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Plitt and Pennington Win National Award

Miriam R. Plitt, marketing director, and, on the right, Richard B. Pennington, president and CEO of Coventry Credit Union, accept the Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Recognition Award from Credit Union National Chairperson Ray Burnett. The award is given to credit unions that have gone above and beyond in serving their communities.

BJE to Hold Israel Trips Forum

An Israel Trips Forum for high school students, sponsored by the Bureau of Jewish Education of Rhode Island's Israel Committee, will be held on Jan. 8 at 7 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center of Rhode Island, 401 Elmgrove Ave., Providence.

Past participants in Israel study/travel programs will be on hand to give first-hand accounts of their experiences. Trips represented will include Ramah in Israel, United Synagogue Youth Israel, USY Israel/Poland Pilgrimage, B'nai B'rith Youth Organization, Young Judea, Eisendrath International Exchange, Alexander Muss High School in Israel, as well as others.

An explanation of the grants available to Rhode Island high schoolers traveling to Israel will be given. All Rhode Island students can receive incentive grants from the Leonard I. Salmanson Endowment Fund of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island.

Those students who apply for the Salmanson grants are required to take an Israel test, scheduled for March 11 from 7 to 8 p.m. at the BJE.

In addition, students may apply for the BJE's Lillian and Sidney Ross or the JFRI's Graubart/Irving Scholarships, need-based grants. Deadline for the Ross and Graubart/Irving Scholarships is March 11 and for the Salmanson grants is April 1. Interviews for

high school students will be on April 8.

A community service project which is required of all grant recipients upon their return from Israel will be discussed at the forum. Students who receive grants must participate in two orientation sessions, May 2 from 6 to 9 p.m. and May 6 from 6 to 9 p.m.

All interested students and parents are invited to attend this informative evening where details about all of these programs will be given. Refreshments will be served.

Call the BJE at 331-0956 if you plan to attend, or call Ruth Page at the BJE for further information or to register for the Israel Test on March 11 at 7 p.m.

Reform, Conservative Win Large Allocations in Israel

by Naomi Segal
JERUSALEM (JTA) — Advancing the cause of religious pluralism in Israel, the Religious Affairs Ministry will allocate some \$160,000 to the Reform and Conservative movements in the Jewish state.

Secular organizations that deal with Jewish issues from a pluralistic perspective are also expected to receive funding.

Israel's High Court of Justice previously ruled that the Reform and Conservative movements should receive funding from the Religious Affairs Ministry for Torah studies.

But until now, only small amounts were disbursed in an informal matter.

In New York, the move by the Religious Affairs Ministry was greeted by Rabbi Alexander Schindler, outgoing president of the Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

"I could not be more delighted," he said.

The announcement of the allocations reportedly came in the wake of new funding criteria established by Religious Affairs Minister Shimon Shetreet, who has sought to eliminate inequi-

ties in funding for non-Orthodox institutions.

The allocations provoked criticism from Orthodox parties in Israel.

Knesset member Avraham Ravitz, of the Orthodox Degel HaTorah Party, said Shetreet "did something that should not have been done, when he allowed the Reform movement to embezzle the public coffers."

"The Reform movement has lots of money... and it is outrageous that it should swoop down on the meager allowances of the Religious Affairs Ministry," Ravitz said.

(Continued on Page 2)

Conservative Rabbi Lieber Plans Revised Torah Commentary

by Natalie Weinstein
Jewish Bulletin of
Northern California

SAN FRANCISCO (JTA) — Rabbi Joseph Hertz's 60-year-old commentary on the Torah is so familiar to Conservative Jews that many refer to it simply as the "Hertz Chumash."

Conservative rabbis and Jewish scholars, however, are actively assembling a mix of voices for a new commentary that aims to tackle what today are considered apologetics, sexism and homophobic views sprinkled throughout Hertz's work.

Slated for publication in 1998, the new book will likely replace the Hertz Chumash as the standard at Saturday morning services.

The force behind the move is Rabbi David Lieber, who is the vice president of the Conservative movement's international Rabbinical Assembly and who is expected to become president of the 1,500-member group in the spring.

Lieber, the general editor of the new text, said, "Hertz's commentary has become obsolete."

"The style is beautiful," he added. "It's very worthwhile. But it's simply dated."

To compile this new commentary, Lieber has brought together leading scholars, including Rabbi Chaim Potok and Harold Kushner and university of Maryland Professor Adele Berlin, whom Lieber called "one of the foremost women Bible scholars in the world."

Four other Bible scholars are acting as consultants.

About 30 scholars and rabbis are writing short articles that will appear at the back of the book; topics include revelation, G-d's covenant with Israel, ancient criminal and civil law, and biblical ecology.

The new interpretations will reflect advances in biblical scholarship and archeological discoveries during the second half of the 20th century, Lieber said.

The commentary also will reflect the views of Conservative leadership, which recognizes "the sanctity of the Torah" but not the literal authorship by G-d.

Although they will try to avoid apologetics, Lieber said the commentators would acknowledge centuries-old problems created by commandments such as: "Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress to live."

In many ways, this publication will differ noticeably from its predecessor, whose influence on the Conservative movement has been profound.

Hertz was born in 1872 in Slovakia.

He became the first graduate of the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary in New York in 1894.

He served as England's chief rabbi for more than three decades.

He spent seven years writing his commentary on the Torah, finishing it in 1936.

Temple Beth Abraham in Oakland, Calif., as most Conservative congregations, continues to use it today. "It's a testimony to this work that it has lasted as long as it has," said Rabbi Mark Diamond of Temple Beth Abraham.

"Sixty years is pretty amazing for a Jewish book." Yet Diamond's congregants are looking for something more today, Diamond said. Most are university educated and accept modern biblical scholarship, which asserts that the Torah comprises various narratives woven together.

Congregants also want biblical critiques to take into account such factors as archaeology, history, and literary and linguistic analysis.

"Modern commentary needs to weigh all these factors," Diamond said.

Lieber, who became a rabbi in 1948 and served as University of Judaism's president from 1963 to 1993, has been suggesting since the 1960s that the Conservative movement create a new commentary.

Lieber pointed to the problem of Hertz's tendency toward apologetics.

Reacting to German biblical criticism of the time, which often devalued the Hebrew Bible, Hertz tried to show that the To-

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The commentary also will reflect the views of Conservative leadership, which recognizes "the sanctity of the Torah" but not the literal authorship by G-d.

INSIDE THE OCEAN STATE

Optometrists Launch Free Eye-Care Program

A program to provide free eye examinations to low-income, uninsured working Americans and their families gets under way this month in Rhode Island. Sponsored by the Rhode Island Optometric Association and the American Optometric Association, VISION USA is a national program to help people who need eye care but have no means to obtain it.

To be eligible for care through VISION USA, one member of the family must be employed, the family must not be covered by government or private health insurance, eye exams must not have been received in the past two years, and household income cannot exceed an established level based on household size.

Workers who believe they may be eligible for benefits are encouraged to call the Providence Salvation Army at 421-0956 through Feb. 21. Residents of South County, Aquidneck Island and the Woonsocket area may call Rhoda Kelly, executive director of the Rhode Island Optometric Association, toll-free at (800) 491-7550 to be screened for eligibility.

Each qualified person will be given an appointment between March 4 to 9 for a private office visit with one of the participating optometrists. VISION USA patients are provided eyeglasses, if needed, for a \$20 donation. More than 90 optometrists are donating approximately 700 eye exams, saving these patients nearly \$100,000 in eye care and eyewear costs.

Admission Open House at Moses Brown School

The Moses Brown School admission office will hold an open house for prospective students and their families, Jan. 7, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Faculty and administrators will be on hand to provide a brief introduction to the school and its programs. Student musicians will provide entertainment and student guides will offer tours of the campus.

Representatives from the

school's academic and co-curricular departments, including the arts, athletics, computer education, and college counseling, will be stationed in the Sinclair Room to answer questions about their programs.

Established in 1784, Moses Brown is an independent Quaker school serving more than 770 students, nursery through grade 12.

For more information, call the office of admission, 831-7350.

CCRI Offers Spring Courses

Community College of Rhode Island will offer more than 300 credit and non-credit courses this spring at its campuses in Warwick, Lincoln and Providence and at off-campus locations in East Providence,

Middletown, Newport and Westerly. Classes begin Jan. 22.

Walk-in registration is Jan. 10 and 11 from 10 a.m. through 7 p.m. and Jan. 12 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Amos House Celebrates Souper Bowl

From Jan. 11 to 28, Amos House will celebrate the 1996 Souper Bowl: a two week-fund-raising event filled with excitement and generosity. The Souper Bowl will raise funds for the social services Amos House provides to people in need.

The Souper Bowl will kickoff at the Roger Williams Park Casino on Jan. 11. The festivities will begin with a pre-event champagne hour from 5 to 6 p.m., followed by a full reception from 6 to 8 p.m. with food, fun and entertainment.

Tickets for the champagne reception are \$75 per person which includes the kick-off party. Individuals may also purchase the \$350 Gold Bowl Special which includes four tickets to the champagne reception and kick-off party, as well as sponsoring two people unable to afford tickets on their own.

Tickets for the kick-off party are \$25 per person. All proceeds will be used directly for Amos House's year-round services such as daily meals, shelter and programs to help others get back on their feet.

Souper Bowl events continue through Jan. 28 with individually sponsored house parties and contributions from restaurants throughout the state. The house parties provide an opportunity to combine football, fun and generosity.

The house parties can be as simple or elegant as the host would like and may be scheduled for any time during the two-week Souper Bowl fundraiser. Anyone who is interested in hosting a party is encouraged to call Amos House for additional information at 831-9866.

Lazy Crazy Sundays

Beginning on Jan. 7 and running through March, Books on the Square at 471 Angell St. in Providence will resume Lazy Sunday Store Hours for children 3 to 8 and their families.

The programs will be held every Sunday from 2 to 3 p.m. at the store.

All programs are free and open to the public.

On Jan. 7, Judith Plotz will give children the chance to actually use some of those tempting-looking toys attached to Klutz books: juggling balls, stopwatches, face paints, lanyards, magic tricks and others.

Centennial Scholarships Have Big Impact

Program Already Bearing Fruit

The two-year-old University of Rhode Island Centennial Scholarship program is a great success.

Since 1994, URI has awarded 989 of these scholarships and is currently reviewing applications for prospective freshmen who would enter in 1996.

First offered to the freshman class of 1994, the scholarships range from \$1,000 to full tuition for both in-state and out-of-state students who attain at least 1,100 on the SATs and are ranked in the top third of their graduating classes.

Each scholarship is renewable over a 4-year period, providing the recipient is continuously enrolled and maintains a 3.0 grade point average.

In addition to being responsible for a 24-point increase in the overall Scholastic Aptitude Test score for incoming freshmen over the past two years, the scholarship program is stimulating a commitment to academics at URI and among high school students who hope to win a scholarship.

James Guarino, chairman of the guidance department at Westerly High School, said Westerly always sends many young people to URI, but he said now they are working hard to get their applications in early so they have a chance for the Centennial Scholarship.

"It's not just kids choosing URI as a safety net, but they are seeing it as their first or second choice, and these are the better students. They're looking for the biggest bang for the buck and they're going to get it at URI."

The numbers tell much of the success story:

Sixty-six percent of the freshmen Centennial Scholars in 1994-95 posted averages between 3.0 and 4.0 out of a possible 4.0. By contrast, 51 percent of all other freshmen posted an average between 2.0 and 2.99.

Eighty-nine percent of the freshmen Centennial Scholars in 1994 returned for their sophomore year. By contrast, 75 percent of the entering class in 1993 (the latest year available) returned for their sophomore year.

Over the past two years the Centennial Scholarship has increased the number of out-of-state students who have accepted URI's offer of admission. In 1994, the out-of-state enrollment increased by 234 students,

who generated additional revenue of nearly \$2 million. In 1995, 162 additional out-of-state students generated additional revenue of about \$1.75 million.

David G. Taggart, dean of admissions and financial aid at URI, said it's more than a story of numbers. "The Centennial Scholars have an academic vitality and an eagerness to learn. The program has raised the level of expectations for all students in classrooms across the campus."

Joseph Clifford, a guidance counselor at Scituate High School, said it is a great way for URI to get the word out that it is a quality institution. "I would think you are getting the quality kids you might otherwise lose," he said. "I understand the financial decisions kids face. I always thought that merit should be rewarded."

"It's awesome," said Veglia Mollo, chairwoman of the guidance department at Warwick's Toll Gate High School. "The kids are very excited about it," noting that students have improved their grades just to be able to compete for the scholarships. She said they like the idea that they don't all have to be class valedictorians, but that as long as they are committed to academic excellence and school involvement, they'll have a chance for a scholarship.

It's not just the students who are benefiting.

Norman Campbell, professor of pharmacy administration and also a student advisor at URI's University College, said the program keeps students focused. "I hear kids saying, 'I am really buckling down because I need to keep my grade point average up because I'll lose my scholarship.'"

John Grandin, chairman of the department of languages and director of its International Engineering Program, has used the Centennial program to recruit top students for the engineering program that results in a combined degree in engineering and German.

Using donations from international firms, the International Engineering Program promised the 22 freshmen who entered the program this year an additional \$500 each year if they maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average.

"We think the Centennial Scholarship program is an excellent one," Grandin said. "If you encourage people to come here who are highly motivated and take the long view, they tend to elevate the whole atmosphere."

Reform

(Continued from Page 1)

However, Knesset member Avner Shaki of the National Religious Party, a former minister of the Religious Affairs Ministry, was more accepting of the decision.

"Their way is not mine," he said of the Reform and Conservative movements. "But it is a good deed to teach every Jew the Torah."

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FEATURE



Movies Great and Small

by Mike Fink
Herald Contributing Reporter

All roads lead to the moviehouses before the new year gets back in full gear.

You can drive straight through with no traffic at all, and the cinemas have plenty of room. It's like a western ghost town, though you do bump into your temple crowd looking for the same ticket to escape and entertainment.

"Nixon" owes its zest more to Bob Richardson's cinematography than to Oliver Stone's direction.

I was never as taken with Anthony Hopkins' acting style as his many fans, except for his restrained performance in "Remains of the Day." He smiles and shrugs too much in "Nixon," and his cohorts look like Madame Tussaud wax figures of the famous.

But Richardson's camera work took my breath away. He swoops and tracks, blends and blurs, and interprets the inner life of our 37th president in a fun feat of visual imagination.

Let me brag that Bob Richardson was my R.I.S.D. student and takes me to dinner when he's in Boston or Providence.

I watch his films with an eye to silent commentary, not just a vulgar script.

The portraits of Nixon's mother, played by Mary Steenburgen, and Kissinger, by Paul Sorvino, merit comment. Mary takes charge of her scenes as her image merges with Joan Allen as Pat in Richardson's collage of the women who scare Nixon and suffer with him.

Nixon and the Jews? Not developed much, but Henry K. comes across as an intelligent, "liberal" lonely figure squeezed between the biases of the right and the scorn of the left.

Well, cameo characters continue to steal the show from big superstars.

In "Sabrina" the Hispanic maid, the mom and the secretary reach you more than the lovers.

You can't help but recall the fragile appeal of Audrey Hepburn and the pathos of Bill Holden as the younger brother. Billy Wilder brought his sardonic Yiddish spirit to bear on the wistful romance. Ormond and Ford can't quite connect the harsh '90s to the hopeful '50s, but they try, and you wish them well.

"Kicking and Screaming" carries Elliott Gould playing himself, a divorced father confiding his personal problems to his college son.

It's a great role for him, but in the case of this youthful, low-budget film at the Avon, it's the script that works so well. It's genuinely funny and lively to hear a group of seniors worry about their forthcoming future.

You'll spot lots of Jewish names among the producers and performers, and the muted wit will win you over to the simply made, modest movie on

a wee budget. It's a daffy design with no heroics and no ugliness.

Don't miss Jonathan Pryce's interpretation of Lytton Strachey in "Carrington" if it stays around long enough to catch.

Can you love a friend? asks the storyline. Pryce makes the bisexual writer delicate and fragile but very appealing, hated and enthroned, bearded but slightly fey.

It's not a kitsch job, but tentative and touching, worth watching in close-up. The death scene mixes the real, the surreal, and the dramatic, not sad but sharp.

Vacation moved right along, and my boy and I went off to a matinee of "Toy Story" at the Entertainment Complex.

I roared with pleasure at the wild whimsy of this most elegant piece of computer craftsmanship. It's sort of about competition among the clutter of toys a little boy crams into his bedroom, as they come to life like Hobbes in "Calvin" but when he's not around.

What's odd though is that the real people are also toys, and the issue of what is real lifts the script into the realms of poetry not just special effects.

If you recall scenes from "Freaks" or "Pinocchio" it's not because the movie is stealing ideas. It's just playing delightfully a game of dada.

Once again, the little characters add flavor and humane humor. "Toy Story" is a treasure of pleasure that boasts irony, not sentimentality.

How strange it is that every season a kids' flick comes along that's more grown-up than the adult fare!

Leave it to me to cover the waterfront of movies that make their way to our local screens. It's my role and I revel in it.

From Mantel to Trunk

by Mike Fink

Herald Contributing Reporter

Some of us do New Year greeting cards, after the hubbub of the holidays have gone. We return messages from neighbors, co-workers, classmates, or friends who have moved away. You mail them with the latest stamps, you cut or tear them open and place them about.

Your mantel gets littered with last minute notes, and then it's time to bind them up in bands to take out a twelvemonth hence for the addresses. As you clear your board, you take stock and review the record of seasons slipped by.

Some people fill you in on their activities with charm and in telling details. But then those bragging, boasting, computerized letters intrude into your parlor. Every year there's a culprit that tops this obnoxious list. We got one printed on cloud-and-sky writing paper. A photo of two kids in MIT shirts posed in the cockpit of their private plane is glued at the start. Somebody who represents the family refers to everybody as "he" or "she," but never "I." Every sentence bears an exclamation point like a club. My wife roared with laughter and I winced in slight pain at each phrase.

"C's list of activities would lead you to conclude (correctly, H. thinks) that she has become a pillar of the community. Besides raising our children and providing a wonderfully elegant homelife for the family, she is still co-President of the PTA..." The résumé continues for a full paragraph. The entire epistle, a CV designed to impress one and all, closes with good wishes to us, the readers. "It would be nice to see more of each and every one of you." Really? Shall we pack up and stop by for a weekend?

What would Miss Manners say about all this?

Of course, I don't send out the greatest correspondence either. My hand writing reads like the Rosetta Stone, hieroglyphs without a code. Even my typing turns dark and messy. Instead

of kvelling, I kvetch about the things that haven't worked out. Is it better than showing off?

Or, if I've penned too many cards and notes at one sitting, I write the same thing, fixed fond regards that don't hit the mark much better than C and H.

At least I shop round for pretty paper. I let the artists say it for me. I found a graphic red sled, just some crimson lines on blank white snowy cardboard, and I muster, "May you glide smoothly through the winter ahead." There's a Brazilian Jewish designer who blended tropical hummingbirds with Sabbath lights. I let the image imply the words.

I'm grateful as all get-out for any blessing with a stamp on it and the flow of ink on palimpsest. I have a past made up of people who wish me and my family well. The postal pile of the new year, like a snow-bank, tucks me in with a blanket of kindness. That trunk of old envelopes, a record of living in a community of my own making, holds some magic.

But the automatic print-outs come close to ruining the illusion of affection!

Announce the birth of your child in the Herald!

Learn About the 'Cake Lady'

On Jan. 9 at 2 p.m., Virginia Adams, librarian emerita of the Old Dartmouth Historical Society, will speak at the New Bedford Whaling Museum about Phebe Hart Mendall, "New Bedford's Cake Lady."

Mendall's recipes are featured in the cookbook, *Favorite Recipes from Johnny Cake Hill*, produced by the museum's volunteer council. In addition, Adams will talk about the art of housewifery in the 19th century.

Following her talk, the museum will be hosting a tea. Refreshments will be baked by the volunteers using recipes from their cookbook. Museum members are admitted free, admission for non-members is \$5.

As a continuing tradition, the museum will be open free of charge to the public on Wednesday afternoons, through March 27 from 1 to 5 p.m.

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Responsible Democracy Requires Responsible Rhetoric

by Abraham H. Foxman

The assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has raised serious questions about many aspects of Jewish life: the meaning of democracy and civility, the role of words and rhetoric, the relationship of religion and religious leaders to a civil society, the responsibilities of those in power and those in the opposition.

Clearly, there is need for all of us — Jews in Israel and in the diaspora — to go back to basics, to revisit the fundamental importance and meaning of responsible democracy.

That means, among other things, that there should be an avoidance of demonization and stereotyping of groups — it is unfair, counterproductive, and dangerous to attack all Orthodox Jews or the whole political right in Israel for the climate created that led to the assassination.

It is also vital that those in power make efforts to explain their politics and engage in dialogue with those who are disaffected, especially when critical decisions affecting people's lives are involved and when the minority view represents a substantial body of opinion in the public.

On the other hand, those in opposition must work within the system to get their views across, recognizing that in the long run everyone benefits from respect for democracy, that each side has used and will use small majorities in a parliamentary system to pursue their policies until the opposition is able to turn them out of power.

Likud in the 1980s used its small majority to create thousands of housing units in the territories; it was entitled to do so, even while many Israelis disagreed with its policies. And today, the Labor government, with its small majority, pursues its approach to the peace process because it holds majority power.

Responsible democracy also requires responsible use of words. This applies to every citizen, but it particularly applies to leadership, and most specifically to leaders who can most influence those susceptible to the extremism of the moment.

While extremist rhetoric has a long history in Israel, since the Oslo agreements, it has been the rhetoric coming from the extreme right and the extreme Nationalist Orthodox which has been of concern and which generated an environment which made a Yigal Amir possible.

Since the assassination, there have been two kinds of responses to the extremism.

There are those who have engaged in soul-searching. Rabbi Norman Lamm, president of Yeshiva University, said that religious Zionism must take a hard look at itself: "The Amirs and (Baruch) Goldsteins didn't invent their depraved justification for their murderous acts. Yes, they were weeds in our garden, but it was our garden."

Rabbi Aaron Soloveichik, a leading rabbinic figure, who

himself had been very outspoken against the government, called Rabin's murder the "greatest crisis in 2,000 years of Jewish history." And, he added that when a Jew kills another Jew, "the Mishna says it is also the fault of the Jews, of the parents, of the teachers, of the rosh Yeshiva, who did not try to hammer into the minds of the students and children the terrible abomination of bloodshed."

Agudath Israel published an ad in *The New York Times* which not only condemned the act as abhorrent to Torah-observant Jews, but reminded all Jews "that inflammatory rhetoric and hateful invective often toxify the atmosphere." And Rabbi Aaron Lichtenstein told his students at Yeshiva Har Etzion in Gush Etzion that "this shame, that our state, our people should have fallen to such a level, should be felt by everyone — religious, secular, right and left... But naturally, this shame should be felt by our camp, the National Religious camp, more than any other. Here was a man who grew up in the vest of our institutions."

Others have spoken out as well. They represent responsible voices in Orthodox Judaism and deserve the encouragement and support of the entire Jewish people.

At the same time, there are those who have learned nothing from the tragedy, who continue to justify their extremism or see no need to look inwards or to show true moral leadership.

Rabbi Mordechai Friedman, president of the American Board of Rabbis, called the murder of Rabin an "act of G-d."

In the aftermath of the assassination, many fingers pointed to Rabbi Abraham B. Hecht, who in the summer gave Halachic legitimacy to the notion of murdering the prime minister.

Rabbi Hecht defended himself on the grounds that he had written to Rabin in October apologizing for his statements. Nevertheless, he has not clearly condemned the use of incendiary language, particularly by community and religious leaders.

Reacting to Rabbi Soloveichik's call for atonement in the Orthodox community, Rabbi Moshe Tendler, a professor at Yeshiva University, dismissed Rabbi Soloveichik's remarks as "nonsense" and insisted there is no need for atonement: "I am not guilty."

He argued that to say the murder represents a "failure of the Orthodox community, and that we should crop our heads and do mea culpas — you will not get me to do that... How does this cast aspersion on the entire community? It's utter nonsense."

Rabbi Steven Pruzansky of Teaneck, a long-timer user of extremist language in his criticism of the government, continued. He told *The Jerusalem Report* that "Rabin was probably well-intentioned, but so were the leaders of the Judemat."

And instead of examining his own rhetoric and those of others, he put the blame elsewhere: "we are focusing on the wrong

factor when we criticize the rhetoric that divides and inflames — it's the policies that have divided and inflamed. A climate was created in which this horrific crime could take place. The climate is not one of words but of deeds."

Not surprisingly, Mike Guzofsky, leader of Kahane Chai, showed no remorse: "Rabin was bad for the Jews. He is over and he's gone... An intelligent man, one like this law student (confessed assassin Amir), had to act."

Others rationalized the act. Beth Gilinsky, president of the Jewish Action Alliance, said: "Rhetoric didn't cause this. Think about elevating Arafat to statesman. If you reward violence, people will believe it's the way to go."

Paul Eidelberg, writing in *The Jewish Press*, claimed that "Yitzhak Rabin and his cohorts created the emotional and political climate that led to his assassination."

Indeed, since the assassination, *The Jewish Press* has consistently refused to recognize that the extreme rhetoric which they featured for years promoted the demonization and delegitimization of the democratically elected government of the State of Israel.

Even in the weeks since the murder, *The Jewish Press* continues to use incendiary terms such as "treason" and "appeasement" in referring to Israeli leaders and policies.

In a brilliant and courageous address to Orthodox leaders, Lamm indicated that his institution, Yeshiva University, was going to take practical steps to come to grips with the problem. He said that faculty and others would meet in the coming months to talk about Torah, extremism, and democracy. Lamm's example should be followed by others.

Still, there needs to be a strong and direct reaction to those who continue to articulate hatred. Rabbis who do so and who teach at institutions, should be told that it is unacceptable within a religious context, with sanctions threatened. Congregants should let their rabbis know the same. And newspapers should not continue to carry columnists who engage in this kind of rhetoric.

It is good to see that more and more responsible leaders are speaking out. This is not a time for demonization. Nor is it a time to tolerate those who fan the flames of bigotry and violence.

Abraham H. Foxman is national director of the Anti-Defamation League.

Menschlichkeit in a Culture of Loathing

by Rabbi Avi Shafran
Director of Public Affairs
Agudath Israel of America

It was inevitable, of course, that the second portion of the theme at Agudath Israel of America's 73rd recent national convention — "The Jewish Family, The Family of Jews" — would be deemed more newsworthy by the press and public than its first segment. Shocking events only a few traumatic weeks old were still loudly reverberating in Jewish hearts and souls the world over.

And those events — both the ground-zero of the Rabin assassination itself and the subsequent fest of finger-pointing and anti-Orthodox animus-venting — were indeed repeatedly examined and analyzed from the podium of the Parsippany Hilton ballroom.

But a different, most important and no less timely picture was brought into focus, too, at the convention's opening session by Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah (Council of Torah Sages) member Rabbi Avrohom Pam, the Rosh HaYeshiva of Mesivta Torah Vodaath.

Pam quietly but powerfully addressed the atmosphere of "harmony and sweetness, of shalom bayis ('peace in the home')," in which Jewish children must breathe if they are to thrive.

He spoke pointedly, too, of the failures, the homes where, sadly, that shalom bayis is diminished or departed entirely, the situations where there "is not even a divorce, where bitter war has been declared" between spouses. He depicted a different scene of "desecration of G-d's name" than the one that had glared from the front pages of the world's newspapers weeks earlier, this one of the profanation born of personal rancor and ill-will that has invaded too many — any — Jewish homes.

Observant Jews are constantly concerned, and rightfully, with the corrupting influences of all the prurience and sacrileges so rampant in our time.

What Pam addressed, though, was the issue of Jewish diligence in preventing the outside world's propensity for rudeness and outright malice from similarly contaminating our lives.

Are even the most insular of Jews, after all, immune to the sheer meanness that has come to characterize so much of the world we live next to and move throughout?

It is a world, after all, where — in one recent week alone — two soldiers in North Carolina went "hunting" blacks, killing their prey, a man and a woman they had never met; a young California man (by his own confession) decided he was going "to kill me a Chinaman" and proceeded to stab an Asian-American carrying groceries to his car; a black racist attacked and set ablaze a Jewish-operated store in Harlem, leaving seven innocent people dead.

And it is not just racist hatred that runs amok around us; skin-color is simply a convenient hook for the more nebulous rage that has metastasized throughout Western society in recent decades.

This has become a society where radio personalities seem to attain popularity commensurate with the degree of their disdain for and derision of others where obnoxiousness has been elevated to high art, where the trial of a confirmed vicious wife-beater accused of his spouse's grisly murder became the family entertainment of choice for nearly a year, and where the man's acquittal was cheered by thousands, if not millions.

The world we inhabit is a cauldron of simmering hatreds and explosive ill-will. And even those of us who are certainly not part of that ugliness, and would never dream of acting like any of the violent, malignant characters "out there," is it too outlandish to imagine that the dominant culture of loathing might still exert some subtle effect on us?

It is an influence whose wispy but dangerous infiltration we may not even have noticed, so preoccupied have we been in fighting all the others. But has society's fury appeared among us as rudeness; its viciousness, as disrespect; its violence, as insensitivity to the feelings of others?

Pam provided the simplest and most essential of solutions to the plague that has appeared in the walls of too many Jewish homes.

He prescribed a determined re-connection to the high Jewish ideal of interpersonal chesed, "kindness," a clear resolve to show true concern and feeling for "the other," not only for the homeless stranger or the needy neighbor, but for the child and the spouse no less.

Easier said than done, a cynic might respond. But vital all the same.

"Where," Pam asked, "is the feeling for the mother of one's own children, for the father of one's own children?"

And even, he added, when there is no realistic hope that a marriage can be saved, when a man and wife must go their separate ways, the two must part "without hatred, without warring." In other words, not like the world without, but like Jews.

Later during the convention, Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah members Rabbi Elya Svei (the Rosh HaYeshiva of the Yeshiva of Philadelphia) and Rabbi Yaakov Perlow (the Novominsk rebbe) both addressed current events in Israel and in the wider Jewish world, tracing the deeper philosophical roots of Yigal Amir's tragically misguided mind, roots that, prejudiced pundits aside, lie distant indeed from the "Haredi" world, far from the constituency of Agudath Israel.

(Continued on Page 7)

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WORLD AND NATIONAL NEWS

Peres Criticized for Offering to Give up Nuclear Capability

by Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres drew widespread criticism from opposition leaders after he said that Israel would give up its nuclear capability in exchange for regional peace.

In remarks to Israeli newspaper editors recently in Tel Aviv, Peres said that Israel would be willing to "give up the atom" if it were able to achieve peace with its Arab neighbors.

"Give me peace, we will give up the nuclear capability. That's the whole story," he said.

Peres refused to say whether he was referring specifically to Israeli nuclear weapons — the existence of which Israeli officials have refused to confirm or deny.

Opposition leaders, along with some media commentators, criticized Peres for what they said was careless talk, and for going too far to appease the Arabs.

The Likud Party issued a statement saying, "The ease with which Peres volunteers to dismantle Israel's nuclear potential is additional testimony to his illusion of a new Middle East in which this government is imprisoned."

Knesset member Rehavam Ze'evi, of the far-right Moledet Party, lashed out at Peres for

endangering national security in the face of what he said were ongoing nuclear development programs in Iraq, Iran and Libya.

Egyptian-Israeli tension over the nuclear issue reemerged over the weekend, when Foreign Minister Ehud Barak visited Cairo to meet with Egyptian officials.

During a news conference recently, Barak and Egyptian Foreign Minister Amre Moussa openly sparred over the issue.

Barak, who was in Egypt for discussions about the resumption of peace negotiations with Syria, said that Israel's potential nuclear arsenal was not relevant to current developments in the region.

Moussa, in turn, said the issue was crucial to the future of the Middle East.

Moussa threatened that Egypt would boycott multilateral talks on regional disarmament and security if Israel's nuclear program was not included in the agenda, Israel Television reported.

The matter came up despite an agreement reached earlier last year between Egypt and Israel to put the issue aside for at least a year. Egypt has in the past protested Israel's refusal to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

blew up Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, the Senate included sanctions on firms that do business with Libya's fuel industries.

The vote on the measure came on the eve of the seventh anniversary of the bombing.

Under the Senate bill, sponsored by Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-N.Y.), sanctioned firms would be denied access to financing sponsored by the Export-Import Bank of the United States and to licenses for exports to the United States.

War Over Religious Pluralism Continues

by Debra Nussbaum Cohen
NEW YORK (JTA) — Yair Cohen and Ruti Floreschein were beaming and it wasn't just in anticipation of their first night together as newlyweds.

The Israeli couple had been married minutes before by the leaders of the Reform movement, in front of 4,000 "guests" attending the Union of American Hebrew Congregations convention in Atlanta. Yair Tsaban, Israel's minister of absorption, had flown in to witness the Dec. 1 nuptials and declared the wedding "kosher and legal."

Ruti's parents were at the wedding, too, but the rest of the couple's family and friends were back home on Kibbutz Yakum.

It didn't matter, though, to Ruti and Yair, who are not religious.

They wanted to use their own experience as a public example of the problems encountered by non-Orthodox Israelis who want to marry, and so agreed to let the Reform movement make them the "poster couple" for religious pluralism.

Theirs is but one example of the human problems created by the way the State of Israel handles matters of personal status.

The wedding was an early salvo launched by the Reform movement in a rapidly building war over religious pluralism in Israel.

The opposing sides are the liberal religious and secular Jews, led by a two-year Reform movement campaign expected to cost \$2 million, vs. The Orthodox, some of whom are organizing a campaign of their own to be launched in February.

The two sides have staked out their positions for a fight that promises to be as polarizing as the "Who is a Jew" issue was a decade ago.

Yair and Ruti could not marry at home because he is a descendant of the priestly class of Kohanim and she was divorced from her first husband, a union prohibited by the Orthodox interpretation of Jewish law, which controls all matters of

personal status in Israel.

At the same time, Israeli civil law recognizes as legitimate non-Orthodox marriages performed outside Israel, so the Reform movement brought them to Atlanta.

The wedding had been broadcast around the world by major news programs.

"We wanted to show how they [the Orthodox rabbinate] refuse, just refuse, a simple couple just because of my name," said Yair, who manages the kibbutz kitchen.

"If I did something it's because they pushed me to do it," he said.

The Reform-led coalition for pluralism has the backing of several organizations in Israel and members of Knesset, who are expected to introduce a bill that would legalize civil and non-Orthodox religious marriages.

They seemed to win the first round of the current battle in mid-November, when Israel's High Court of Justice endorsed the legitimacy of non-Orthodox conversions in Israel but thrust responsibility for the final decision into the hands of the Israeli parliament.

Orthodox interests are represented by the Orthodox parties in the Knesset, which have been pressuring Prime Minister Shimon Peres to endorse legislation to prohibit non-Orthodox conversion and marriage, in exchange for their support of his other policies.

Their goal is to block the legislative efforts of the advocates for pluralism.

The religious pluralism crisis is the inevitable result of lingering and fundamental contradictions in the way questions of Jewish status are handled in Israel, say those at the forefront of the battle.

"There is a dichotomy," Rabbi Uri Regev, director of the Reform movement's Israel Religious Action Center, said in an interview in Atlanta.

"On the one hand are civil issues of the Law of Return and

on the other are issues of personal status," he said. "In many ways this is a reawakening of the 'Who is a Jew' issue."

Israel's Law of Return grants automatic citizenship to any Jew or person with one Jewish grandparent.

An Orthodox effort in the 1980s to restrict the law, which also applies to converts, to apply only to those converted according to Orthodox Jewish law sparked a major outcry among diaspora Jews — and ultimately failed.

But even though individuals with Jewish parents or grandparents — such as thousands from the former Soviet Union — are granted citizenship, they are not recognized by the Orthodox rabbinate, which controls all marriage, divorce, burial and conversion in Israel.

Some 150,000 Israeli citizens from the former Soviet Union who cannot prove their halachic Jewishness are not willing — or able — to become Orthodox in order to convert, say some.

Israel to Hunt Drug Dealers in India

by Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel has disclosed that a unit of undercover Israeli police is searching in India for Israeli drug dealers.

The announcement came amid widespread Israeli media reports about mass drug use and sales by Israelis in India, the destination of thousands of young Israelis each year.

During the winter, thousands flock to the beaches of Goa, in southern India, for massive parties where drugs, some bought from Israelis, are heavily used, according to the reports.

The largest of these parties apparently is one held New Year's Eve.

Because of a lack of interest, a flight was canceled that would have taken concerned parents to India to search for their traveling children, it was reported.

Israel to Free 1,100 Prisoners

by Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — An Israeli ministerial committee has announced that it plans to free some 1,100 Palestinian prisoners.

The committee reached the decision after meeting to discuss the issue of prisoner releases.

The releases are part of a number of confidence-building gestures included in an agreement for extending West Bank autonomy that was signed Sept. 28 in Washington.

Israel, which has more than 4,000 Palestinians in its jails, has repeatedly stated that no prisoners with Jewish blood on their hands would be set free.

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Israel to Free 1,100 Prisoners
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WORLD AND NATIONAL NEWS

JNF Rededicates to Jerusalem 3000

Excerpts From a
Chanukah Message

by Milton S. Shapiro

President, Jewish National Fund

"A great miracle happened there, almost 2,000 years ago. As the Temple was rededicated after the Maccabees reclaimed Jerusalem, the oil burned for eight days — and the Festival of Lights was born.

"Miracles haven't ceased.

"In modern times, we've witnessed the miracle of Israel, which JNF helped bring forth out of the wilderness. From the thriving desert agricultural communities on JNF-reclaimed land, to the security roads that school-children travel on in the Galilee, to the reservoirs that bring water to Israel's farms, homes, and industries, JNF's work is evident throughout Israel.

"We've also witnessed Jerusalem united, just as it was under the Maccabees. JNF is strengthening and beautifying the city that is the heart and soul of the Jewish people — the city that is the eternal, undivided capital of the state of Israel; the city that Jews around the world yearned for over generations.

"For Jerusalem 3000, JNF will further enhance Jerusalem by building Gan Yaldei Yisrael, a unique children's garden with eight observation points overlooking key sites in Jerusalem; by completing the magnificent Green Belt of trees that encircles

Jerusalem, symbolizing Jerusalem's unity, and by developing the KKL Park and Evenings Center in the Judean Hills for Jerusalem's inhabitants.

"...Just as we rededicated the Temple, we are now going to rededicate ourselves to Jerusalem...."

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First JCC Launched in St. Petersburg... Russia

by Leslie Katz
Jewish Bulletin of
Northern California

SAN FRANCISCO (JTA) — What is believed to be the first Jewish Community Center inaugurated in the former Soviet Union has opened its doors in the Russian city that under Communist rule was called Leningrad. For the first time since the fall of Communism, St. Petersburg's 100,000 Jews have

a communal home.

"This is to be a central address for the Jews of St. Petersburg," said Eva Seligman-Kennard, assistant director of the Bay Area Council of Jewish Rescue and Renewal in San Francisco, which helped purchased the apartments.

Unlike many American JCCs, which serve primarily as recreational and cultural centers, this Russian JCC is likely to become

the hub of St. Petersburg Jewish life, housing everything from Jewish organizations to a nursery school, day-care programs and Jewish publications, she said.

The Bay Area Council, along with the Jewish Association of St. Petersburg and The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, bought the apartments that house the new center.

Jewish Cemetery in Venice Is Disappearing

by Ruth E. Gruber

VENICE (JTA) — Nearly 180 years ago, when the great English poet Lord Byron lived here, he loved to go horseback riding on the Lido, the strip of island that protects the Venetian Lagoon from the Adriatic Sea.

With companions such as fellow poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, he would ride through what Shelley described as a sandy, windswept wasteland.

It was an especially haunting wasteland, however.

"The spot where we usually rode," wrote Byron's friend, British Consul Richard Belgrave Hoppner, "was a Jewish cemetery whose walls had been pulled down and stones overturned by the French."

The ancient Jewish Cemetery on the Venice Lido was founded in the 1380s, but by the time Byron was riding there, it had not been used for burials for half a century.

Although the cemetery is one

of the treasures of European Jewish heritage, it has languished in a virtually abandoned state for more than 200 years while the rest of the Lido was developed into an area of homes, beach resorts, hotels and a big casino.

Time, neglect and human destruction have taken their toll, and today, finally, alarm bells are going off about the cemetery's deteriorating condition.

Venice's tiny Jewish community as well as international monuments preservation organizations such as Save Venice, Inc. and the World Monuments Fund are seeking sponsors for urgently needed repairs and conservation operations.

In addition to restoration of tombstones, other needed repair work includes the drainage of swampy areas; regular clearing of weeds, bushes and undergrowth; and reconstruction of the wall.

Recent surveys indicate that expenses for all needed work may total \$300,000.

"Unless we intervene, little will remain after only a few more years," according to the current issue of the Save Venice, Inc. newsletter.

"This cemetery has had a tormented life," said Aldo Izzo, a Jewish retired sea captain who has devoted the past decade to looking after both the ancient cemetery and a newer Jewish cemetery nearby.

For four centuries, the ancient cemetery served as the only burial ground for Venetian Jews. Funerals took place in convoys of gondolas that set sail from the ghetto, at the northern edge

of Venice. Time and time again its area was decreased, its walls were torn down or its tombstones were uprooted in order to build fortifications along the Lido shore.

The cemetery was finally abandoned about 1770, and the newer cemetery, which is still in use today, was opened several hundred yards away.

In the 1920s, a large part of the cemetery was destroyed to construct a road along the shore. Tombstones were pulled up and laid on the ground or against the walls in the main cemetery area — and here they remain to this day.

Loathing

(Continued from Page 5)

Svei noted, however, that the fact that Amir's nefarious act grew in foreign conceptual soil, that it was born of the fringe of a nationalism that the Haredi religious leadership has long and consistently disavowed, must not allow the "fervent Orthodox" to be complacent.

A divine message, he proclaimed, must still inhere in the very fact that we of the non-Zionist Jewish world — universes removed from Yigal Amir's "Ultra-Zionist one" — have been accused, even if nonsensical, of fostering the climate in which political extremism, even to the point of murder, thrived.

He noted, among other things, that "murder" exists on multiple levels, that it can, on one stratum, mean a lack of empathy for the pain of others, or a breach in the proper profound concern for the holiness that is another person's life.

Perlow, too, compelling his listeners to confront a future fraught with even more negativity toward Torah and its adherents than in the past, stressed the need for observant Jews to effectively communicate with the secularist world, to address our fellow Jews as the "brothers and sisters" they are.

And in the end, this listener among these sea of men and women present wondered: aren't those timely messages of menschlichkeit precisely what Pam was proclaiming as well, — the key to resolving not only the problems of the family of Jews but those of the Jewish family.

Leslie Weinstock, M.Ed., NCC, ACDP

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Chanukah Gift Bags

Estelle Klemer joined other Temple Emanu-El Kulanu members, in conjunction with the Jewish Eldercare of Rhode Island program, to prepare 170 Chanukah gift bags for Jewish residents of nursing homes throughout the state.

Photo courtesy of Roberta Segal and Associates

Israel Employment Fair Coming to States

Leading Israeli high-tech companies will be in North America to interview suitable candidates for thousands of employment opportunities in Israel. Interviews will take place from March 17 to 28.

Companies represented include Intel, IBM, Bezeq, Motorola Semi Conductors, Elbit, Raphael, Tadiran and Elta.

Jobs are available for electronic or computer engineers, hardware or software communications engineers, systems analysts, pro-

grammers, project managers or specialists in microelectronics or electro-optics.

Those interested should fax their résumé by Feb. 9 to (212) 508-4114. This fair is sponsored by the State of Israel, The Ministry of Immigrant Absorption/The Foreign Ministry, and the Jewish Agency/Israel Aliyah Center.

For more information, call (617) 457-8570.

A Pot Luck Shabbat

Mativ, Temple Beth-El's group for young adults, will host a potluck Shabbat dinner on Jan. 19 at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Lisa Weingeroff, the Village Green, East Providence.

The cost is \$5 per person, plus a dish. Call Weingeroff at 434-7692 by Jan. 15 to R.S.V.P. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Mazon—a Jewish Response to Hunger.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Class for Adults

Applications are being accepted to join Temple Torat Yisrael's new adult bar/bat mitzvah class. If you did not become a bar/bat mitzvah as a child, the temple welcomes your participation in this two-year program of study with Rabbi David Rosen, Cantor Robert Lieberman and Educational Director Lonna Picker, on Tuesday evenings.

Call Picker at 785-1890 by Jan. 15 to enroll.

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THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

'Go Away, Go Away, Before This Dignity Crumbles.'

by Alison Smith
Herald Editor

Lee Sharkey has written a book of poems entitled *To A Vanished World*, based on pictures taken between 1933 and 1939 by Roman Vishniac.

Vishniac, a Russian doctor in Germany, set out deliberately to create a photographic record of the Jewish people and their community in the '30s. He believed Hitler when he said he planned to do away with the Jews. All Vishniac could do was preserve pictorially what was about to be destroyed.

Vishniac's pictures were usually taken with a concealed camera so they are what we call "candid," or unposed...almost always a candid shot is more revealing than a planned portrait.

Sharkey has responded to Vishniac's images in words of poetry. Each poem in the book was based on her response to a specific shot.

At first glance, since the photographs involved are not reproduced in Sharkey's book, the reader might well wonder, "what's the point? If we can't see the picture, how can we get much out of the poem about the picture?"

The trick is to abandon trying to visualize Vishniac's image, and trust Sharkey. She will describe for you the high points, the essence of what she saw, leaving out any extraneous material, and then, or concurrently, she will remind us of what's coming for this child, or of what life used to be like for this old man.

We hear so much about the concentration camps, about the gas chambers, about the brutal

Hadassah Offers Tour

Hadassah is offering a 12-day "Tale of Four Cities" tour Feb. 18 to 29 for Hadassah members and non-members. Participants will visit Jerusalem, Amman, Petra and Eilat.

Highlights include a visit to Neot Kedumin and Beit Gauvrin; a trip to Mt. Nebo, believed to be the site of Moses' tomb; a tour of the Greco-Roman city of Jerash to see the grand ruins; a drive to Tel BerSheba, a newly excavated site where Abraham's well is located; and more.

"A Tale of Four Cities" includes round-trip airfare from Newark International Airport, accommodations, two meals per day, ground transportation and all tours. Price per person, double occupancy is \$1,996; single supplement is \$400.

For information and reservations, contact the Hadassah National Travel Department, 50 West 58th St., New York, N.Y. 10019; (800) 363-2373 or (212) 303-8031.

experiments, that we become numbered to the individual stories.

Sharkey reintroduces us to who these people were. She makes them human again, reveals them as people we might know, or have known.

I think she is an exceptionally talented poet, and I hope

that when she has exorcised the ghosts of the '30s, she will turn toward the '90s.

To a *Vanished World* published by Puckerbrush Press, 76 Main St., Orono, Maine 04473. It costs \$8.95, plus \$1.00 post and handling. Sharkey will appear at Books on the Square on April 16, Holocaust Remembrance Day, to read from, and sign, her books.

WARSAW

The photographer comes upon him holding his hand inside his suit coat to his ribs, the crumpled bag with all he owns tucked to his side.

It's the very day he lost his job, his room. He stands straight at a cool stone corner staring down the lens, eyes narrowed, brows and mouth two lines

that draw him tight. Go away, go away, before this dignity crumbles.

WARSAW

Two large blonde baskets filled with fresh bagels, baked twisted strands with centers the size of the bagels I buy on Hope Street.

The rounds are perfect fruit of the earth in leaning rows. A handsome family has come to sell where Jews are forbidden what Jews have no money to buy. A policeman is hiding behind a house gate preparing to spring, grab a fistful of bagels from the basket at the feet of the father, who's rubbing his knuckles, kick the rest out onto the sidewalk, wrench the basket from the dark mother's hand and spill its contents too. A dozen dozen golden rings will roll, topple into the gutter, bobble once or twice, then stop. The family will shout their dismay. The photographer will run with his hidden camera, his exposure, to his cache. The officer will begin to chew.

'A Helping Hand' for Caregivers

A caregiver is anyone who is providing physical, emotional or financial assistance to an older person. As a caregiver you may feel overwhelmed, or not know where to turn.

The Comprehensive Adult Day Center's caregivers support group will start the winter session on Jan. 9 at 5:30 p.m. at the

center on 99 Hillside Ave.

The support group is designed to assist families in caregiving, to provide ways to cope and handle situations and to provide education about resources available in the community.

If interested, call Sharon Rice at the center at 351-2440.

Vote For Your Favorite Pizza

Exercise your right to vote... for the best pizza in Rhode Island. Perspectives, the Rhode Island Jewish Young Adult Project, will hold a Charity Pizza Challenge on Jan. 13 at 8 p.m. at the Johnson & Wales Culinary Museum, Narragansett Boulevard, Cranston.

The cost is \$10. The price includes pizza and two beverages. Half of the proceeds will benefit the Bureau of Jewish Education Israel Scholarship Fund.

Those in attendance will have the opportunity to vote for pizza from the following places: Adesso, Bertucci's, Bob and Timmy's Grilled Pizzeria, Caserta Pizzeria, Little Caesars, Papa Gino's, Pizza King, Pizza Pie-Er and Twins Pizza.

All pizza will be vegetarian kosher-style. R.S.V.P. by Jan. 10 by calling Marci Ingber at 521-

3541. Specify if a kosher pizza is required.

Perspectives is open to adults in their mid 20s to mid 30s, either single or married. The group is committed to programming in the areas of philanthropy/social action, sports/social and religion/education.

Recently, Perspectives held a trip to Foxwoods Casino, visited the elderly for Chanukah and helped out at a local soup kitchen on Christmas.

Some upcoming events include going to a Providence College-Georgetown basketball game, a ski trip and a comedy night. To get on Perspectives' mailing list, call 521-3541.

Perspectives is funded through a Continuity Grant from the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island.

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MILESTONES

Bracha Feinsod Steinberg Receives Scholarship at PC

Bracha Feinsod Steinberg of Providence was honored recently as one of two recipients of a Textron Diversity Scholarship at the Textron Business Forum on Women and Minority Issues, held at Providence College on Oct. 26.

The Textron Diversity Scholarships are open to all women and minority students throughout the southern New England region. Recipients of these scholarships are awarded an average of \$2,200 annually to attend the Providence College School of Continuing Education.

Steinberg is pursuing a liberal arts baccalaureate with additional certification in elementary and special education. Born and raised in Israel, her goals are founded in Judaism and its

traditions of family, heritage, learning and teaching.

She also directs an organization for the prevention of slanderous language, and volunteers in a women's league to prepare and deliver meals for those unable to care for themselves. Her Textron Diversity Scholarship will enable her to accelerate her course work and enter the teaching profession sooner than she had anticipated.

The Textron Scholarships were made possible by the company's \$1.1 million grant to Providence College in 1994 for the advancement of women and minorities. The grant is the largest corporate contribution ever made in the history of the college.



100 Years Young

Belle Goldstein 50 years ago, during her term as president of AMIT (then called the Mizrahi Women's Organization of America), and at a recent luncheon celebrating her 100th birthday. AMIT is this country's largest religious Zionist organization.



She's There! She's Everywhere!

Dr. Ruth Westheimer presents a bicycle to a Rwandan child as part of an American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee project to facilitate the provision of vital social and medical services in Rwanda, by the donation of 1,000 bicycles.

Dr. Mel Yoken Receives Teacher of the Year Award

Dr. Mel B. Yoken, professor of French at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, has been chosen as the 1995 recipient of the Leo M. Sullivan Teacher of the Year Award.

This award recognizes a colleague who has demonstrated a particular dedication to students

through exceptionally meritorious teaching and advising, and is selected by an elected committee of faculty members.

A UMass Dartmouth faculty member since 1966, Yoken previously received La Medaille de Vermeil from the French Academy in Paris for his contribu-

tions to the French language and culture via his books. They were published in Quebec and encompass a series about living French-Canadian authors.

The banquet, honoring Yoken, was held recently at the Hawthorne Country Club in North Dartmouth.

Rabbi Grama Named Director of Pirchei Agudath Israel

Rabbi Shimon Grama of Brooklyn has been named the new national director for Pirchei Agudath Israel of America, the Orthodox Jewish boys' youth movement — a project of Agudath Israel of America.

Grama is a respected educator who, over a long and distinguished history of involvement with Pirchei, played an instrumental role in the successful promotion of the annual Pirchei

"Mishnayos-Completion Celebration" as well as in the production of Pirchei's popular recordings.

He lived in Israel for 20 years, until 1989, during which time he studied at the Kolel Chazon Ish in Bnai Brak, where he helped found several Torah institutions and programs. He later founded and served as principal of a girls' high school in Jerusalem.

His experience in both education and administration has well prepared Grama for the position he now occupies, a position that was filled by Rabbi Joshua Silbermintz, the youth group's leader for nearly a half-century.

Since Silbermintz's passing nearly two years ago, Agudath Israel's Daf Yomi Commission coordinator Rabbi Avrohom Nisan Perl has served as acting director of Pirchei.



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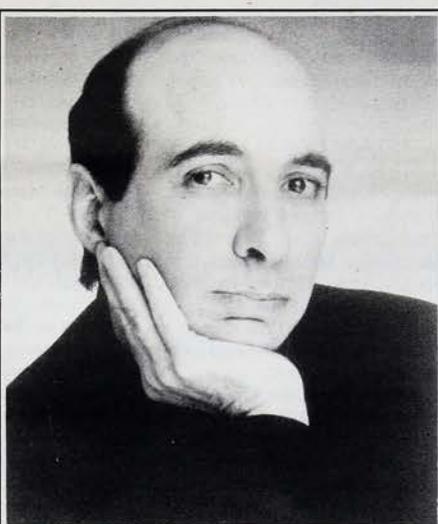
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ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT



DEEP THOUGHT — Dr. Katz (left) and comedian Jonathan Katz appear to be deep in thought.
Photo courtesy of Leventhal-Sidman JCC

Let Dr. Katz Tickle Your Funny Bone

The Leventhal-Sidman Jewish Community Center in Newton Centre, Mass., will present "Dr. Katz and Friends" on Jan. 20 at 8 p.m. and Jan. 21 at 2 p.m. Comedian Jonathan Katz is the star and co-creator of "Dr. Katz, Professional Therapist," Comedy Central's first animated series that focuses on the life and sessions of psychiatrist Dr. Katz, whose patients are animated versions of some of

today's hottest comedians. Aside from Katz, comedians Lew Schneider and Scott Blakeman will be performing. The program is part of the JCC's Concerts on the Campus series. Tickets are \$16 general admission and \$14 for seniors and students. This show is filling up fast, so seating is limited. Call the JCC box office at (617) 965-5226 for tickets or more information.

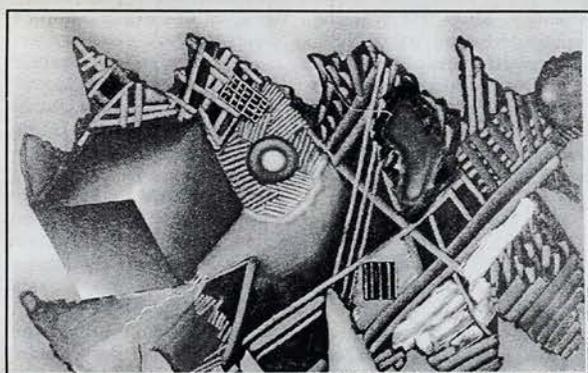
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DINING GUIDE



Bert Gallery Presents Two Shows



FRANK GASBARRO'S flux #2, oil on canvas, 28" x 44"

A fine arts establishment founded to feature significant regional American artists, Bert Gallery will exhibit from Jan. 8 to March 29, two shows, "Women Who Age Well: Early 20th Century Painters" and "Paintings by Frank Gasbarro." Both shows, one in the front gallery and the other in the back, will be on view in the gallery's location at 540 South Water St. in Providence at Corliss Landing. Hours are Monday through Saturdays 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. There is no charge for admission. "Women Who Age Well: Early 20th Century Painters" is an opportunity to see some of the finest Rhode Island woman painters from the turn of the century. A publication on Rhode Island women artists, *The Myth of the Dilettante*, is available for \$6. Gasbarro has been painting in Providence for the last decade and is known for his ambitious large 6 ft. x 6 ft. canvases. These mixed media canvases, incorporating oil, pure pigment and black board slate, assume a monumental physicality demanding the viewer's attention. Gasbarro not only demonstrates a powerful command of color, his combination of forms is very alluring.

Auditions in Newport

The Newport Playhouse and Cabaret Restaurant is holding open auditions for the Neil Simon comedy "The Ginger Bread Lady," on Jan. 9 at 7 p.m. The comedy stars Niki Bruno and is directed by Arthur "Bucky" Walsh. The Playhouse is looking for three males ages 20 to 45 and two females ages 20 to 50. All actors are paid. For more information, call 848-PLAY.

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OBITUARIES

MAX G. BENDER

PROVIDENCE — Max G. Bender, 90, of 508 Regency West, 2 Jackson Walkway, an expediter for more than 50 years for several area jewelry firms died Dec. 28 at Miriam Hospital. He was the husband of the late Dora (Make) Bender.

Born in Russia, a son of the late David and Betsy Bender, he lived in Providence since 1939, previously residing in Detroit.

He was a member of Temple Emanu-El and its Men's Club.

He leaves a daughter, Carole Hirschmann of Washington, D.C.; a son, David Bender of Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.; two sisters, Lee Koffman and Ida Koffman, both of Canada and three grandchildren.

The funeral service was held Dec. 31 at the Mount Sinai Memorial Chapel, 825 Hope St., Providence. Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

JULIUS COHEN

FALL RIVER, Mass. — Julius Cohen, of Fall River, died Dec. 29. He was the husband of Sadie (Rosput) Cohen.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by two daughters, Judith Goodwin of Maryland and Marilyn Viale of Boca Raton, Fla.; two sisters, Sarah Kretman and Ruth Baker of Massachusetts; three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Graveside services were held Dec. 31 at Hebrew Cemetery, Fall River. Arrangements were by Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St., Providence.

ERI COLE

FALL RIVER — Eri Cole, 82, of 538 Robeson St., died Dec. 30 at the Fall River Jewish Home. She was the wife of William Cole.

Born in Germany, a daughter of the late Sigmund and Leonie (Swartz) Kahn, she lived in Mahwah, N.J., for 45 years before moving to Fall River three weeks ago.

She was a member of Congregation Adas Israel. She was a former member of Congregation Sons of Israel in Suffern, N.Y.

Besides her husband she leaves two sons, Allan Cole of Boca Raton, Fla., and Lawrence Cole of Key Gardens, N.Y.; a

daughter, Paulette Johnson of Somerset; seven grandchildren and a great-grandchild.

A graveside service was held Dec. 31 at Hebrew Cemetery. Burial followed. Arrangements were by Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St., Providence.

GERTRUDE DIWINSKY

BRONX, N.Y. — Gertrude Diwinsky, 78, of 100 W. Kingsbridge Rd., Bronx, N.Y., died Dec. 26 at the Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx. She was the wife of the late Jerome Diwinsky.

Born in Montreal, a daughter of the late Oscar and Fannie (Tennenhouse) Cohen, she had lived in Providence for most of her life before moving to New York three years ago.

She had been a financial consultant and accountant in Providence for many years. She was a member of Temple Emanu-El where she had taught Sunday school for many years. She was a member of Hadassah and the Pioneer Women.

She leaves three daughters, Lynne Diwinsky of New York, Rhea Diwinsky in Israel and Faye Yemini of Los Angeles, Calif., and nine grandchildren.

The funeral was held Dec. 29 at Mount Sinai Memorial Chapel, 825 Hope St., Providence. Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery in Warwick.

BENJAMIN FACTOR

CRANSTON — Benjamin Factor, 90, of the Scandinavian Home, 1811 Broad St., Cranston, for the past two-and-a-half years, died Dec. 25 at the home. He was the husband of the late Jenny (Singer) Factor.

Born in Russia, a son of the late Abraham and Frances Factor, he had lived in Providence for most of his life.

He had been the founder and proprietor of the former Benny's Menswear Store for 51 years, retiring in 1978. He was a member of the Providence Fraternal Association and the Providence Free Loan Association.

He leaves a daughter, Eleanor Marrocco; a son, Alfred Factor, a lawyer, both of Cranston; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

A private funeral service was

held Dec. 27. Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick. Service was coordinated by Mount Sinai Memorial Chapel, 825 Hope St., Providence.

STANLEY P. FLINK

NATICK, Mass. — Stanley P. Flink, 65, of 24 Westlake Road, Natick, a former resident of Providence, died Dec. 23 at Metrowest Medical Center in Natick, Mass. He was the husband of Sondra Flink.

He was born in Providence, a son of the late Samuel and Dorothy (Maker) Flink.

He attended the University of Miami. For 20 years he was an industrial trade show specialist, retiring 5 years ago.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by a son, Henry Flink; four sisters, Rita Zietz and Bernice Baker of Hollywood, Fla.; Joyce Zimble of Cranston and Joan Rosen of West Roxbury, Mass. He was the brother of the late Arthur Flink.

A private funeral service took place Dec. 26. Burial was at Lincoln Park Cemetery. The service was coordinated by Mount Sinai Memorial Chapel, 825 Hope St., Providence.

MYRNA FINN

PAWTUCKET — Myrna (Abramson) Finn, of Pawtucket, died on Dec. 28. She was the wife of the late Robert Finn.

She is survived by a daughter, Marlene Finn Gabriel of New York City; two sisters, Lillian Lipselt of Brookline and Esther Fine of Natick, Mass. She also leaves nieces, nephews and their families.

Services were held at Levine Chapel in Brookline on Dec. 29.

ESTHER HARRIS

WARWICK — Esther Harris, 93, a resident of the Pawtucket Village Nursing Home for the last two years and formerly of 940 Namquid Drive, Warwick, died Dec. 28 at the home.

Born in Attleboro, Mass., a daughter of the late Morris and Nellie (Livingston) Sholes, she lived in Warwick for more than 40 years. She was a graduate of the former Bryant and Stratton Business College, now Bryant College. She had been an office manager for a wire manufacturing company in Boston and she

had been a plant manager for a silk mill in Pawtucket. She had been a manager of Sholes Riverview Roller Rink in Boston.

She was a former member of Temple Torat Yisrael of Cranston and a former member of Temple Am David in Warwick. She was a member of Pioneer Women. She was a life member of the Women's Association of the Jewish Home for the Aged. She was a member of the Cranston Senior Guild and a member of the Majestic Senior Guild. She was a member of the Warwick Social Seniors. She was an avid reader.

She leaves a son, Elliot Harris, of San Diego, Calif.; a brother, Leonard J. Sholes, of Cranston; three sisters, Bessie Lipson of Warwick, Evelyn Kagan of Quincy, Mass., and Alyce Guthart of Newington, Conn.; two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. She was the sister of the late Sampson Sholes and the late Bertha Aron.

The funeral service was held Dec. 31 at Mount Sinai Memorial Chapel, 825 Hope St., Providence. Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery in Warwick.

WILLIAM RUBIN

PROVIDENCE — William Rubin, 89, of 1166 North Main St., a salesman for the former Adams Drug Stores for 10 years before retiring, died Dec. 28 at Miriam Hospital. He was the husband of Mabel (Beck) Rubin.

A lifelong Providence resident, he was a son of the late Samuel and Lena (Henick) Rubin.

He had been a self-employed poultry dealer for many years. He was a member of Congregation Sons of Zion.

Besides his wife, he leaves two brothers, Alexander Rubin of Cranston and Harold Rubin of Providence, and a sister, Rachel Webber of Providence. He was the brother of the late Irving and Abraham Rubin.

A graveside service was held Dec. 29 at Lincoln Park Cemetery. Arrangements were by Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St., Providence.

ETTA JANE SCHAEFFER

PROVIDENCE — Etta Jane Schaeffer, 68, of 135 Sayles Ave., owner of the Bargain Closet for 24 years before retiring two years ago, died Dec. 20 at the Philip Hulitar Hospice Inpatient Center in Providence. She was the wife of Sidney H. Schaeffer.

Born in Providence, she was a daughter of the late Barnett and Katherine (Sirk) Falcovsky.

She was a graduate of the Wilson School in Boston. She

was an X-ray technician at the former Charles Chapin Hospital in Providence, and a volunteer at Hasbro Children's Hospital. She was a member of Temple Emanu-El. She was a member of Hadassah.

Besides her husband, she leaves three daughters, Leslie Lynn Clark of Seekonk, Mass., Sandra H. Abrams of Warwick and Ellen B. Schaeffer of Foster; a sister, Roslyn Markoff of Pawtucket, and four grandchildren.

The funeral was held Jan. 1 at the Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St., Providence. Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery in Warwick.

GERTRUDE STEINHARDT

PROVIDENCE — Gertrude Steinhardt, 78, of 104 Governor Bradford Drive, Barrington, died Dec. 25 at Rhode Island Hospital. She was the widow of Allan Steinhardt.

Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., a daughter of the late Samuel and Sarah Brand, she lived in Barrington for 26 years. She previously lived in New Rochelle, N.Y.

She was a member of the League of Women Voters.

She leaves two sons, Andrew Steinhardt of Sterling, Mass., and Kenneth Steinhardt of Milford, Mass.; two brothers, Leonard Brand of Englewood Cliffs, N.J., George Brand of Hollywood, Fla., and five grandchildren.

The funeral was held Dec. 29 at the chapel of Swan Point Cemetery in Providence. The service was coordinated by Mount Sinai Memorial Chapel, 825 Hope St., Providence.

SAMUEL Y. WEISER

PROVIDENCE — Samuel Y. Weiser, 93, of 225 New London Ave., Cranston, an employee of Morton's Shoe Store in West Warwick for 19 years before retiring in 1980, died Dec. 29 at Miriam Hospital. He was the husband of Josie (Horowitz) Weiser.

Born in Russia, a son of the late Louis and Nettie (Goverman) Weiser, he lived in Providence before moving to Cranston in 1966.

He also worked at Ann & Hope and the Gob Shop. He was a member of Temple Torat Yisrael, Congregation Shaare Zedek, the South Providence Hebrew Free Loan Association, and the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island. He was a member of the former Olneyville Hebrew Club and the Cranston Senior Guild.

(Continued on Page 15)

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CLASSIFIED

(Continued from Page 14)

He leaves his wife.
A graveside service was held Dec. 31 at Lincoln Park Cemetery in Warwick. Arrangements were by Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St., Providence.

PPAC Announces Change of Show

Eight performances of "Andrew Lloyd Webber's Music of the Night," starring Colm Wilkinson, will replace the originally scheduled show, "The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber." The dates and times for "Music of the Night" are exactly the same as those for "The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber," Feb. 13 to 18.

Webber." The dates and times for "Music of the Night" are exactly the same as those for "The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber," Feb. 13 to 18.

ADL Releases Top Ten List

The Anti-Defamation League has released its list of the 1995 Top Ten Events. That list includes:

- The assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by right-wing Israeli extremist Yigal Amir. Rabin, 73, was shot as he departed a rally in support of the peace process that was attended by more than 100,000 people in Tel Aviv. Amir, the self-confessed assassin and 25-year-old opponent of the peace process, was apprehended immediately.
- The militia-related terrorist bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Okla., killed 169 people and injured more than 500. The alleged perpetrators, Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, are anti-government extremists reportedly linked to the Michigan Militia.
- The Million Man March of black men led by outspoken anti-Semite and racist, Minister Louis Farrakhan of the black separatist Nation of Islam. While ADL expressed support for the African-American community to come together to address severe problems plaguing their community, it expressed concern that the march was tainted by the leadership of Farrakhan.
- The continued progress of the Israel-Palestinian Liberation Organization peace process. On Sept. 28, 1995, at the White House Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO leader Yasser Arafat signed the "Oslo II" agreement on extending Palestinian autonomy through the West Bank and calling for Israeli withdrawal from seven West Bank cities. In December, Arafat announced that elections for a Palestinian Council will be held on Jan. 22. Also in December, Peres developed a 10-point plan for renewed negotiations with Syria.
- The increase in racially motivated violence. Seven innocent people died in the racially and religiously motivated Harlem massacre. Rowland J. Smith Jr., a protester in a cam-

paigned to drive the Jewish white-owned Freddy's Fashion Mart from the community, walked into the store allegedly shouting racial and anti-Semitic epithets, opened fire and set the building ablaze.

• Israel was hit hard by the continuation of Islamic extremist terrorism. Islamic extremist suicide-bombers killed 21 Israelis and wounded more than 60 in Beit Lid in central Israel. In the Gaza Strip an Islamic Jihad suicide bombing of an Israeli public bus killed seven Israeli soldiers and Jewish-American student, Alisa Flatow. A terrorist-detonated bomb on a bus in Tel Aviv killed seven Israelis and injured more than 30. A Hamas suicide bomber's detonation of an explosive on a bus in Jerusalem, killed five, including American teacher, Joan Davenny, and injured 100.

• President Clinton's issue of an Executive Order freezing the assets in the United States of Middle East-based terrorist groups and banning charitable contributions to them. Among the groups affected were Hamas, Hezbollah, and Islamic Jihad.

• The conviction of Islamic extremists for plotting "war of urban terrorism." A federal jury convicted 10 Islamic militants on 48 of 50 seditious conspiracy charges stemming from a failed plot to bomb the United Nations headquarters, Hudson River commuter crossings and other New York City landmarks.

• The serious exploitation of the Internet by neo-Nazi and other anti-Semites and racists. The Internet is being used to recruit new members and dis-

seminate and promote propaganda of religious and racial divisiveness.

• The U.S. Supreme Court's landmark decisions on affirmative action and on racially based electoral districts. The court in *Adarand Constructors v. Peña* called into question the constitutionality of numerous "affirmative action" set-aside programs. Noting that race-based government actions jeopardize individual equal protection rights guaranteed by the Constitution, the Court ruled that such set-asides must be narrowly tailored and serve a compelling state interest. In the case of *Miller v. Johnson*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that race cannot be used as the "predominant factor" in drawing election district boundaries.

George Delury

(Continued from Page 4)

from taking affirmative steps to end life, but also to take affirmative steps to preserve life.

This is admittedly an area of considerable complexity that does not lend itself to vague generalities and requires careful case-by-case consultation with a competent halachic authority—which is why Agudath Israel of America developed its "Halachic Living Will"—but I think it fair to say that halacha's emphasis is on the sanctity of human life as opposed to the quality of human life; and that halacha will often insist on medical intervention to keep a person alive even in situations where a patient's family or doc-

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tor — or even the patient himself — may feel otherwise.

The Delury diary reminds us that life and death decisions are often made in the stifling claustrophobic atmosphere of personal desperation and interpersonal frustration.

The danger that one's subjective considerations will consciously or subconsciously influence such decisions — "I don't want to be a burden on my family;" "I no longer have the strength to care for this person;" "We won't be able to afford the new care if we pay for 24-hour nursing care;" "We won't be able to meet our day-school tuition payments if we pay for 24-hour nursing care"; etc., etc. — is palpable.

"Aseh lecha Rav," advised Chazal, "Accept for yourself a teacher" — to teach objective principles of halachic right and wrong, obviously, but also to save us from the dangers of our own subjectively feverish count-downs.

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Reform Jewish Women Combat Violence and Sex in the Media

The Women of Reform Judaism, representing more than 600 Reform Jewish congregational sisterhoods throughout the United States and Canada, has urged its membership to join in organized efforts to protest violence and sex in the media.

In a resolution passed at its 40th biennial assembly in Atlanta, the group was sharply critical of both print and television journalism. It charged that too many papers in North America trivialize and editorialize news and give front page coverage to violent and sensational events while "burying important information" in the inside pages.

The resolution lashed out at the transmission of unverified information and conjecture, citing the "false, inflammatory attribution of the Oklahoma Federal Building bombing to Middle-Eastern terrorists" as a case in point.

Some of the organization's sharpest criticism was reserved for television, which it accused of broadcasting "a deluge of crime and brutality in entertainment readily available to children" and of using "gratuitously sexual images."

Judith O. Rosenkranz of Tampa, Fla., president of the Women of Reform Judaism, noted that "media executives argue that there is no proven causative relationship between TV violence and anti-social behavior, they nevertheless try to convince their advertisers that TV ads do affect viewer behavior by boosting sales."

Rosenkranz was especially critical of "gangsta rap," which she described as "a particularly heinous form of rap music because of its racist, pornographic and brutal language and images."

In its resolution, WRJ urged families to use recently developed technology, such as the

"V-Chip" to supervise children's viewing habits and to "organize an advocacy campaign in the Sisterhood and congregation and join with community coalitions to convey their distress with entertainment media to the highest corporate levels and the community."

The policy declaration also called for an expansion of media efforts to develop industry-wide standards and announced support for "legislative and judicial measures regarding violence and pornography on TV and in other entertainment media viewed or heard by children." But it cautioned that such measures should not infringe on constitutional or human rights.

The resolution also urged all on-line systems to set standards or to provide parents with the means to limit their children's access to areas that the parents consider appropriate.



Chatting Over Latkes

Hershey Rosen (right), president of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, chats with participants at the Chanukah party held at the Jewish Family Service Kosher Mealsite in Cranston on Dec. 21.

Photo courtesy of Roberta Segal and Associates

Rabbi Lieber

(Continued from Page 1)

rah "is every bit as good as the Christian Scripture."

For example, Hertz wanted to prove that "an eye for an eye" sometimes cited by Christians to show a lack of mercy in Judaism — was never meant to be taken literally.

The chief rabbi was also trying to convince a younger, more educated generation of Jews that Torah was still relevant.

"The younger Jews in England," said Lieber, "felt the Bible represented an earlier age that was superseded by science."

This led to passages such as one explaining that each day of creation was not actually 24 hours.

"With Him, a thousand years, nay a thousand thousand ages, are but as a day that is past," Hertz wrote.

In addition, Lieber said, Hertz's remarks on a number of issues reflect the consciousness

of another age.

He comments, for example, on the biblical ban on homosexual sex by labeling the act "this unnatural vice" and one of the "unnatural abominations."

Hertz's views toward the laws of the "niddah," or menstruating woman, laws that prohibit husbands and wives from having sex during menstruation, include: "They have fostered racial sanity and well-being, and have proved as favorable to hygiene as to morals. The overwhelming majority of Jewish women still live, thank G-d, under the 'yoke' of these laws—to their own good and the biologic good of the Jewish people."

Lieber cautioned that the new commentary obviously will not alter the Torah. He added that he does not know yet how the rabbis and scholars will deal with the now-controversial verses regarding male homosexuality.

"We're not going to change the biblical text," he said. "But we'll try to reinterpret it in the light of what we know today."

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