about.

Most of the time, I would be assigned to the older class in the school, the one that does not sit down for a minute. For the most part, I was the younger teacher. Sometimes I had to get them out of the classroom and have those high conversations in the parking lot, while sitting in a circle. Once, while we were learning about Yom Kippur and the Book of Life, a student asked me why G-d did not kill people as soon as they sinned, so that we would know what was right or wrong. That profound question led me into teaching about free will and the story of Jonah and our purpose in the world - something that I did not see in any of the school books, but I believed was part of Judaism.

Not all the schools I was involved with allowed me to teach the way I wanted to in the classroom. Sometimes I did not even have a proper classroom. On the first day in one of the schools, I learned that I was the only teacher without a classroom. Therefore, on each day, I had to set up tables and a board in the function hall. I could only feel singled out as a new teacher. I nonetheless took advantage of the space, and engaged the kids in acting out biblical stories. However, the principal kept pushing me to teach in a certain style that she would call "Teach by Design." I learned about this method for the first time at a conference, but could not understand the concept. I asked the principal to show me by example, by coming to my class and demonstrating a lesson that was "Taught by Design" - but she never came down to do this.

Ultimately, when I returned from Brazil after sitting shiva for my father, I said to myself, I don't need to suffer this pressure. At that time I had just started my television program where I was having a lot of fun. So I told the kids that I was leaving. It broke my heart to see the kids crying and hugging me and asking me to stay, but I could not be happy when I was being squeezed by administrators.

When you teach with your heart, and with passion, the kids feel it. At another school, I was assigned to teach about Shabbat. I decided to invite the kids to experience Shabbat at my home, just as I was invited by Orthodox families when I was studying at the Beth Rivkah School in New York. The girls would light the candles with me, and I would have the boys recite the Kiddush. I feel happy just by remembering their joy. They felt comfortable discussing Shabbat, and I do not think they will forget the lesson.

It's not about teaching from a book; it's about teaching as an example - and if you talk about what you love, chances are that the listeners will love it too.

When discussing Jewish education, it is important to mention the fact that being a Hebrew teacher is not a full-time job. Most of the time, teachers come from working at another place, and are just as tired as the kids. Another aspect that must be considered is that there is a big generation gap between teachers and students.

I always felt that I had to juggle between the principal, the students and the parents. One time, I was able to get the kids excited about acting a Purim play. The students picked the characters that they were best able to represent in front of the class. However, one mother was not happy because her daughter was not

selected to be Queen Esther. She came to talk to me and the director, and almost threatened to have me fired. She demanded another tryout for the role, and I was forced to pick her daughter. Although I soldiered on, my subsequently diminished enthusiasm for directing the play can only be imagined.

Thank G-d, there are other means to teach Judaism with passion to Jews and non-Jews, such as the media, in my case, through both of my magazines (Shalom and Bate Papo, in Portuguese) and my community access television show, "Bate Papo com Shirley."

For four years, I hosted a Jewish radio program in Rio de Janeiro, where I discussed the holidays, Israel, and played Hebrew songs. In similar fashion, through my current media outlets, through the challenges and roadblocks that affect all of us in our endeavors, I continue to try to promote the best, the brightest, the most unique, and the most effective avenues by which to educate my readers and viewers.

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# Exhibit on Hitler's War on Law:

## "Lawyers Without Rights: Jewish Lawyers in Germany under the Third Reich"

By John J. Michalczyk

The very informative exhibit "Lawyers Without Rights" will be hosted by Boston College on March 10-11, 2015 as part of an international conference, "Legally Blind: Law, Ethics and the Third Reich."

The exhibit was previously shown earlier this year, from early July through September, when the American Bar Association and the German Federal Bar featured "Lawyers without Rights: Jewish Lawyers in Germany under the Third Reich," at the John Joseph Moakley U.S. Courthouse in Boston. The exhibit was viewed by countless visitors.

Its tall, stand-alone panels portraying Jewish lawyers who suffered the wrath of the government were prominently displayed in the lobby. Co-hosted by The Vilna Shul, Boston's Center for Jewish Culture, the exhibit depicted the Third Reich's early steps in 1933 at totally dismantling the legal system of Germany, which had been based on constitutional law.

With the removal of Jewish lawyers and judges from German society, all legitimacy of the law was gradually eroded, preparing the way for the Shoah (the Holocaust). By 1933, Jewish lawyers (as was the case with doctors), were for the most part assimilated into German professional areas, and ultimately comprised approximately half of German lawyers in Berlin.

Although the Jewish lawyers were highly respected in various sectors of society, anti-Semitism reared its ugly head in the National Socialist state. Non-Jewish lawyers coveted their Jewish colleagues' clients; hence race and economics played a key role in restructuring the German legal apparatus to the likings of the Third Reich government. Once this step to purge Jewish lawyers and judges was taken, it became easy to trample the law.

Fifteen male and female lawyers are profiled in this exhibit. Some of the men had fought in World War I. Several others were well-established in the legal system and had tried major legal cases. Other Jewish lawyers portrayed in this exhibit managed to survive the Holocaust, while still others were caught up in the net surrounding the Jewish community.

This was especially a common occurrence after the Wannsee Conference of January 22, 1942, when Nazi administrators met to discuss the measures to be taken to assure the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question."

The exhibit offers images of these persecuted Jewish lawyers; for example, a humiliated Dr. Michael Siegel was paraded through the streets after complaining to the Munich Police that his client was legally taken into protective custody. Julius Magnus, a prominent lawyer who had practiced law since 1898, was forced to cease his legal activities in 1938, when all Jewish lawyers were banned from the practice of law. He died at Theresienstadt.

Even female attorneys fell prey to the removal of Jewish lawyers. Dr. Elisabeth Kohn, a human rights activist, was part of the November 1941 massacre of Jews in Kowno, Lithuania. From the dawn of the Third Reich, like other Jews, no Jewish attorney or judge was safe.

With the absence of constitutional law, the crimes of the 22 major Nazi war criminals at the Nuremberg Trials were committed under the guise of fulfilling the law. The exhibit "Lawyers without Rights" is a visual testament to a key step in the Nazi overthrow of the law.

Website: <http://www.lawyerswithoutrights.com/travelingexhibit.html>

**John J. Michalczyk is the director of the Film Studies Program at Boston College.**



*German Federal Bar President Axel Filges (right) speaking with Rolf E. Schütte, Consul General of Germany to New England*



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## *Symphony Hall to host Defiant Requiem, honor Krasas*

By Susie Davidson

On Jan. 27, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and the United Nations' International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Terezin concentration camp survivors Edgar and Hana Krasa of Newton will be honored at Boston's Symphony Hall during the Boston premiere performance of the "Defiant Requiem" musical drama by symphony conductor and music professor Murry Sidlin.

Krasa, who was the cook at the Czechoslovakia camp where the Nazis imprisoned many of Eastern Europe most talented artists and musicians, sang in the June, 1944 prisoners' performance of the Verdi Requiem led by conductor and inmate Rafael Schaechter.

In this secret act of resistance, they sang to the Nazi officials, their guests, and representatives from the Red Cross the lyrics of the Requiem, about Judgment Day, and that they would be held accountable for their sins. The Nazis did not know this, as the verses were sung in Latin. Although the prisoners were forewarned by the Jewish Council of Elders not to take this great risk, as they would surely be murdered if the Nazis caught on, they voted unanimously to continue.

Schaechter perished shortly thereafter at Auschwitz, but the historic event lives on, thanks to the efforts of researchers like Sidlin, who brought a 160 member chorus to Terezin to reenact the original performance, which became the award-winning Partisan Pictures' film Defiant Requiem: Voices of Resistance, featured on PBS. The Symphony Hall presentation, by the Defiant Requiem Foundation, is a tribute to all 16 performances of the Verdi Requiem given by the prisoners during 1943 and 1944 that will include videos, survivor testimony, survivor artwork and dramatic readings. The Krasas' two sons, Daniel and Raphael (who was named after Schaechter), will sing in the choir, as will one of the Krasa's four grandchildren, Raphael's son Alexander.

For information, please visit <http://www.defiantrequiem.org>.



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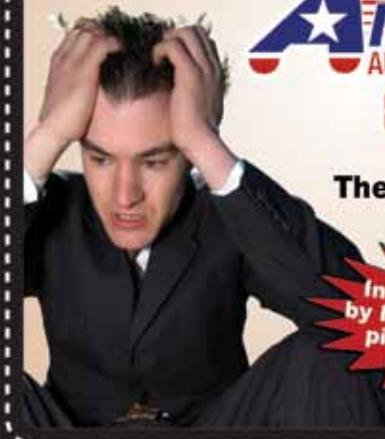
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# A Great Miracle Happened Here

By Dr. Nancy Hait and Elana H. Margolis

As we celebrate the miracle of Chanukah, some members of our Southeastern Massachusetts community are feeling an even greater sense of awe this year. Last spring, our beloved day school (Solomon Schechter in Norwood) closed after 25 years, delivering a heartbreaking blow to many Jewish families. It was then that a small group of determined parents began working to sustain the light of a Schechter day school in our community. Together, we formed a new K-5 Jewish community day school, and named it Ner Tamid, "the eternal light".

Now a growing and innovative multi-age learning community, we find ourselves relating more than ever to the Chanukah story, in which a small group of Jewish people overcame great difficulties to keep the flame of our tradition burning.

As we recall the Chanukah story, when it was discovered that there was only enough oil left to keep the Temple's light shining for one night, there was fear that this eternal flame would be extinguished. But a great miracle happened there (*Nes Gadol Haya Sham*) as the light continued to burn for eight nights. As we celebrate this joyous holiday at Ner Tamid Community Day School, we also know that a great miracle happened here (*Nes Gadol Haya Po*).

Ner Tamid's unique commitment to multi-age learning, with instruction tailored to each student, makes a highly personalized Jewish education available to a wide range of learners. Our educational practices are grounded in the philosophy that every child can learn, and can do so in a way that is best suited to their style, needs, and strengths. At Ner Tamid, children who are five years old learn in the same classroom as 11-year-olds, with every child meeting age-appropriate benchmarks. Our teachers focus on teaching each child according to his or her own skills and interests, unlike in same-grade classrooms that often expect

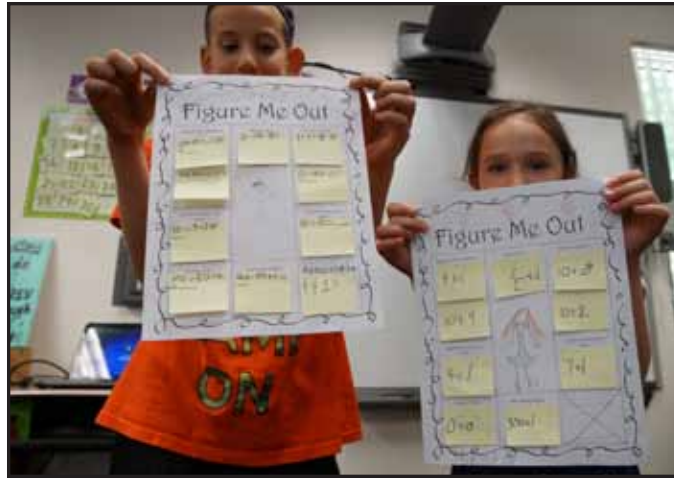
all children to be at the same place at the same time. Our students are assessed throughout the school year to determine where they are in their learning and to identify individual learning styles. Older students have the opportunity to serve as mentors and to take leadership roles. Younger students are exposed to material above grade level as they see and hear what the older students are doing. Our children develop a sense of family with their classmates. They become a family of learners who support and care for each other.

The Ner Tamid community extends beyond the school, through partnerships that enhance the educational experience while ensuring uniquely affordable tuition rates. For example, Professor Marshall Katler of the Harvard School of Public Health brings his science lab to our school weekly. Nationally recognized songwriter Jon Nelson leads students in spirited song. Volunteers share the joy of a cappella and Israeli dance. Rabbi Yitzi Weiner from the Sharon Community Kollel brings monthly

Rosh Chodesh programming. Cantor Steven Dress from Temple Israel teaches traditional niggunim.

Like so many Jewish communities before us, our strength comes not from our numbers but from the light of our traditions and the spark within each of our twelve students.

*Dr. Nancy Hait and Elana H. Margolis, are, respectively, Principal and President of Ner Tamid, a Jewish community day school and member of the Schechter Network, located within the school wing of Temple Israel in Sharon.*





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# Is religion important in choosing a college?

By Larry Dannenberg

Seventy-five percent of teenagers embarking on the college hunt tell counselors that religion doesn't matter in their selection.

But placement experts say think again. Nearly 27 percent of college freshmen transfer to other schools, many of them citing a bad "fit." Religion can, however, be a subtle factor in finding that comfort zone.

Religious practice may not rank high on the entering freshman's priority list, but it doesn't hurt to check out the chapel along with the gym on that campus visit. Students bring invisible expectations to their new school. If the environment is markedly different from the climate of their social group or high school, it can make or break the freshman experience.

Schools can be sorted into three categories: religious study, religion-sponsored, and unaffiliated.

Religious study institutions are targeted to the career-minded divinity student, e.g., a Yeshiva.

Religion-sponsored schools run the gamut, from fundamentalist institutions that require religion-specific studies and observances, to those administered by religious professionals, with few requirements. Questions to ask at a religion-sponsored school:

- How many religion courses are required?
- Is attendance at religious services mandatory or optional?
- How many students enroll from other religions? Which religions?
- Are courses taught from the religious or wider-scope academic perspective (creationist theory, for instance)?
- Are symbols of religion displayed on campus? Are they offensive to me?
- Will my different or non-religious status be respected? Have there been incidents of intolerance on campus, and what groups have been targeted?

Some examples of religion-sponsored colleges with religious study requirements are: Georgetown (D.C.), Pepperdine (Calif.), Texas Christian University, and Houghton College (New York). St. Anselm's

(New Hampshire) requires church attendance three times a week. On the other hand, Boston College (Mass.) allows for the substitution of a culturally oriented class for the required religion course.

Some schools that have a religious affiliation but do not have religious requirements are:

- Harvard, which offers a divinity degree
- Boston University, where Martin Luther King received a Ph.D. in Theology
- Muhlenberg (PA) is a Lutheran College but is 35 percent Jewish and 30 percent Catholic (as well as Muslims, Hindus and those of other religions who attend the college)

At non-affiliated public and private universities and colleges, students can expect no religious requirements. They should explore where they will find students to whom they relate. That can be done by looking at clubs and school organizations.

Prospective students should consider the following questions:

- Is there a Hillel House? If not, how do I find students like me on campus?
- Which houses of worship are available locally? Does the school provide transportation on Fridays, Saturdays, or on holy days?
- Does the school acknowledge my religious holidays in scheduling classes or exams? Will instructors accommodate religious holidays?
- Do the dining halls offer alternative meals for religious practices or holidays?
- Will I feel out of place?

A visit to the campus is key to finding the right college. The right homework can help you narrow down the choices, but an in-person visit will help you analyze the "fit."

An estimated 94 percent of college students change their major by the time they graduate with their bachelor's degree. Therefore, when deciding on a school, be sure it can meet your needs as a person, in addition to your initial career goal.

*Larry Dannenberg is the founder of College Solutions. More information is available at [www.collegesolutions.com](http://www.collegesolutions.com).*




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# Inclusion Initiative in Sharon

By Andrew Warren

At Young Israel of Sharon, a warm and vibrant Modern Orthodox congregation, Jodi Saltzman noticed there were children with special needs that were nonetheless not well engaged in synagogue life. She felt more needed to be done. "There are things we cannot do alone, and a team is needed to be proactive about reaching out to help those that might not ask for it," she told synagogue personnel.

The congregation launched the "Inclusivity Initiative" as its focus for the New Year, with Saltzman as its chair. The goal, explained synagogue President David Katz, is to ensure that each member of the *kehillah* (congregation) feels connected and valued when they come, regardless of any physical, mental or social challenges. During his Rosh HaShanah address, Rabbi Meir Sendor challenged the congregation to "open our hearts and our minds; to become sensitive. It's a really important moral and spiritual lesson for us all," he said.

Special guest Shelly Cohen, a national leader in the Modern Orthodox community on issues of disability and inclusion, also came to share her story with the *kehillah*. Speaking from the heart about her son Nathaniel's challenges to become accepted in Jewish schools and camps, her topic was "Blow a shofar for inclusion: How a communal inclusion committee can affect the *Teshuvah* process." Her son eventually succumbed to muscular dystrophy, but her campaign for inclusion for other children and families continues. Everyone in the filled social hall was touched by her vision and dedication.

Member Joshua Levin, who has a son with special needs who attends shul every Shabbat, said, "the initiative is a good start and going in the right direction. It's hard for people to relate to what it's like, but now there is greater awareness of the situation, and the need to consider and involve special needs kids and their families."

Member Julie Galler, who organizes Tefilat Nashim, the women's prayer group, noticed congregant Dan Rosen's daughter in the back of the small sanctuary, who appeared to be somewhat restless. Galler invited the young woman who also has special needs to open up the *Aron* (the ark) to display the Torah. Afterward, she stood at the *bimah*

as the Torah was read, and was "beaming" with joy. "One thing I know about Shoshana is that she is no different than the rest of us," said Rosen. "She comes to shul because she loves being Jewish, and loves being with her friends and family as part of the Jewish community."

He continued to place himself in his daughter's position. "And I imagine - though who can know these things," he pondered, "that shul on Shabbat is a place where Shoshana feels close to G-d. To watch her open the *Aron* at *Tefillat Nashim* and stand at the *bimah* for 25 minutes in front of the open *Sefer Torah* so peacefully, the smile on her face reaching from ear to ear, without any prodding or encouragement from teachers, aides, family or friends, well, that seems to me what the word *Shekinah* is meant to describe."

Guest Larry Hollander has recently begun visiting Young Israel for Shabbat. Larry brings his son Rafi by wheelchair, and says that he understands everything. Although Rafi cannot communicate verbally like other teens, after entering the main sanctuary and receiving wishes

for a "Good Shabbos" and handshakes, his big smile speaks volumes. Hollander is not surprised by the support. He related that when he received an aliyah, the *gabaim* (assistants) at the *bimah* still had his card and Hebrew name from his last visit. "You don't understand," said Hollander. "My first and last visit was when I myself was a teen like Rafi. That was 36 years ago!" he recollected, adding, "This is truly a special and welcoming community."

Andrew Warren is a Board Member of Young Israel of Sharon



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# Pro-Israel activism in the UK

**Text and photo by Monna Young**

It was the shouting and sheer noise that made Daniel leave his flat and head down the street to see what was going on. It was early September 2012, and nearby, an Israeli-owned shop called Ecostream (owned by Sodastream) had opened up on one of Brighton, UK's busiest streets, Western Road. As Daniel approached, he saw a crowd shouting, waving Palestinian flags and going inside the shop, creating a hostile atmosphere.

This crowd was made up of members of the local Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, and the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign. It was then that Daniel met Simon, who had also come to the shop to see what was going on. Daniel was a Christian; Simon was Jewish. Both were appalled and shocked at the level of animosity and hatred aimed toward Israel. Amid the havoc and mayhem around them, they agreed to gather some members of their respective communities the next week, and stand against future demonstrations that were being threatened against the shop. Within weeks, a large pro-Israel following began to emerge, with Jews, Christians, and other pro-Israel and Zionist adherents meeting and countering the vicious lies and hatred that the BDS movement (through propaganda, placards, posters, and leaflets) were trying to foist onto the public.

Thus, Sussex Friends of Israel was born. SFI began to hold rallies of their own, as well as counter-demonstrations, and Israeli-themed street parties took place with food, music, and dancing, while also informing the public through pro-Israel placards, posters, and leaflets. Thousands of leaflets of all kinds were distributed, and many members of the public were engaged.

Supporters from different faiths and ways of life both offered and showed support. People from all types of backgrounds joined together, with a love for Israel, defending it from bias, lies and de-legitimization. SFI expanded online onto Facebook, and very quickly grew, especially after a series of funny, insightful and positive videos were released (in the form of "fly-on-the-wall" shorts) of SFI's Israel advocacy, and its exposure of the hypocrisy of the BDS movement (i.e., when BDS proponents turned up at demonstrations with shopping bags from shops they were supposedly boycotting, as well as continually using cameras and filming equipment developed in Israel!)

One BDS member admitted on camera that the reason they were targeting Ecostream was because it was Jewish (before realizing his mistake, and trying to backtrack this anti-Semitic remark). Week after week following the demonstrations, satirically humorous moments were captured, and thought-provoking discussions were advanced by characters that supporters of the Facebook site came to know.

The popular videos portrayed "real-time" presentations of the events that took place, and included discussions with the BDS inciters, members of the public, and scenes of rallies and counter-demonstrations.



SFI's footage caught street parties and other initiatives, as well as its sharing of news, and advocacy.

Though a separate entity, SFI sometimes joins with long-established Zionist organizations, such as the Zionist Federation of Britain, among other organizations, during events, rallies, and actions. Unexpectedly, in January 2014, SFI was honored to receive notification that it had

received the 2014 Hasbara Award (the Hasby) by the well-known Israel-advocacy Elder of Zion media site.

Photos of SFI's initiatives have often gone viral. The most well-known was of SFI member "Jill" and her poster entitled: "Idiots Boycott Shops - Israel Leads and Heals the World," which was shared on Facebook and retweeted hundreds of thousands of times on Twitter. It is still circulating the cybersphere, the original time and place probably long forgotten, but it still appears to resonate.

Last Rosh Hashanah, it was estimated that SFI became the largest pro-Israel Facebook site in the UK. When Ecostream closed its doors after two years, SFI expanded further into new initiatives for influencing education. Rallies outside of Brighton UK were held, as SFI joined with London pro-Israel groups to rally and petition the Qatari Embassy to cease their funding of terrorist groups such as Hamas. SFI, often together with London Zionist organizations also hosts speakers from Israel from all levels of Israeli government and society.

During the last year, several new, independent Friends of Israel groups have begun defending Israeli shops through initiatives in their own towns in the UK - notably Kedem and Sabon, both Israeli cosmetic stores. It is grassroots activism at its best.

No one knows how far this new and unique rise of grassroots pro-Israel activism is going to go, but from here, I believe that it has only just begun.

**Monna Young lives in the Brighton area (UK), manages the SFI Facebook page and support their activities.**

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# DIGITAL MEDITATION FOR THE DIGITAL GENERATION

*iFeel Technologies*, an Israeli startup, is working on the development of a unique stress relief smartphone app, called *Meditation Touch*, due to be released in May 2015. The primary focus of the application will be to help children and adults to cope better with the stress they are experiencing as a result of the security situation through cool visualization and simple and powerful meditation techniques.

"Two years ago, a rocket directly hit an apartment building in Rishon Le-Zion," recalled Keren Fein, a therapist who at the time was visiting her parents, who live only 500 meters away. "I remember all the walls in my building shaking," she said. "All the anxiety and stress I felt at that moment demonstrated to me, in the most dramatic way, the situation in the south of Israel over the past 14 years."

But she found a way to cope that she wishes to share with anyone who experiences such duress: "The stressful experience motivated us to harness the technological, therapeutic knowledge, and all the spiritual knowledge we have accumulated, to offer everyone an efficient and healthy way to manage stress, primary for the residents of Israel and especially their children," she explained. "It's a bit ironic that the idea that was pondered under the anxiety and stress felt in the 'Pillar of Defense' operation was taking shape over the siren alarms during 'Protective Edge,' but this is unfortunately the Israeli reality," she said.

"We realized that unfortunately we can't change the security situation, but we can harness the power and knowledge we have to control our mind, and in that way, contribute to our mental and physical health," said Information Systems Engineer Elad Fein. "It is no secret that chronic stress weakens the body's systems; especially the immune system." He said, however, that now, for the first time, there will be an app that will monitor, in real time, both the physiological and emotional states of the user, and offer individualized relaxation

techniques, just like personalized medicine.

"The new app sprouted from the insight that the current dynamic, digital environment calls for a new approach toward meditation, which could be termed digital meditation," said Elad Fein. "It is a meditation that will alleviate the stressful rat race and deliver a unique user experience of meditation anytime, anywhere. This type of meditation will be inspiring, fun, and easy, and will use the latest bio-feedback technologies to help the user listen easily and accurately to his body."




Keren Fein further explained the flexible applications of the app. "We see it as an educational tool, to be utilized wherever education is conducted, not just in school," she said. "When you want to convey an educational message, you should not only be clear and interesting, but also reach your audience," she continued, noting that today, all of us - children, teenagers and adults - are connected to our smartphones 24/7. "Therefore, it is only natural that our audience will be there, communicating in a digital and visual language. So in the spirit of the phrase 'Educate a child according to his way,' we obviously have to mobilize this technology to our advantage, and use it to teach meditation techniques to enhance peace and concentration," she said.

She emphasized that the potential of such an application is enormous, and said that they have already received requests from psychologists, pain relief experts, and all types of therapists, all of whom wish to offer the app to their patients, and begged them to speed up the development of *Meditation Touch*.

Keren Fein said that every dollar they are able to raise through their *Indiegogo* campaign *iMeowApp.com* will "move *Meditation Touch* faster from vision to reality and help hundreds of thousands of people to live more calm and peaceful lives."

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## What makes real learning possible?

By Rabbi Ari Lev Fornari

I have spent a lot of time as a student and a teacher reflecting on this question. In thinking about my personal experiences, both as a student and an educator, I realize that learning happens in community. It is through relationships that we are able to open ourselves up in a such a way that we can take the risk to not-know something and then to learn.

When we enter the classroom, we are not just our minds. We bring our full selves, the experiences shared around cereal at breakfast, sports games, robotics club, sick family members, sibling rivalry, moving to a new place. Educators and students alike bring the adrenaline of trying new things, learning perhaps to be scared and brave at the same time.

So what, we must ask, makes a community?

One ancient rabbinic text offers a working definition of the concept of community in Jewish life:

“A Torah scholar is not allowed to live in a city that does not have these 10 things: a court of law; a tzedakah fund that is collected by two people and distributed by three; a synagogue; a bath house; a bathroom; a doctor; a craftsman; a blood-letting; (some versions add: a butcher); and a teacher of children.” - *Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 17b*

In other words, in order to be a suitable place to live and learn, a community must provide for all its members’ spiritual and physical needs. This growth is possible only when we recognize the diverse skillsets and perspectives within our community.

I believe that all children have the potential to be Torah scholars - teachers of kindness, love, and justice - and it is our collective task to cultivate a community worthy of their potential. As parents, peers and educators, we are a network of relationships. And relationships are the fabric of community.

Judaism is a living tradition. This means that our lives are deeply informed by ancient wisdom and practices, and that Jewish tradition learns and grows from our insights and lived experiences. We are responsible for one another’s learning. Our shared task is to grow in joy and understanding, to be playful and rigorous in our learning, to be creative, silly, patient and kind with one another.

Learning happens in community. What makes learning possible for you?


**Rabbi Ari Lev Fornari is the Director of BJEP (Boston-Area Jewish Education Program). He graduated from the Rabbinical School of Hebrew College with rabbinic ordination and a Master’s in Jewish Studies.**

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## ORT America honors Lenore Wolbarsht for 70 Years of Service

Eastern Massachusetts Chapter of ORT America honored Lenore Wolbarsht at a special brunch attended by members, friends and family. She delighted all with her recollections of her 70 years as an active participant in the organization's activities, and passed around memorabilia that she has collected over the years.

Wolbarsht joined Women's American ORT in 1944 as a member of the Boston chapter became its president in 1946, and a year later, became the first president of the New England Region. Later, as a Women's American ORT National Board member, she was elected to attend the World ORT Congress and Women's International ORT Convention in Paris. She spent seven weeks visiting schools in England, Holland, Belgium, France, Italy, and Switzerland. Later, she continued to serve on the Board of Directors of the Region, was elected to the Board of Directors of the American ORT Federation, and was appointed to a seat on the Board of the World ORT Federation.



As Vice President of the New England Region in charge of thrift stores, Lenore was instrumental in the creation of the Value Center in Cambridge. She played a large role in writing the thrift shop manual for the National office that would become the prototype used to open other stores around the country.

For ten years, Wolbarsht represented ORT by volunteering as a tutor through the Jewish Coalition for Literacy at the Mozart School in Roslindale.

In recent years, Women's American ORT and American ORT (formerly the American ORT Federation) combined to become ORT America.

Lenore Wolbarsht has never wavered in her devotion and passion for giving her time to raising funds for, and telling anyone who would listen, about the wonderful work of ORT. Today, at 97, she remains a strong and enthusiastic voice on the Eastern Massachusetts ORT America Board.

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# Area's Only Kosher Soup Kitchen Finds New Home

By Robert Levine

Jewish newcomers to Boston who hail from larger communities often complain about the comparative scarcity of kosher dining options in the area. But those who can least afford to eat out do have one place to go: Gittel's Kitchen, the Boston area's only kosher soup kitchen, open every Thursday from 5-6 p.m. And since its relocation in late May to Congregation Kadimah-Toras Moshe, an Orthodox synagogue in Brighton, diners have been flocking to Gittel's Kitchen in unprecedented numbers.

Gittel's Kitchen has been operated by high school students from Brookline's Maimonides School since its founding in 1998 by Maimonides student Jessica Singer. After Singer saw someone from the Orthodox K-12 day school's community at a local soup kitchen, she decided the Boston area should have a kosher venue for feeding the hungry. She named the kitchen after her late mother Gail's Hebrew name.

"I'm there as their safety net, making sure they have resources and a location," said Mike Rosenberg, Maimonides' director of alumni and community relations. Through Rosenberg, the soup kitchen established contacts with local kosher restaurants and caterers - especially Milk Street Café, Catering by Edna, and Café Eilat - that donate most of the food served. Student co-leaders Adel Buff, Moshe Forman, Charlotte Guedalia, Sarah Pomeranz, and Jared Shein organize all of Gittel's Kitchen's other concerns.

For several years, Gittel's Kitchen made its home at Temple Bnai Moshe, a Conservative congregation in Brighton. "We are grateful for Bnai Moshe's hospitality and friendship," Rosenberg said. The co-leaders felt that a new location, closer to more people in need, would maximize the kitchen's potential. "We thought about the small amount of diners and concluded that the best way to get more was to move," said Shein, a Maimonides senior from Newton. "We brought our ideas to Mike and after thinking about it for a little while, he decided that Kadimah was the perfect place."

Rosenberg's judgment paid off: the small crowd has increased to 12 diners since relocating, and the kitchen has served as many as 18 on occasion. The leadership targeted Kadimah because of its proximity to low-income housing projects. "We assumed that people living there could use our help," said Shein.

Volunteers posted flyers in the buildings to publicize Gittel's Kitchen's arrival, and West Roxbury senior Buff added that she had "connections in some of the houses" who helped spread the word.

Guedalia, a junior from Newton, credits Kadimah with helping to improve Gittel's Kitchen, both through more space to accommodate the increased demand, "as well as more physical things such as a whiteboard to write the menu on, and more tables and chairs."

Buff observed that "Kadimah really wanted us to be a part of their shul, and for their patrons to join us as volunteers as well." In this vein, one Kadimah member pitches in each week, and, according to Buff, also provides safety oversight for students in the synagogue's kitchen.

At a typical "service," two kitchen volunteers heat up the food while two servers take diners' orders at tables in the synagogue's kiddush area, and bring their meals

out. "The volunteers are constantly checking to ensure that the patrons have everything that they need," affirms Guedalia. "Once everyone has gotten their meal, there is time to sit and talk with diners. We talk about current events or how each other's weeks have been," he said. "They often ask us about how our school life is going and how we are in general," said Buff. "We try to talk to them as much as we can." This camaraderie could be what draws six regulars who make it to Gittel's Kitchen Thursday after Thursday.

Gittel's Kitchen offers a variety of menu choices that change from week to week; staples include fish, pizza, pasta, and quiche. The most common soups are gazpacho and minestrone. Once in a while, volunteers contribute homemade fare to supplement the donations. One student baked pies for dessert earlier this year, and another group of volunteers, including co-leader Forman, have prepared full main courses.

Guedalia explained that Gittel's Kitchen, being kosher, fills not only the practical need of feeding hungry observant Jews, but a psychological one as well. "Many people in tough situations don't get to make a lot of

choices for themselves, and it can seem to them like they don't have any control over their own lives," she said. "Because of this, giving them even a choice of what food they eat can give them a renewed sense of power over their own lives. And with a situation like eating kosher, which is integral to many Jewish people, offering a kosher option is even more necessary."

Nonetheless, Buff estimates that about half the diners aren't Jewish. "One goal of Gittel's is to offer a kosher option to people who need it, but an even more significant part of a soup kitchen is feeding people who need food," commented Guedalia. "Anybody who is in a difficult situation and needs a hot meal is welcome, regardless of their religious affiliation, or lack thereof."

*Robert Levine is a freelance writer whose poetry, book reviews, and articles have appeared in numerous publications. He lives in Brookline.*



Gittel's Kitchen's student leaders: Adel Buff, Charlotte Guedalia, Jared Shein, Sarah Pomeranz, and Moshe Forman.

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## ***“The New Anti-Semitism” Comes of Age a Decade Later***

**By Fern Sidman**

Written in a compelling, easy-to-read and free-flowing style, Dr. Phyllis Chesler’s premise in “The New Anti-Semitism” (Gefen Publishers) is that classical anti-Semitism as espoused by such nihilists and evil madmen as Hitler and the scores that preceded him has now been deemed to be “politically correct” by the trendy denizens of the Western academy and the “intellectual” crowds. Chesler was among the first to have seen and denounced the suicidal alliance between the Western intelligentsia and fundamental Islam. The anti-Semite needed a new and more acceptable veneer, and the little place on the globe known as Israel would serve as the perfect subterfuge. Thus, Zionism does not equal racism, but anti-Zionism does. In fact, it is part of what makes the new anti-Semitism “new.”

There is no doubt that the al-Aqsa intifada and the traumatic events of 9/11 served as an impetus for Chesler to pen this book as she naturally drew a correlation between the kind of terrorism that had become endemic to the state of Israel and the Jihadic terrorism that was let loose upon the world. “War and a new kind of anti-Semitism had been declared,” she writes.

Always sensing a strong undercurrent of such bigotry in the various human rights movements that came to define her *raison d’etre*, Chesler is most disheartened when women’s conferences and forums such as Copenhagen and a pre-Durban one were hijacked by Jew-hating agendas. She justifiably laments the fact that some important conferences are cancelled because of anti-Semitic and anti-Israel bias. “Women, you see, cannot be accused of racism - unless, of course, they are Jewish women,” she sardonically writes.

Because she is keenly aware that anti-Semitism may start with the Jews, but never ends with the Jews, she makes the logical connection between the opprobrium that is harbored for both America and Israel by those who assign blame to all forms of human oppression in terms of colonialism, capitalism, and imperialism. “The Palestinian

uprising has increasingly been seen as the uprising of all oppressed peoples against their colonial oppressors, that is, Jews, Zionists and Americans,” she ruefully observes. And, she notes, few understand that Muslim history is one of imperialism, colonialism, conversion by the sword, gender and religious Apartheid, and slavery. Only the post-enlightenment Judeo-Christian West is seen as mighty sinners.

Chesler cites the palpable but surreal bellicosity that has become an endemic part of campus life for Jews who wish to express pro-Israel sentiments. Physical attacks, heckling of speakers, academic boycotts, incendiary street theater predicated on distortions, the lies being promulgated at the annual Jew roasting, better known as Israel apartheid Week, and the infinite amount of Orwellian rhetoric being circulated in every facet of academic life, to just name a few. “The New McCarthyism on campus consists of the anti-Israeli and pro-Palestinian point of view. No other view will be tolerated,” she writes.

Chesler is under no illusions and does not even attempt to sugarcoat the obvious. European anti-Semitism is at pre-World War II levels and the flames of destruction are being consistently fanned, not only by the “usual suspects,” but by the formidable fourth estate. The European press, she writes, “has continuously held Israel accountable for Palestinian terrorism, and justified human homicide bombing as a function of Palestinian ‘despair’.”

This book is replete with a voluminous amount of facts, and is definitely driven by concrete and verifiable data. What causes the words to leap off the pages, however, and to embed themselves in our collective psyches are

the nuanced and urbane analyses proffered both by Chesler and also by an extensive array of experts. Frightening as it may be, they provide us with the kind of perspective we need to understand in order to tackle anti-Semitic diatribes.



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***"Te Amo! Shabbat Shalom"***  
***wins award in Hollywood***



*Aymara Limma*

Brazilian Actress **Aymara Limma** won an "Audience Award" for her debut as director of the short film *"Te Amo! Shabbat Shalom"* at the Edge Independent Film Festival in Santa Monica.

Set in Los Angeles, the 15-minute short follows the story of a free-spirited actress, Ayeme, who is determined to balance her burgeoning Hollywood acting career and life as a newly converted Orthodox Jewish wife. She goes through a life transformation when she has to make choices between her career, her spiritual vows and beliefs, Jewish religious rules, and regarding her husband, an Orthodox Jewish lawyer who isn't very Orthodox. The film also features Anthony Kantor and Daniel Lee Robertson III (Cold Case, NCIS)

"I wanted to inspire people to follow their dreams," Limma told Shalom "I believe that through laughter, it is possible to address a serious message and portray the difficulties faced by many women who struggle to reconcile a career, a family, and a religion. Making this film is a living proof that no matter how hard it seems, we all need to keep moving forward to make our dreams come true!" she said.

Selected for a festival in Switzerland called LIFF (Lucerne International Film Festival), the short is still participating in international festivals, with no date set as yet to be shown to the public.

For more information, visit [www.teamoshabbatshalomthemovie.com](http://www.teamoshabbatshalomthemovie.com).

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The off-Broadway hit show "Old Jews Telling Jokes" comes to Arlington for a six-week run at the Regent Theatre, and is sure to make audiences laugh 'til they plotz.

Performances run April 15 - May 24, with opening night Saturday, April 25. (Material is for adults only!)

The show is co-created by Peter Gethers and Daniel Okrent, who brought us "My Mother's Italian, My Father's Jewish & I'm in Therapy!" and "My Son The Waiter, A Jewish Tragedy!," both of which had very successful runs at the Arlington venue.

"Old Jews Telling Jokes" showcases five actors in a revue that pays tribute to and reinvents classic jokes of the past and present. Think you've heard them all before? Not this way. The show also features comic songs - brand new and satisfyingly old - as well as tributes to some of the giants of the comedy world and to the brilliant raconteurs from OldJewsTellingJokes.com, the website that inspired the show. If you've ever had a mother, visited a doctor, or walked into a bar with a priest, a rabbi and a frog, "Old Jews Telling Jokes" will sit in the dark, give you a second opinion, and ask you where you got that.

The show the New York Times called "Hilarious" and a "Magnificent, Enduring Rhythm of Jewish Humor" promises to be an outrageous evening of one-liners, double-entendres and hysterical routines sure to triple you over with laughter!

Like rye bread, kosher pickles and bagels, this show is for everyone! The cast of five actors/singers include old and young, Jewish and Non Jewish talent, all of which makes the point that you don't have to be Jewish to love this show. Jewish humor is universal...it is the essence of American humor.

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# DAVID'S Page



**Every Picture Tells A Story,  
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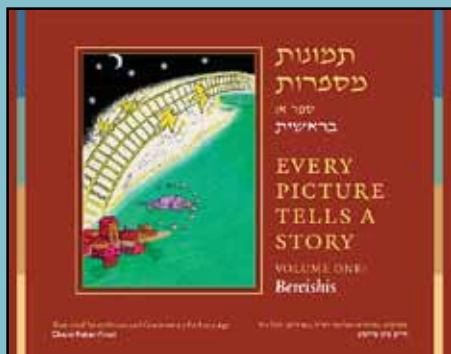
**By David Farber**

I really liked this book because as a kid, I like to learn about Hebrew culture, especially stories from the Torah. If you read this book you will enjoy both the beautiful Bereshit Torah illustrations and easy-to-understand writing. This book may come with a coloring book, in which you can color the same pictures that you see in the book.

What I liked the most in the book was the family tree at the end, which is three pages long. It starts from Adam and Eve and goes down to Noah. Then from Noah, it goes down to Avraham, and then to Yaakov, Rachel and Leah.

When you read this book, you will notice that it starts from the creation of the world and ends at Yaakov's death and funeral.

The entire book is written in both the Hebrew and English languages. You will see the real sentence from the Torah and the explanation in English. And sometimes, even by looking at the pictures, you will remember the story.



## Ma'or Illuminates Jewish Learning

Ma'or, a collaborative Jewish educational program for grades K-5 now in its second year, is on the cutting edge of Jewish educational philosophy and educational trends for the future.

A joint venture of Congregation Mishkan Tefila and Temple Emeth of Chestnut Hill and Temple Reyim of Newton, Ma'or - which means illumination - is drawing on the best practices in Jewish education to form meaningful connections between learning and living, creating community, and enriching Jewish family life.

Ma'or offers a unique experience for both students and parents. The curriculum focuses on five "pillars of illumination" or areas of study:

**Am Yisrael** includes Jewish cultural and social subjects, the State of Israel, Sephardi and Ashkenazi customs, Jewish diversity and holiday traditions.

**Jewish texts/Torah** exposes students to a variety of ancient and modern Jewish texts, including Tanach Mishnah, to establish foundations for lifelong learning.

**Tikkun Olam** explores the relationship of the individual to the greater community and wider society. Students undertake social action projects as they learn the importance of community service. Current events and local news serve as catalysts to action and bring Jewish learning outside the classroom.

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# A smooth operation in the South End

## Tweed offers straight-razor hot lathers and gift boxes for Chanukah

By Susie Davidson

“Fine grooming is timeless.”

At Tweed Barbers of Boston, the decor is classic and vintage, the service and amenities top-notch. Your men will not only receive a great do from Tweed’s staff of master barbers, they’ll also get a shampoo, scalp massage, and a signature hot lather shave. “It’s the real deal, the straight-razor,” said owner Peter Solomon, who said that the smoothing experience includes hot towels as well. Why barber shop, and not men’s salon? “All the men who work here are called barbers. On Newbury Street, they’re more stylists,” explained Solomon, who said that each of his barbers have at least 10 years’ experience in the art.

The South End shop was *Boston Magazine’s* 2007 *Best of Boston* designee for Best Men’s Haircut, and was named one of *Details Magazine’s* 16 best barbershops in America. Hot and cold beverages, facials, and hair products are also part of the experience at Tweed, which, in May, evolved from State Street Barbers, in the spot since 2006. “I sold my four Chicago State Street Barbers stores, as well as the State Street Barbers name, which had strong brand recognition in Chicago,” recalled Solomon (there is another prominent State Street in Chicago, he explained).

While many Boston businessmen want stylish but conservative cuts, some bring in pictures of Justin Timberlake at the Grammys, or Ryan Gosling at the Cannes Film Festival. Celebrities have also been among the clientele. In 2010, Tom Hanks, prior to an appearance at the JFK Library for a screening of his World War II epic “The Pacific,” came in for a hot lather shave, and Jon Hamm of *Mad Men*, a St. Louis native, came in twice during the 2013 Red Sox World Series playoffs. “He also was here for vocal reconstruction,” recalled Solomon. “He couldn’t speak, so he brought in a yellow sticky pad.”

Solomon, a Wellesley native, still lives in the town. “I grew up at Temple Beth Elohim,” he told Shalom. “I went to Sunday School

starting when I was 5 or 6, was bar mitzvahed and confirmed there, and married there in 1998. Now, I’ve come full circle and my two daughters go to Hebrew School there,” he said.

His parents were significant donors to the synagogue’s 2011 remodeling effort, and Solomon’s children have a room named in their honor. “It’s a really beautiful facility, not only for the High Holidays, but for Shabbat service, or taking the kids there on Sundays,” he said.

“There’s a lot of energy and dynamism in the Temple now under Rabbi Joel Sisenwine. The community has grown considerably in the last 10 or 15 years.”

Sisenwine, who is the rabbinic chair of the Reform movement’s Commission on Worship and Religious Living, and serves on the President’s Rabbinic Council at Hebrew Union College, has been the synagogue’s rabbi since 2000. Its website concurs with Solomon, deeming the Rabbi’s years there “a period of great growth and energy in the life of our community.”

Solomon traveled to Israel in 2000, the summer after he graduated from the Kellogg School of Management’s MBA program. He also holds a bachelor’s degree in history from Carleton College in Minnesota. “We do have plans to take the kids to Israel in the future,” he said.

He said customers include international college students, area residents, and businessmen. “It spans generations, sexual orientations, and lines of work, but I think what draws everyone to our shop is quality and dependability,” he said.

A few members from Solomon’s synagogue come in as well. “One father and son are regulars,” Solomon, who had always set 12 and under for the kid’s price, recollected. “But one day I asked the son how old he was.” He was about to turn 13 and was having his bar mitzvah the following week. Since that day, the \$25 kid’s haircut, in deference to Jewish tradition, is up to age 13.

Tweed offers Boston-based natural line Hairo’s styling agents, shampoos and conditioners, and the Men’s Soap Shop, which began in a small apartment in Boston and held a May product launch at the shop. Today, their soaps are brewed, poured, cut and cured from basic and natural ingredients in small batches in a 19th-century factory building. “We sell products we stand behind,” said Solomon.

Every day is Father’s Day at Tweed, but it’s a great place for Chanukah gifts. Solomon recommends a kit in a nice wooden box that includes a shaving brush, a shave soap, and a Bergamot or Cedarwood aftershave. “You run the shave brush under hot water and then run it into the soap, and it creates a nice lather,” he said.

Tweed is the only branch, but Solomon is considering expansion. Tweed Barbers is located at 1313 Washington St. in Boston’s South End. For more information, visit [TweedBarbers.com](http://TweedBarbers.com).



Peter Solomon (R) of Tweed Barber



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## Why We Need Passion-Based Learning in Jewish Education

The following is an edited transcript of Tikvah Wiener's ELI talk, "Why We Need Passion-Based Learning in Jewish Education." To watch the full talk, visit [elitalks.org](http://elitalks.org).

In my high school yearbook, my classmates generously thanked me for four years of avid note-taking. I loved taking notes. I loved everything about it: the soft, lined paper, the organized notebook, the blue Papermate pens. I geeked out on all those little details. And I really thrived in a traditional classroom, with a teacher who lectured frontally. But at the same time, I realized - and this was the 1980's - that not everyone was having the same classroom experience that I was. After all, the 1980's was when Ferris Bueller's Day Off came out. And of course, that movie immortalized classroom boredom for everyone.

Anyone? Anyone?

When I left the classroom as a student and I re-entered it as a teacher, classroom boredom really became my problem, and I had to figure out a way to deal with it. I had to really engage the students. I'm an English teacher and one of the best pieces of advice I got as a young teacher was 'You don't teach English; you teach students.' So right away, that re-oriented me because I saw pretty quickly that my students weren't as excited about Elizabethan ghost theory in Hamlet and Macbeth as I was.

I think the problem of classroom boredom has become more acute over the past few years and that's because of technology. Because the truth is our children were pretty much chained to the classroom desk before technology. Now we know that we can be in a room and not really be in a room. There's a term for it. We call it 'absent presence.'

And of course, the students are engaging with it just as much as we are. I asked my students last year what exactly they were doing behind their computers. Some of them told me, you might be surprised to know, that they were actually taking notes in class. But some of them said they were playing games, and others said they were using computers to hide their devices, so that they could text their friends behind them.

But a couple of students gave me some really fascinating answers. One student told me that she had a business and was growing it online during the course of the day. Another student told me that his brother taught him how to trade stocks, so he was trading stocks, you know, during class. (Gotta make a living. Tuition is expensive!) A student this past year told me that he does math all day - except in the classes where he's actually learning math.

Our students are finding ways to engage with their passions in class, and I think we really need to tap into that more. And not only that, I think we need to connect it to what we want them to learn and know.

An educational innovator named Will Richardson was one of the earliest education bloggers, and he put out on his blog a couple years ago the following: He asked people, educators all over the world, 'My son loves basketball. Can I teach him all the middle school math he needs to know using basketball?' He got 60 responses from math teachers and basically could lay out an entire math curriculum using his son's passion for basketball.

Why are we chaining our kids to desks when everything they need to know can be in a device they can carry around with them? Right? Let's them get out of the building. Let them see what their passions are.

At Frisch, the school where I used to work, I launched a program called RealSchool, based on the premise of passion-based learning. In that program, one of the first teams of students that formed was the religious identity team. They just wanted a space where they could discuss the things that interested them, that excited them, that they were intrigued about or wondering about in their Judaism. They didn't want to have to cover course material or finish a curriculum. Just a place to be.

You know, there's no standardized testing in Jewish education and I thank God for it. I hate standardized testing. We had in *RealSchool* a T-shirt that says, 'I am more than a test score.' There's no SAT you have to prep the kids for. There's no AP in Jewish education that you have to spend the year preparing for. So it could be all about what the kids want to know. What the kids want to learn.

I think we need to get our kids out of the desks. I think we need to let them play more. I think we need to see what their passions are. And I think in that way, they'll find their purpose as human beings and as Jews. And I don't think this is a new concept in Judaism at all. We have the phrase "educate the child according to his or her own way" (*Proverbs 22:6*). According to his or her own passion.

I want you to think about something that you're passionate about. Something that gets you up in the morning that you're excited to do, that you wanna be engaged in. And I want you to think about a kid in your life who could be that excited to go to school every day because that's what he or she gets to do. Because that, to me, seems like a start of a lifelong journey into learning and into a really deep and rich connection to one's faith.



### HAPPY CHANUKAH

We share light in times of celebration and in times of darkness, here in Boston, in Israel and around the world. Thanks to your caring and support, our community finds strength.



# Boston Jewish Film Festival

The 26th Annual Boston Jewish Film Festival, held Nov. 5-17, had another record year with a 10 percent increase in attendance over 2013. More than 11,000 filmgoers flocked to 42 films, selling out 25 of 53 screenings. BJFF 2014 Audience Award Winner for Best Feature was *Run Boy Run* and BJFF 2014 Audience Award Winner for Best Documentary was Jon Imber's *Left Hand*. *The Funeral* won first place in BJFF 2014 FRESHFLIX 4th Annual Short Film Competition with *Siren* winning second place.

*Run Boy Run*, directed by Pepe Danquart, is the wrenching and courageous Jewish hero's tale about a 9-year-old boy who flees the Warsaw Ghetto in 1942. Based on the best-selling young adult book from Uri Orlev and the real-life experiences of Yoram Friedman, the film received overwhelming praise at all three screenings during the Festival. Screenwriter Heinrich Hadding offered an insightful and compelling discussion on opening night. Regarding the BJFF award, Hadding says, "I'm thrilled that *Run Boy Run* has won the BJFF audience award for best fiction film...I can't wait to tell our true hero, Yoram Friedman, and his family about the film's success and how his story continues to reach the hearts of audiences worldwide."

Our FRESHFLIX 4th Annual Short Film Competition showcased four strong contenders selected by our young adult jury; the audience voted for the winners via text. The \$1,500 First Prize went to *The Funeral*, directed by Nick Green. Jez Freedman, screenwriter and executive producer of *The Funeral* says, "You always try to make the best film you can...so watching the film with such a large audience, and seeing how much they were enjoying it, was an amazing experience." Second prize of \$1,000 went to *Siren*, directed by Jonah Bleicher.

Additionally, BJFF Artistic Director, Amy Geller, has been named a winner of the *CJP Chai in the Hub Award* that highlights the faces of Boston's Jewish future and celebrates Jewish Boston's most inspiring young adults! Winners will be honored on Saturday, January 31, 2015, 7 p.m., Renaissance Boston Waterfront Hotel.

# Letters to the Editor

As Jews, we must always be cognizant of our surroundings, and unfortunately as well, constantly looking over our shoulders. Terrorism is another disease that we must work hard to eradicate as well as cancer, Ebola, and other life-threatening plagues. There must not be a division among the Jewish population. There are factions of Jews that hold demonstrations against Israel. I believe this is wrong. It is our land, and we must all unite as one people. This subject should be discussed in all synagogues throughout the world. It should be a part of all sermons. We cannot ignore this subject, because it will not just disappear. It is up to all of us to band together and fight to end this disastrous movement that commits acts of terrorism with the aim of the complete annihilation of the Jewish people.

**Elliot Hershoff, President**  
**Congregation Tifereth Israel, Peabody**

'Notably absent' from Dr. Yosef Glassman's article on 'Jewish Gems of Martha's Vineyard,' perhaps because it is far from hidden, is our vibrant synagogue, the Martha's Vineyard Hebrew Center. With a membership of over 350 individuals and families (residents and island visitors), a year-round rabbi, Caryn Broitman, an active Hebrew school, and continuing spiritual, educational, charitable, cultural, and social activities, the center is a welcoming, exciting organization for Jews of all affiliations, and non Jews who eagerly attend our many secular and even our religious events. We hold year-round Friday evening and Saturday morning services, and offer a Summer Institute series of world-renowned speakers on topics ranging from science to politics, history, and art, and our Jewish film festival. Come to the resplendent island of Martha's Vineyard, and share in the beacon and hub of Jewish life here, the Martha's Vineyard Hebrew Center: at 130 Center Street, Vineyard Haven, MA, 02568. Call 508-693-0745 or email: office@mvhc.us, for more information.

b'Shalom,  
**Joann Green Breuer, West Tisbury, MA**

**SEND YOUR COMMENTS TO [ShalomMA@msn.com](mailto:ShalomMA@msn.com).**



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