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## URI Student Reflects on Visit With Elie Wiesel

by Amy Lefkowitz  
A few weeks ago, I received a telephone call from Ailene Gerhardt, URI Hillel's Jewish Campus Service Corps Fellow, asking me to write an article about Elie Wiesel's recent commencement speech at URI.

I was a bit shocked. Me? Write for the *Herald*? At the same time I was also excited and nervous about the prospect of covering this story. When I conveyed my thoughts to Ailene, she assured me that she would come with me to commencement and provide me with any additional help I would need, for which I am very grateful. With that reassurance, I immediately accepted the offer.

After I hung up the phone, I thought for a moment... Elie Wiesel. This is a man who has suffered so and yet has accomplished so much. He is from Sighet, Transylvania (Romania), but he and his family were deported by the Nazis when he was just 15 years old. His mother and younger sister died in the Auschwitz death camp, and later he and his father were transported to Buchenwald, another concentration camp. Amazingly, Elie survived the camps and after the war he moved to Paris where he later became a journalist.

Although encouraged by some people, Elie Wiesel was then reluctant to share his tragic experiences with many. However, the French writer François Mauriac persuaded him to end his silence. In 1958 Wiesel published *La Nuit (Night)*, a personal account of his trials as an

inmate in the Nazi death camps. Since that time, he has published more than 35 books which have won many awards, and he has become known worldwide as "the voice that has risen from the ashes of the Holocaust." In 1986, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, an award which he greatly deserved for all of his efforts as an author and a teacher, defending human rights and peace throughout the world. Today, Wiesel continues to educate, serving as Andrew Mellon Professor in the Humanities at Boston University.

As I thought about all that he has accomplished, I realized that writing this story would be an honor and an experience I would benefit from. After much anticipation, May 18 finally arrived. I left my house that morning, clutching all the important items I would need — most importantly, my press pass! I had jumbled thoughts running through my head. Would Ailene and I get to meet Dr. Wiesel? What words of wisdom would he offer the 2,012 URI graduates?

Luckily, when Ailene and I arrived at URI, we discovered that Dr. Wiesel would be holding a small press conference just before the graduation. Here was the grand opportunity to meet and converse with Elie Wiesel, an event that I never thought would be part of my life. Strategically Ailene and I sat down in the conference room so that we would be able to face Dr. Wiesel when he sat down at the head of the table. Quite unexpectedly, when he entered the room, he

sat down just to my left. As he was sitting next to me, I composed myself to ask questions. As we began to converse, I found myself feeling at ease.

Although the conference was short, I was able to ask Dr. Wiesel a question that was important to me: What advice does he have for the Jewish college students of today? His answer was immediate: "Continue with your education, especially with your Jewish education. This is how you will know your background, where you come from. I will tell any student that continuing to study, especially about your history, is of the utmost importance."

After a brief photo session, Ailene and I regained our composure and went out to where the graduation ceremony was beginning. As I thought back to just moments before, it was hard to believe that we had just been conversing with Elie Wiesel, a man who for so long has been such an integral part of our history, someone whom we have admired and respected and looked up to, as an educator and fellow Jew.

Just before Dr. Wiesel took



Amy Lefkowitz and Ailene Gerhardt meet with Elie Wiesel before the URI commencement ceremony. Photo courtesy of URI Hillel

the podium to address the graduates, he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters for his work to defend human rights and promote peace. Upon receiving this degree, Dr. Wiesel then spoke. With a bit of humor in his words, he borrowed a line from another speaker. "It is not your unpaid parking tickets," he told them, that was keeping them from receiving their diplomas, but rather what he had to say. Wiesel proceeded to talk to the crowd about subjects we have become all too familiar with: violence and hatred.

Wiesel said that he has worked hard all of his life to try to understand hatred, but that he still doesn't have any answers. All he knows is that once hatred exists, it is too late. "We must immunize you. We must immunize society against the danger, the peril of inhuman solutions to human problems," Wiesel warned.

He urged the graduates to guard against fanaticism or anyone who perpetrates violence, pointing out somberly that as they were celebrating their graduation, children elsewhere

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## Slogans, Ballots and Intrigue: Time for Another Zionist Congress

by Cynthia Mann  
NEW YORK (JTA) — "In one very important election concerning Israel, only Americans can vote," blares the blue-and-white form in bold black letters. "Send for your ballot today."

The race is on. All across the country, rabbis are calling on their congregants to vote in the upcoming election of representatives to the 33rd World Zionist Congress.

In New Bedford, Rabbi Moshe Ulmer sent out a mass mailing to congregants asking them to register to vote. Various Rhode Island synagogues have also informed their members about the upcoming elections.

But what's at stake depends on whom you talk to.

If the Zionist arms of the Reform and Conservative movements have their way, the Zionist Congress election will be a referendum on religious pluralism in Israel.

Whether they succeed, however, will depend on the strength of a recently mobilized opposition, including the American affiliate of Israel's Likud Party

and the Orthodox Zionist organizations.

They argue that religious pluralism has no place at the table of the congress of the World Zionist Organization. While some want to advance an agenda tied to the peace process, others want to see a more traditional focus on aliyah and Jewish identity.

The political intrigue surrounding the elections exploded in the wake of a recent unconfirmed Israeli newspaper report that Likud was seeking a secret deal to garner support from the non-Zionist Lubavitch movement in its efforts to prevent a Reform and Conservative landslide in the U.S. elections.

In the last election 10 years ago, the Reform and Conservative organizations came in second and third, edged out only by Hadassah, the women's Zionist organization of America, which has taken itself out of the running this year.

One hundred years ago, Theodor Herzl, Zionism's founder, convened the first Zionist Congress in Basel, Swit-

zerland. It was hailed as the first international parliament of the Jewish people. The State of Israel was only a dream and the hall was filled with memorable and passionate debate on Jewish destiny.

Today, with Israel a fait accompli, the task of rousing masses of Jews to participate in that debate is a daunting challenge.

Most American Jews have little understanding of the role or the workings of the WZO, and even if they do understand it, many believe it is irrelevant to contemporary Jewish life.

But that has not stymied the Reform movement's Association of Reform Zionists of America or the Conservative movement's Mercaz.

Both are using the elections as a battleground on which to wage their fight against the official Orthodox monopoly of religious life in the Jewish state.

These organizations say the election provides a chance to seat people in positions of power who will allocate more of world

(Continued on Page 15)



### Honoring the Fallen

Rhode Islanders observed Memorial Day with a long holiday weekend. Memorial services were held at cemeteries around the state.

Herald photo by Sara Wise

# HAPPENINGS

## Boston Celebrates Jerusalem Day

Boston's Jerusalem Day celebration, commemorating the anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem, will be held June 3 at 7:15 p.m. at the Boston Public Library in Copley Square. A presentation, Jerusalem Through Art, will be conducted by Dr. Shalom Sabar, professor of art history at Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Greetings will

be by Dan Kyras, consul general of Israel to New England, members of the clergy and Sons of Jerusalem by Issi Rozen Jazz Quartet.

The exhibition, "Postcards from Jerusalem," will be on display in the Boston Room, June 3 to 30. The event is free and open to the public. For information, call (617) 267-3600.

## Fighting AIDS, One Step At A Time

Be a part of the solution, and join your friends and neighbors to walk, jog, bike or wheel your way through the streets of Providence. The 10th annual Walk for Life takes place on June 1, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

The Walk for Life begins and ends at India Point Park, with registration and pre-walk festivities starting at 7:30 a.m. The 1997 Walk for Life honorary chairman, Mayor Vincent A. Cianci Jr., and event emcee, TV 12's Karen Adams, will be on hand to rally the anticipated 6,000 walkers who last year raised over \$260,000.

This year, special attention has been given to food which will be served throughout the day. Walkers will enjoy snacks along the route and a boxed lunch upon returning to the park for a post-walk celebration. All in atten-

dance will be treated to the celebration picnic, including the music of Hurricane and the Ellyn Fleming Band. Many local performers, including Providence's own dancing cop, Tony Lepore, will also be stationed along the decorated 10-kilometer route to entertain walkers. "We want everyone participating to enjoy themselves and the event," said Frank Pafume, walk coordinator.

Proceeds from the 1997 Walk for Life will benefit the client services, prevention, education and wellness efforts of Rhode Island Project/AIDS. For the second year, the project will also distribute a portion of the proceeds to other organizations on the front lines in the battle against HIV and AIDS.

To register, form a team or to volunteer, phone the Walkline at 831-5595.

## Get Together With The Jewish 49ers

On June 8, the Jewish 49ers will sponsor a Sunday Dessert Social at Temple Beth Avodah, Puddingstone Lane, Newton. Music will be provided by popular disc jockey, Lennie Souza. The hours will be from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Cost: \$5 for members, \$8 non-members. All beverages will be provided.

Call Jim at (508) 872-6533 or (508) 877-0636 for information.

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## Calendar of Events For May 30-June 7

30 Jewish War Veterans State Convention at the Cape Codder Hotel in Hyannis. Call (508) 993-7594.

URI Alumni Weekend May 30 to June 7. Call 874-2242 for a list of activities.

31 "The Soul of a People," a song recital in Yiddish with Cantor Ida Rae Cahana, 8 p.m., Temple Beth-El.

"Night Out in Newport," with Perspectives Young Adult group. Meet at the Pelham in Newport, 9:30 p.m. Call 863-9537.

Bristol Community College celebrates 30th commencement ceremony at 11 a.m. Call (508) 676-0334.

Sandy Dollar Soirée, dinner and auction to benefit Meadowbrook Waldorf School, at Easton's Beach Rotunda, Newport. Tickets \$35. Call 782-1312.

Women's Wilderness Weekend at W. Alton Jones Campus, W. Greenwich, May 31 to June 1. Fee is \$140, which covers classes, meals and lodging. Call 397-3304, ext. 6043.

Friends of the Blackstone River Race at 10 a.m. at River Island Park in Woonsocket. Call 762-0440 or 334-2153.

Classic Car Show at Ann & Hope parking lot, Cumberland, from 8 a.m. to noon. Call 722-1000, ext. 329.

Providence Black Rep. Co. presents "For Colored Girls Who have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf," at 8 p.m. and June 1, 4 p.m. Call 598-5422.

### June

1 MATIV presents June Fest at Chardonnay's Restaurant, Seekonk, Mass. \$15 per person. Call 273-6643.

Application deadline for Rhode Island College summer camp in the performing arts. Applicants must be 12 to 17 years old and currently in grades seven and 11. Call 456-6839.

Children's Museum of R.I. invites children and families to link themselves to the history of the museum, creating the longest paperchain ever, June 1 to June 15. Call 726-2591.

Pt. Judith, Galilee and the Great Salt Pond Harbour Tours, June 1 to 30, Saturday and Sunday, 1 to 3 p.m. Excursions aboard the "Southland." Call 783-2954.

Naturalization Workshop for New Americans applying for U.S. citizenship, noon to 4:30 p.m. at Jewish Community Center of Rhode Island. Call 331-1244.

Touro Congregation meeting, 10 a.m. at the Touro Community Center, Newport. Call 847-4794.

2 Rhode Island Hadassah installation, 7 p.m. Temple Emanu-El, Providence. Call 463-3636.

Contemporary Furniture Show, June 2 to June 29 at Oop!, 297 Thayer St. Call 455-0844.

Gigantic Book Giveaway at Cranston Public Library, 1 to 6 p.m. First come, first serve. Call 781-2450.

3 R.I. Philharmonic Youth Orchestra string auditions, June 3, 4, 16 at RIC in Roberts Hall, Room 138. Call 831-3123.

Alperin Schechter Day School annual picnic, 4 to 8 p.m. at Highridge Swim Club. Call for reservations, 751-2470.

"Swanhurst," designer showhouse and gardens, proceeds go to Women's Resource Center & Lucy's Hearth, local Newport organizations, June 3 to June 29. Call 841-9375.

Freshstart, series of five smoking cessation classes, 6 to 7 p.m. at the American Cancer Society, Pawtucket. Call (800) ACS-2345.

Friends of Rochambeau annual meeting at 7 p.m., Providence. Call 455-8110.

4 Yom Yerushalayim/Jerusalem Day. The date marks the 29th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem under Israeli rule which occurred in 1967. King David, 3,000 years ago, established Jerusalem as the eternal capital of Israel.

Cranston Senior Guild annual installation luncheon, noon at Venus di Milo, Swansea, Mass. Call 723-8580.

5 Fourth session of the Independent World Commission on the Oceans (IWCO) in Newport, June 5 to 9. 10 a.m., ceremony at Ochre Court at Salve Regina is open to public. Call 729-5600.

6 Vestry dedication for Cantor William Cransman, 8 p.m., United Brothers Synagogue, Bristol.

Doggone Storytelling Festival in Chester, Conn., June 6, 7 and 8 at the fairgrounds. Call (860) 526-4644.

South County, 100 years ago art exhibit at Annex Gallery, W. Kingston. Call 782-1018.

1st annual Newport Spring Optimist Challenge Regatta at N.Y. Yacht Club, 8:30 a.m., Newport. Call 848-5941.

7 UMass Dartmouth celebrates 97th commencement, June 7, 8, 9. Public is invited. Call (508) 999-8760.

Warren on Wheels Festival (WOW) 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Railroad Ave. in Warren. Free and open to the public. Call 437-2411.

South County Museum's annual Children's Festival, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., free admission. Call 783-5400.

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East Side Prescription Center, Hope St.  
Swan Liquors, Hope St.  
Rhoda's Judaica, Burlington St.

# THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

## Singer-Berk Starts as JCCRI Assistant Director

by Emily Torgan  
Jewish Community Reporter  
Jewish Community Center of Rhode Island Assistant Director Linda Singer-Berk began her fourth week on the job by sifting through a mound of legal pads and manila folders. "My first pile," she laughed on May 27.

Singer-Berk, who has worked in Jewish community service for 17 years, knows there are many piles ahead.

But she's not worried. "A lot of people go into this type of work because they want to give back," explained Singer-Berk, who resides in Sharon, Mass., with her husband, Alexander, and their three children. "It's more than just a job or even a career. There are rewards that you wouldn't get elsewhere."

Now 42, Singer-Berk's interest in the Jewish community began during her college years at the University of California in Los Angeles.

"I grew up in a very secular household," she said. "My parents, who are both German Holocaust survivors, are not very religious."

Then a somewhat unfocused sociology major, Singer-Berk joined an Israeli folk dancing group. Her involvement soon brought her to the campus Hillel, where her interest in the Jewish community blossomed.

"Hillel was a great experience for me," she said. "I got into the student leadership, and I led a student mission. I got close to the rabbis and professionals there."

A California native, Singer-Berk remained in Los Angeles after college and worked in social service.

Shortly thereafter, she obtained a joint master of arts degree in social work and Jewish community service from the Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion and the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

Singer-Berk's new qualifications helped her secure a position at the University of North Carolina's Hillel Foundation that developed her interest in Jewish institutions even further.

"Both religiously and culturally, Jewish organizations can really touch people," she said. "They affect a lot of lives."

Three years later, Singer-Berk moved to Baltimore where she worked for the Jewish Community Center of Greater Baltimore as the director of college services.

After relocating to Boston with her husband to serve as director of the Jewish Young Adult Center, Singer-Berk decided to remain in the area.

"We've been in the Boston area for 11 years," she said.

There, Singer-Berk and her husband, Alexander, an atmospheric scientist at Spectral Sciences Inc. in Burlington, Mass., joined the Conservative Temple Israel and raised their three children.

Pictures of their 4-year-old twins, Lila and Moriel, adorn her desk.

"No, they are not identical," said Singer-Berk, pointing out their different coloring and similar but distinct facial features.

There are also images of 3-year-old Adam wearing a huge grin and long curls.

"We had a hair cutting ceremony for him this weekend," said Singer-Berk. "It was supposed to be a picnic, but it rained. It was fun anyway."

Before replacing former Assistant Director Marvin Stark, Singer-Berk spent about four years as executive director of the Striar Jewish Community Center in Stoughton, Mass.

"JCCs have a place for people who are searching," she said. "Though synagogues provide a wonderful sense of community, a center is a place where anyone can come and test out their Jewishness as gingerly as they want to. They attract people who are very well-versed as well, so that people from very different backgrounds can come together. That's a unique and important role."

Although Singer-Berk's previous job was too time-consuming for her family's needs, she wanted to remain in a center environment.

According to Singer-Berk, she will need more time in her new position to determine exactly

where she will concentrate her energies.

Still, she is enthusiastic about the many possibilities she sees.

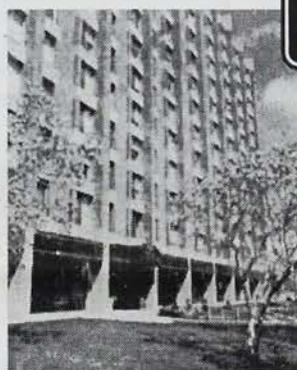
"This is a very good center and a strong, cohesive community," she said. "Still, it is growing older, and in some ways, it is not replacing itself. We have to grapple with that while continuing to provide quality services."

Singer-Berk hopes to strengthen the center's ties with other local institutions, and to look into developing resources that will serve Rhode Islanders beyond the Providence area.

"I also want to upgrade and modernize the building itself," she said. "I'm looking forward to working closely with the staff. I want to support [Executive Director] Vivian [Weisman], and I want to help her develop new leadership for this community."



Linda Singer-Berk  
Herald photo by Emily Torgan



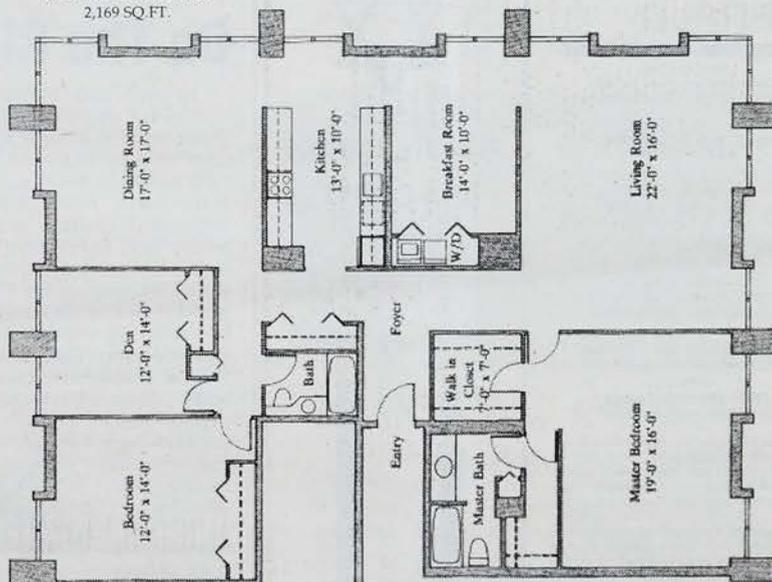
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## Perspectives Receives Funding For A Third Year

by Emily Torgan  
Jewish Community Reporter  
Perspectives, Rhode Island's Jewish young adult project, has secured funding for a third year, and its leaders, members and supporters are thrilled.

On May 1, the Continuity Commission of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, led by Maurice Glicksman, voted to allot the group a third yearlong grant that will take it through 1997-1998.

The sum, which JFRI Executive Director Steven Rakitt declined to disclose, was supplemented by the Jewish Community Center of Rhode Island for the first time.

"We're very excited about the program," said Rakitt on May 26. "Perspectives offers excellent programming that meets

the clear needs of the young adult Jewish population in our community."

JCCRI Executive Director Vivian Weisman also said Perspectives merited some financial support.

"We have always let Perspectives use our facilities and supported the group verbally," Weisman said. "We do not have a young adult worker, and we see a responsibility to that age group. Perspectives is helping to meet the recreational and social needs of many young adults, not just those involved with a synagogue or Hillel or the center. It really makes sense to do this on a community-wide basis, and the community needs to support the group."

(Continued on Page 15)

# OPINION

## Jewish Singles Blues

by Cary Eichenbaum

I am Ike the Jewish Gigolo. I have been single for a long time now — my entire life — and I envision myself being unmarried for 50 more lifetimes. While I admit there are probably a few people (like 1 or 2) older than I who have never been married (or never have a chance to be, any time in the near future, either), I cannot imagine anyone on this planet or anywhere else experiencing the frustrating and schizophrenic ordeals of the Jewish Singles Scene as much as myself and my loser (but undyingly faithful) friends. And we have lived to tell and write about it.

I have been to every Jewish Singles event imaginable in the last three years. I have been to Boston, Waltham, Stoneham, Wareham, Framingham, Worcester, the Catskills, N.Y., Providence, Sharon, Rome, Milan and Japan over that time.

I have been to every Jewish Singles event imaginable in the last three years.

I have been to the Concord Hotel Meat Market (which doubles as a singles escape weekend) where I have gotten close enough to touch alluring, wearing-next-to-nothing, eye-catching black jumpsuit seductresses and I have been to Young Israel of Brookline Singles Shabbatons (which double as a weekend at Yeshiva, but with women), where the only females

you are allowed to kiss and touch are the hosts' cats and the shul's mezzuzahs.

I have had a round number of dates — 0 — in 1997 and can only envision this number tripling or quadrupling as the year gets older.

I have danced with Russian girls, Italian girls, Canadian girls, French girls, Israeli girls, even girls with chicken pox. I have danced the Electric Slide, the Macarena, the YMCA, the Mombo, the Dabbo, and even a funky hip-hop danced called the "Cowfunk," which was taught to me at the Concord by a family of African-American women (at a Jewish hotel!).

I have spoken to women old enough to be my mother and girls young enough to be my daughter; I have gotten together with women with throaty Bette Davis voices, and in the next minute talked to a femme with a high-pitched, day-after-her-batmitzvah wheeze.

I have spoken to girls who look like they are going to dive after a fumble for the Patriots — and women who look like they haven't eaten in a week; I have met girls with sparkling brown eyes, flowing blond hair, bubbly personalities, thick glasses, big hearts, big hair, big brains, big hips and big derrieres. I have met girls who have never been married, women who have been married at least once (if not more). I have met widows and I have met women who are separated but still married to their husbands.

But most of all, I have met someone whom I don't particularly like at all at these singles events — myself, Ike the Jewish Gigolo. For Ike gets all nervous, his heart skips beats, his breathing gets irregular and he does not act like himself when he goes to all these singles events. And he sometimes makes a fool out of himself and ruins what might have been a promising evening, and future.

But first and foremost, I am here to dispel any rumors or questions about the singles adventures. I have met many beautiful and intelligent and sweet people since I started going to these events. Some of the women that I have met will be, by the grace of G-d, lifelong friends with whom I can share heartfelt memories and stories. As the great Jackie Robinson said: "A life is only important if it impacts another life," and these women (as well as some men I have met at these encounters) will affect my life until my dying day on this earth.

I also hope I haven't scared off too many perspective singles-event goers. For although some of my experiences might have been less than Utopian, they are my experiences; and everyone who goes out there will have different experiences.

I also hope that everyone realizes that, just because he or she has not met that special someone yet, that he or she is not very special indeed. The thing is to be decisive, get off your easy chair and get out there; be friendly and, above all, be yourself. Because all of G-d's creatures are special.

## Expand Summer Food Program

To the Editors:

George Wiley Center strongly urges the 25 cities and towns in Rhode Island who have not yet signed up to offer the summer meals program to heed Gov. Lincoln Almond's March 14 letter and apply to the State Department of Education so that the children of those 25 communities will have access to nutritious meals.

This summer, more than any other in recent memory, should see every city and town in Rhode Island offering the federal program of lunch and breakfast and snacks if the interest is there. Thousands of Rhode Islanders are threatened with total loss or partial loss of their food stamps. Currently only about a third of the R.I. communities offer the summer meals programs. This is a disgrace and a slap in the face to all R.I. children who will be hungry this summer. We challenge our government officials, our clergy, our business leaders and community organization leaders to commit themselves to working together to see that 39 R.I. cities and towns

all offer the summer feeding program.

The statewide initiative of the R.I. Food Bank and Alan Shawn Feinstein to lead Rhode Island to become the first hunger-free state in the nation would be weakened if the 25 R.I. cities and towns who are not yet signed up to offer the summer feeding program don't step forward and initiate the program.

Some of the cities that have not yet stepped forward to offer either summer feeding or the school-based breakfast program are Lincoln, North Providence, and Middletown, among others.

All taxpayers in Rhode Island pay for the federal summer food program, yet the children in 25 R.I. cities and towns do not benefit from the taxes of their parents and suffer nutritionally because of the inaction of the political leadership in those 25 communities.

Henry J. Shelton  
Wiley Coordinator for  
the Campaign to  
Eliminate Poverty Among  
Rhode Island Children

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If you have an opinion about something in the Jewish community, why not express your opinion in the Herald?

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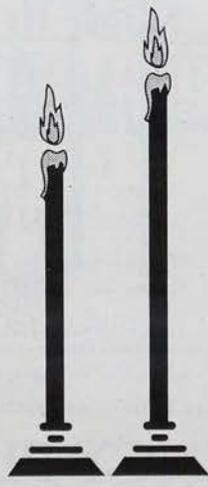
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### Candlelighting

May 30, 1997  
7:55 p.m.



Notice: The opinions presented on this page do not necessarily represent the opinions of this establishment.

## Do The Right Thing — Or Else

by Rabbi Janet Marder

Even the toughest pieces of Torah can be rewarding if you chew on them long enough to suck out some meaning. Sink your teeth into *Parashat Bechukotai*, for instance, and it's hardly "love at first bite." We encounter a theology that many would find unpalatable. We're presented with a G-d who operates according to principles of logic and justice: Those who follow the mitzvot are rewarded with blessings, while those who depart from the law are cursed with terrible punishments.

"If you... faithfully observe My commandments," G-d says, "I will grant your rains in their season.... I will grant peace in the land.... I will make you fertile and... I will be ever present in your midst." (Lev. 26:3-12) But "If you reject My laws and spurn My rules... will wreak misery upon you." (Lev. 26:15-16) This threat is elaborated in a vivid catalogue of misfortunes: disease, famine, war, conquest by foreigners, exile, and utter desolation of the land.

In a visceral sort of way, most of us believe in this reward and punishment theology. We wouldn't worry about "why bad things happen to good people" if we didn't, on some level, expect the universe to be fair. But the promises set forth in our portion can also make us angry, for again and again our expectations of fairness are thwarted by real-life experiences.

Some commentators have argued that this theology of reward and punishment ap-

plied the Holocaust on Reform and secular Jews who "abandoned G-d's laws."

So what meaning can we extract from chewing on this portion, with its promise that G-d blesses those who follow the mitzvot and curses those who turn away from Torah? Maybe it's as simple as this: The mitzvot teach us to recognize and appreciate life's blessings, cultivating in us an attitude of sensitivity and gratitude.

Jews who structure their lives around mitzvot — who pause to sanctify the act of waking up, of eating, of putting on new clothes, of seeing a rainbow or a great scholar — Jews like this learn to perceive life as a wondrous gift. To separate oneself from Torah and mitzvot is to do without these constant reminders of life's beauty and meaning and purpose. Perhaps our portion is right after all: The mitzvot are indeed a pathway to blessing.

Rabbi Janet Marder is the regional director of the UAHC Pacific Southwest Council.





## Who Can Make A Tree?

by Mike Fink  
Herald Contributing Reporter

Judith Schrier put together a charming program booklet featuring trees and daffodils, to announce Arbor Day at the Rochambeau Library. The Arbor Day Committee created the ceremony on the date of the planting of two linden trees on the lawn beside the benches that surround the portals of the east side branch of the downtown public institution. Margaret Brookner prepared the soil with the enthusiastic help of custodian Curtis Bradley. Carole Olshansky took charge of refreshments, which

included cookies in the shape and color of leaves, and cider and apple juice, to suit the various gifts of trees in symbol and fact.

The event included poetry recitations, mandolin music, costumes and speeches. Amy House read a lyric by Langston Hughes, and Jeffrey Dujardin had memorized passages on the special status of apple trees. Paul Klinkman strummed songs about the blessings of trees. Program chairwoman Jeanne Sjovall wore garlands of wisteria. It was a great day!



Judith Schrier

Herald photo by Mike Fink

## Midrasha, Oz, Iyar, 5797

by Mike Fink  
Herald Contributing Reporter

The class of 5757 of the Harry Elkin Midrasha Community High School took place on May 18 at Temple Am David in Warwick. A little busload of chorus



Esther Elkin

Herald photo by Mike Fink

Robin Damsky reported on the achievements and aims of each graduate of the class of 18—a mystical number. The diplomas were handed by Selma Stanzler. Rabbi Nechama Goldberg led shehechyanu.

Jay Brenner won the Rabbi and Mrs. Israel S. Rubinstein Memorial Award for excellence in Contemporary Jewish Studies. Samantha Witman earned the Harry Elkin Award for commitment to the state of Israel. Benjamin Olinky accepted the Al and Tina Simons Award for achievement in rabbinics. Lily Fink took home the Eliezer Ben Yehuda Award for studying Hebrew, "necessary for the rebirth of the nation." And, of course, Ari Alexander was named Resnik Scholar "for participation in school, synagogue and communal activities."

Cover art, a lively and stylish logo of the Midrasha mission, an eye, a star, and a lifeline, was created by Matthew Peiser, whose dad, Dr. Steve, went round with his camera snapping portraits of families sharing a cheerful picnic of salads and bagels, symbols of continuity.

Kind words and gestures wove a Maytime garland. Esther Elkin stood for a round of grateful applause, and then headed for London to study the gardens of Britain—a vacation gift from her Israeli daughter Abby. Happy voyagers to one and all.

## Hear Ye!

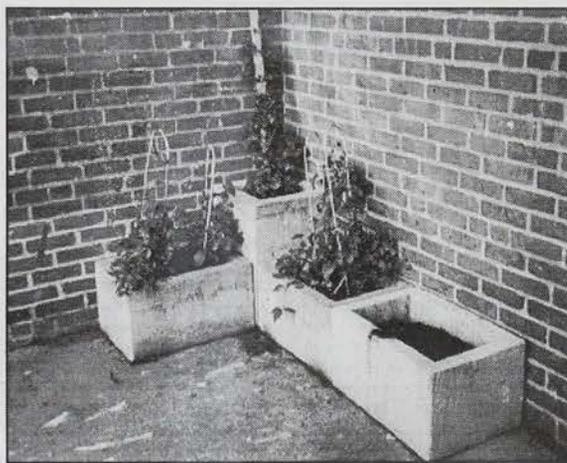
by Mike Fink  
Herald Contributing Reporter  
"I move that, upon satisfactory completion of all departmental and college requirements, the students noted on the graduation list will be eligible to receive their degrees." They need me at Rhode Island School of Design. The diplomas won't be handed out without my fancy statement at the final faculty meeting. The first flourish of pomp and splendor has fallen to me each spring-time.

I started out as the youngest teacher on staff. Now I'm the reigning elder in length of service. The maroon and grey have become my mascot colors. The landscape of fire escapes, secret passageways and alleys, narrow stairways and labyrinthine bridges that twist among the buildings tells the story of my schoolday routines. This season our campus is changing.

A couple of seniors working with the buildings and grounds folks from physical plant have installed some solid concrete planters with perennial vines on the cement landings above the parking lot. I recommended just such a project years ago, and wrote letters to administrators and to college newsletters about it. It just happened on its own this month. And then, the river project, which I tried to create as a one-professor gesture a generation ago, has come to pass on a far grander scale than I could have imagined. All I did was put in a canoe and a silly rubber life-raft down the circular opening into the hidden sewer, like a phantom in Paris, climb down the ladder with some students, paddle about, and snap some shots of the perspective you get. I had no idea the whole college would get into the act.

I guess by now Rhode Island School of Design and I fit each other. But commencements and graduations are like family gatherings, especially Rhode Island weddings. Anything can happen and often does. It's seldom smooth sailing in open water.

I can't write of courses and programs like a dean, up-beat and inspiring. You lose your way in a classroom, and meander down a different path from the one you thought was yours to choose. I figured I'd go to law school and fight for justice. The Sorbonne lured me instead into the charms of French culture. Yale yanked me back to English poetry. I went to Harvard to study education as an art form—partly because it was a one-year program that paid for itself and offered instant work and pay. When I taught a writing and reading seminar at Rhode Island School of Design I worked for a master's degree uphill be-



A campus in concrete.

Herald photo by Mike Fink

yond the Van Wickle gates. I now get gorgeous alumni magazines from the fanciest universities in the world, but actually I blundered and bumped about like a trapped bird among the noble towers of learning. My best student days really were the boyhood days among the Providence

I judge a classroom in part by its architecture or its landscape. Brown has copper beeches, superb forsythia, charming stone benches, romantic turrets. Your feelings get hurt by curt comments or blunt grades. Stone and marble comfort you for hard words.

When you hear the dignified strains of the marching band, watch the parade of proud seniors with their tassels and their gaudy shawls and collars, and snap the glimpses of grins and shining eyes, remember the secrets held back, the fears and hopes, the stepping stones leading somehow by accident or design through the private woodland of youth.

I'm glad it's up to me to make the motion to confer the fine arts honors upon the brilliant young men and women of Rhode Island School of Design. I have watched them grope among the lonely studio stalls and spaces. I was born to stand up and read that proclamation.

## I guess by now Rhode Island School of Design and I fit each other.

public schools! I was at my best in spelling and reciting.

Emerson said, the years know something that the days miss. My legacy has helped my daughters with their college applications. Within the computer at least, I am an honorable graduate. Only I alone recall the troubles I knew among my teachers. I passed. I moved along. One thing led to another.

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# THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

## Gil Mann Asks 'Why Be Jewish?'

by Sara Wise  
Herald Editor

What could be more Jewish than a crowd of more than 200 people gathering to hear the complaints and arguments of other Jews?

Author Gil Mann, the featured speaker at the Rabbi Bernard H. and Minna Ziskind Memorial Lecture at Tefereth Israel Synagogue in New Bedford, told stories, drew diagrams, and challenged the audience members to come up with their own definition of Judaism in his presentation, "Five Complaints Jews Have About Judaism and What Can Be Done About Them."

Mann's comments were based on the findings published in his recent book, *How to Get More Out of Being Jewish Even if You're Not Sure You Believe in G-d, You Think Going to Synagogue is a Waste of Time, You Think Keeping Kosher is Stupid, You Hated Hebrew School, or All of the Above!*

Although the awkward title sounds like a Jewish comedy schtick, the subject matter is

quite serious. Bothered by the overwhelming defections of Jews from mainstream Judaism, Mann set out to learn why interest in Judaism is flagging. Using a standard market research approach, Mann traveled around the country and conducted focus groups with Jews to find out straight from the consumer what was wrong with the product.

In his presentation, Mann shared with the audience his six conclusions based on the five major complaints he discovered and then provided a few prescriptions for how to fix them.

One of his most powerful conclusions was that the average Jew could not define Judaism. When he asked people what Judaism is, he received various responses: "a faith," "a culture," "a religion," "a nationality," "an identity," "a kind of food," "a race" (a widely held misconception which he said our enemies love; "If we were a race, how could you convert to Judaism? You can't convert to be Caucasian, or convert to being black")

Mann offered his own definition of Judaism as "an all-en-

compassing way of life that consists of three things: ethics, spirituality and peoplehood."

He arranged these three components into three intersecting circles. "People have a problem because you can live your life Jewishly in one circle without ever touching the other two. Most Jews live in the "peoplehood" circle. Even the most unaffiliated Jew finds himself there when an anti-Semitic remark is made, it's an affront against 'my people.'" Mann noted that the UJA capitalizes well on the notion of living within the peoplehood circle by pointing out Jewish people in peril in Russia and Ethiopia.

Other complaints had to do with spirituality. Mann found that many people had troubles with Judaism because they were not sure they believed in G-d. He called this misconception the "Christianization of Judaism," because in Christianity, a belief in Christ is essential to being a Christian. He assured the audience that it is in fact very Jewish to wrestle with your questions and doubts about G-d. "Don't worry, those questions are kosher," said Mann.

Mann also criticized the way we access our spirituality. He said that we "spend too much time teaching our children how to be Jewish, and not enough time teaching them why to be Jewish." This is a major reason for what he called "bar mitzvah dropout," the trend for Jews to show an interest in Judaism only up until their bar mitzvah. To reverse this trend, he suggested that we spend more time with adults and show them how Judaism is relevant to the things they grapple with like medical issues and business dilemmas.

He also suggested including parents in their children's Jewish education and reshaping that education to take the focus off rote Hebrew study and concentrate more on the untranslatable meanings behind many of the words. "You could really go in depth and study a concept like *tzedakah* or *tikkun olam*," said Mann.

Most importantly, we each need to have a valid answer to the question "Why be Jewish?" "Most people can't articulate a good answer to why they're proud to be Jewish, but each person needs to have an answer to rise to the crisis, and it's fun learning to formulate those answers," said Mann.

## Happy Jerusalem Day

June 4 Marks the 29th Anniversary of the Reunification of Jerusalem Under Israeli Rule.

A Prayer in Honor of Yom Yerushalayim —  
The Reunification of Jerusalem

The late afternoon sun casts its glint over the stone of Jerusalem.

The City of Peace has become golden once more.

The cry of the muezzin echoes in the distance. Church bells tinkle softly.

At the Kotel, voices in prayer transcend time and history.

Jerusalem! Sacred to three faiths, but utterly unique to us, to the Jewish people.

Here, 3,000 years ago, David, King of Israel, established his capital. Here, Solomon built a Temple to the Lord.

Here, Isaiah declared: "The Torah will come forth from Zion and the word of G-d from Jerusalem."

Here, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, Persians, Byzantines, Moslems, Crusaders, Ottomans and British all triumphed.

But only the Jewish people remained in Jerusalem, always keeping it in mind and soul.

Wherever we went, Jerusalem followed us. Our synagogues faced Jerusalem. Under the wedding canopy, we remembered Jerusalem.

At the end of the seder and at the end of Yom Kippur, we hoped: "Next year in Jerusalem."

In June 1967, on the 28th day of Iyar, 5727, divided Jerusalem became one again. As the barbed wire and barriers disappeared, wholeness returned to Jerusalem.

How can we ever forget that image of hardened soldiers weeping unrestrained at the Kotel?

This year, as we mark Yom Yerushalayim, we celebrate the ongoing renewal and vitality of Jerusalem.

We welcome all those from the four corners of the globe who are finding in Jerusalem a refuge from oppression and hate.

As friends of Jerusalem, we recommit ourselves to work for its progress and well being.

Now, more than ever, may Jerusalem, the City of Peace, become the model for living in mutual harmony and respect.

At the Kotel, it is getting darker, the shadows lengthen, and colors deepen. Our tradition put it well: "There is no beauty like the beauty of Jerusalem."

On Yom Yerushalayim and always, let ours be the privilege of rejoicing with Jerusalem at peace.

Prepared by the United Jewish Appeal Rabbinic Cabinet



LECTURE SPONSORS Shulamith and Sheldon Friedland congratulate author Gil Mann after the Rabbi Bernard H. and Minna Ziskind Memorial lecture. From left: Gil Mann, Shulamith and Sheldon Friedland.

Herald photo by Sara Wise

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## Agudas Achim Welcomes Prospective Members

A special service to welcome prospective members will be held at 7:30 p.m. on June 6, at Congregation Agudas Achim, 901 N. Main St., Attleboro. The synagogue, located just off Route 95 on the Attleboro/North Attleboro line, is home to the area's only Reconstructionist Congregation. The Jewish Reconstructionist Movement is rapidly growing in America, combining contemporary val-

ues with a respect for the Jewish tradition.

Congregation Agudas Achim holds weekly Friday night and Saturday morning services, and provides religious school for children in kindergarten through seventh grades. Pre-school and teen programs are also held at the synagogue.

Founded in 1911, Agudas Achim includes families and individuals of diverse backgrounds and levels of observance. The congregation welcomes families with young children, unaffiliated Jews, and interfaith couples. The synagogue building is wheelchair accessible.

All are welcome to attend the service for prospective members on June 6. For further information about congregation Agudas Achim or the service, contact the synagogue office at (508) 222-2243.

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# THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

## Temple Torat Yisrael Hosts Annual Meeting

by Harold Winthrop and Edmund Beck

Lieutenant Gov. Bernard Jackvony and Philip West were guests speakers at the recent Men's Club program held May 18. Their presentation was well received. West enlightened us about

the outrageous spending of federal and state candidates running for office. He collected signatures on his petition to correct the situation.

Adie Luber, former director of D.E.A., introduced the lieutenant governor. He discussed

his experience as presiding president of the state legislated senate. He commended Gov. Lincoln Almond for success in accumulating a surplus in the budget. He complimented Almond for bringing new enterprises into the state of Rhode Island.



From left, Edmund Beck, Frank Prosnitz, David Klatzner, Philip West, Lt. Gov. Bernard Jackvony, and Adie Luber.

Photo by Harold Winthrop

## The Art of Marriage on Display in New York

A riveting exhibition of 240 decorated ketubbot, Jewish marital contracts, from the 17th to 20th centuries will be on display at the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary from May 15 through Labor Day.

The exhibition, "Courtship and Contract: Decorated Ketubbot From Europe and the Orient," is an impressive assemblage of some of the world's most glorious marital contracts, culled from the Zucker Family Collection of Oriental and European ketubbot.

The manuscripts in the Zucker Family Collection emanate from a variety of communities worldwide. Among the highlights are examples from the Meshed community of Persia, written in Persian and richly illuminated; a gold-leafed contract dated 1881 from Bombay; a ketubbah from Calcutta, 1858, with a floral border filled with exotic birds and animals.

Also included in the exhibition is a large selection of docu-

ments from Ancona, Italy, a prolific center of ketubbah production. The majority of these follow the archetypal Ancona format, with arched tops, floral borders, birds and wreaths. Impressive borders from other Italian towns are exemplified by a contract from Mondovi, 1884, with its delicate micrography, and a ketubbah from Rome, 1771, which bears a coat of arms and biblical scenes inspired by the bridal couples' names.

"Courtship and Contract" is curated by Sharon Lieberman Mintz and Elka Deitsch with Dr. Shalom Sabar, a visiting professor at the seminary and the world's leading expert in ketubbot.

The Jewish Theological Seminary is located on Broadway and 122nd Street on Manhattan's Upper West Side. The hours of the exhibition are Sunday, 9:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Fridays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For information, call the library at (212) 678-8975.

## Brown University Students Share Interfaith Leadership Award

Jennifer Sherling, '97 and Erica Kimberly Taylor, '97, co-founders and coordinators of Ujammah-Yachad, a Jewish and African-American dialogue group, will share this year's Gladys and Sherwin Kapstein Foundation Interfaith Leadership Award. The Interfaith Leadership Award is presented by the chaplains' office, in honor of Charles Baldwin, university chaplain, emeritus, to a graduating senior who has made a significant contribution to inter-religious community building and programming.

Ujammah-Yachad (the words mean "together," in Swahili and

Hebrew respectively) grew out of Sherling's and Taylor's desire to work on alliances across differences. Sherling, who is active in the Jewish community, and Taylor, who is both active in the African-American community and a practicing Christian, decided to turn their efforts toward dialogue, bridge building and mutual understanding between Jewish and African-American students at Brown University. A highlight of the group's life was a four-day trip to Washington, D.C., in October of 1995, during which students visited museums, attended worship services in both traditions and met with Jewish

and African-American leaders and scholars.

According to students' testimonies, even more important were the many hours of informal conversations during the weekend. Sherling and Taylor also presented a workshop at the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education, as well as organized numerous programs on campus, including a jointly written Passover seder for freedom and a Group Independent Study Project on Black-Jewish relations.

The award was presented at the baccalaureate brunch during commencement weekend.

## Board Installation at Temple Shalom

The 36th annual meeting of the Congregation of Temple Shalom, the Conservative Congregation of Newport County, recently took place. Rabbi Marc S. Jagolinzer, spiritual leader for the past 22 years, delivered his

annual State of the Congregation address.

The installation of the new board members will take place on June 10 at 7 p.m. A wine and cheese reception will be followed by a Shavuot Festival Service during which Rabbi Jagolinzer will install the newly elected officials and an Oneg Yom Tov will conclude the evening, graciously sponsored by Joseph and Karen Dannin. All are welcome to attend.

## Sharansky to Take on Deep Blue

by Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Natan Sharansky is going to try his luck next month against Deep Blue, the IBM computer that defeated world chess champion Gary Kasparov, in a six-game match earlier this month.

After Sharansky, Israel's trade and industry minister, expressed interest in taking on the supercomputer, IBM invited him to play during an official business trip to the United States slated for next month.

Though no grandmaster, Sharansky perfected his chess game during the nine years he spent in a Soviet jail as a political dissident before coming to Israel in 1986. Last year, Sharansky won a game against Kasparov, who was playing 25 games simultaneously at the time.

For his part, Kasparov, who is currently in Israel to inaugurate the opening of a new chess center, said he wanted to take the computer on again.

## Jewish War Veterans Host 52nd Convention

The Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A., department of Rhode Island, will hold its 52nd annual department convention, June 8, at 9 a.m. at Temple Am David, 40 Gardiner St., Warwick. Breakfast will be served.

Memorial services for our departed comrades will be held at 11 a.m. All members are invited.

## Touro Fraternal Assn. Installs Officers

Touro Fraternal Association, the east's largest independent Jewish fraternal order, launched its 80th year on May 28 with its annual installation of officers and board members.

The installation ceremonies were held during the association's annual dinner meeting at its headquarters at 45 Rolfe Square. The installing officer was Dr. Burton Fischman, master of ceremonies was Morton Coken. Both are past presidents of the association.

One-third of the association's board of directors were installed for three-year terms which expire in the year 2000. They are Andrew Lamchick of West Warwick; Nathan Lury, Robert Miller and Bruce Weisman of Warwick; and Peter Traugott and Irving Wolpert of Providence.

Lodge officers installed for

one year were:

Harmony Lodge — Alan Lury, Pawtucket, president; Dr. Aaron Sherman, Warwick, vice president; Richard Glucksman, Cranston, secretary; and Peter Hodosh, also of Cranston, treasurer.

Friendship Lodge — Stevan Labush, Warwick, president; Andrew Gilstein, Warwick, vice president; Jeffrey Goldberg, West Warwick, secretary, and David Fleser, Warwick, treasurer.

On June 4 the association's board of directors will hold its annual organizational meeting to elect its leadership.

Since its founding in 1918, the association (not affiliated with Touro synagogue) has built an enviable reputation for service to its members, course, and equally important, to the community at large.

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# THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

## B'nai Mitzvah Students Become Friends and Family

by Tara V. Lisciandro  
Herald Editor

It all began with a crash course in Hebrew three years ago. Forty-eight curious members of Temple Am David in Warwick gathered together to learn from Rabbi Nechama Goldberg. The class ran for six weeks and all 48 adult students learned to read Hebrew successfully. Rabbi Goldberg's class was a great success, and so was she. Congregation members admired her immediately. Her teaching methods and materials were of great interest to the congregation. Rabbi Goldberg then offered a Jewish studies course at her temple. The course could be taken by any member, but for those who were serious enough, the course would open doors to an enlightening challenge. Six enthusiastic adults (out of the original 48) quickly formed a unique two-year study group, their goal being a bar/bat mitzvah.

Seated in a close-knit circle, each member shared their unforgettable experience of the course that has reshaped their lives. The course was more than just a preparation for the b'nai mitzvah, which will take place June 21. The study group involved a series of classes on Jewish movies, literature and cooking as well as holidays. "It was a fun series," said Alice Goldstein, a teacher and member of the study group. Goldstein was first convinced seven years ago by a cantor to recite a haftarah, "gradually I learned how to lead services." As Adult Education chairwoman for the congregation, Goldstein taught many of

the classes for her fellow companions. "I always learn a great deal when I teach," stated Goldstein.

Each member came from a different Judaic background. Some had been brought up Orthodox, others, Conservative. But no one had previously given their Judaic faith any serious concern. "I was looking for a place to feel comfortable," said Jane Levenison, a new mom, "the rabbi has been so supportive and great." As Levenison took on the responsibilities of being a mother she also took on a teaching role. Rabbi Goldberg gave audio-cassettes of the service to her faithful students. Levenison noticed one day that her 9-month-old baby boy, Zack, was very attentive to the rabbi's voice and began to sing along with her on the tape!

"My wife dragged me to an Orthodox synagogue, I didn't understand anything there. So we went to a Reform synagogue and I understood something. Then we came here and I fell in love with the rabbi," said Bob Hodosh, with a little chuckle. Slowly he began to read Hebrew and understand it. "There's so much to learn. I'm very impressed with myself," stated Hodosh proudly. Hodosh, the only male in the group, had the support not only of his fellow companions and Rabbi Goldberg, but his wife also aided him throughout the course.

All of the study group members found a new home at Temple Am David, and they found a new, extended family as well. "This is my life, my

second home. I leave my glasses here, my shoes, everything, here," said Bayla Sklaroff. Currently Sklaroff is changing her name legally to Bayla, Hebrew for Beverly. Sklaroff has been called the "puppy" of the group, as she is known to have followed the rabbi faithfully, con-

attended every course offered. "I joined and it was the best thing I ever did," said Bojar with an adorable smile. Bojar grew up at a Reform temple and never learned Hebrew. "My mother lived her religion," said Bojar. And now she follows in her mother's footsteps, years later.

teach everyone," said Sklaroff. Rabbi Goldberg is originally from New York and attended The Jewish Theological Seminar in New York. Only four years ago she became a rabbi.

Rabbi Goldberg was very impressed with the results of her course. "I am so proud of



THE B'NAI MITZVAH CLASS of Temple Am David. From left, Fanny Bojar, Jane Levenison, Alice Goldstein, Bob Hodosh, Bayla Sklaroff, Toby Horowitz and Rabbi Nechama Goldberg.

Herald photo by Tara V. Lisciandro

stantly asking questions and dwelling on answers. "When I saw the rabbi I thought, if a woman can do this, so could I." Her sweet eyes clearly expressed the group's impact on her life, and her gentle smile was worn with pride as she sat in the company of her dear friends.

Toby Horowitz spoke with certainty, "This was something I always wanted to do." She grew up in an Orthodox family and therefore didn't study. It was only when her own children began to study Hebrew that her own curiosity grew stronger. "The learning was great," she stated. "The best part during the course was the dialogue. They've tried to do things like this here before but never followed through with them like Rabbi Goldberg." Horowitz has been active with the temple for years, holding many positions to assist the congregation.

After hearing Rabbi Goldberg sing the Kaddish, Fanny Bojar

is a dedicated and excited student, who's expectations never stretched this far. "The more I got into it the more I wanted to know," stated Bojar. "Everyone had such enthusiasm teaching the course. It's been one of the most memorable periods of my life, maybe the most memorable."

The six dedicated adults are almost ready for their well-merited and special celebration. They spoke with excitement and a bit of nervousness, well, a lot of nervousness. "We care, that's why we're nervous," stated Goldstein. But they spoke as a family, a group of friends that have known each other for years. Their child-like nervousness could be easily tamed from the words of one another. Their closeness was one to be admired. Every member was thankful to Rabbi Goldberg who has taught and supported them 100 percent. "No one else has inspired us like her. She finds ways to

them," said Rabbi Goldberg, "You have to hear them sing on Friday night, there is so much warmth. This is every rabbi's dream. You don't have to twist arms. They wanted to do this. I'm the enabler, they pushed themselves. This is going to be the best bar/bat mitzvah of the year."

Beautiful Hebrew letters in gold decorate the noble invitations to the b'nai mitzvah celebration in June. Rabbi Goldberg created the invitations for her students, she also coordinated a luncheon, "with a big chocolate cake," exclaimed Bojar, for afterwards. Three hundred invitations were sent out to family and friends of the faithful study group and most are planning to attend.

But not every story has a happy ending. After the b'nai mitzvah, Rabbi Goldberg will be leaving Temple Am David. "It's almost like a good book you hate to see end," said Bojar. All of Rabbi Goldberg's devoted students spoke fondly of her. They will feel the loss of her presence and Rabbi Goldberg will feel the same. "I just wanted to open the door," said Rabbi Goldberg, "I have the image of the Pied Piper. Judaism is the beautiful melody that I get to play, it turns people on and they follow. They just keep singing."

The study group members hope to carry on the inspiring lessons that Rabbi Goldberg has left them with. They have ideas and plans of their own that they would like to implement. But they would also like to continue their studies and increase their knowledge. As Sklaroff said, "I look at this as my stepping stone."



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# THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

## Bristol Synagogue Dedicates Vestry to Innovative Cantor

*A Tiny Temple With Deep Ecumenical Roots Thrives Under Unique Leadership*

by Sara Wise  
Herald Editor

The United Brothers Synagogue sits quietly nestled between prim colonial residences on historic High Street in downtown Bristol. A large wooden Mogen David in the second floor window is the only indication that the gray shingled building is any different from the rest of the houses on the street. The second oldest Rhode Island temple after Touro, the United Brothers Synagogue has a long ecumenical history of religious flexibility and tolerance. Visitors immediately feel the warmth and charm of the intimate haven that has welcomed guests of different faiths to experience its unique services.

The precious synagogue has been kept alive largely through the dedication of Dr. William Crausman, an ordained cantor who has volunteered his services for the past 23 years.

*"Bristol has always had an ecumenical spirit and has welcomed the Jewish synagogue in its midst."*

*Cantor William Crausman*

In a fitting tribute to a man who has helped transform both the synagogue itself and its service, the congregation will honor Crausman by dedicating its main vestry to him during the Friday night service on June 6. He will be presented with a bronze plaque that will hang on the historic wall of the vestry.

In keeping with its rich ecumenical tradition, the synagogue's own choir will be joined by Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Choir under the direction of Raymond Buttero, a music professor at URI who had served as the synagogue's volunteer organist and choir director for the past 15 years. Buttero has taught the church choir parts of the Jewish service which they will sing at the dedication service.

Crausman played an important role in reviving the unused synagogue in 1975, and also in developing a service that appeals to a wide audience. He has never accepted any pay for his work. "I always felt I got more from being the cantor than I could ever give back. I feel that G-d has been very good to me. I felt I had a gift that was going to be wasted until I found out about the efforts to revive the synagogue in Bristol."

### A Synagogue Reborn

In 1975, Al Brody, a relative newcomer to Bristol, spearheaded an effort to restore the dilapidated synagogue that had been dormant since the 1960s. "The place was falling apart, it was in total disrepair, barren inside; it brought tears to my eyes," said Crausman who, with a handful of families, helped refurbish the temple, obtained

historical status and volunteered to conduct services "as long as they need me." Youngsters from the Barrington Jewish Center and a local Girl Scout troop, many of whom were not Jewish, spent months plastering, painting, floor sanding and putting windows. Brody describes the work as a labor of love. "We all worked very hard to get that synagogue back together."

After six months of hard work, during which time the scrolls were rechecked, new coverings were donated, and the original religious ornaments were tracked down, the synagogue finally opened its doors for business again.

Twenty-three years later, Crausman is still conducting services in Bristol on the first Friday night of each month. "We wanted to have something people would remember. If a holiday falls close to the first Friday, we celebrate it on that night. By having services the first Friday, no matter where people go or how long they've been away, they always know when we'll be there." The only exception is for the High Holy Days which are observed on their actual date.

Brody credits Crausman with keeping the synagogue going. "It was always a labor of love; Bill has done a fantastic job, without him, we would have no congregation. G-d's got to look down on that place and be hysterical with the cast of characters we have there!"

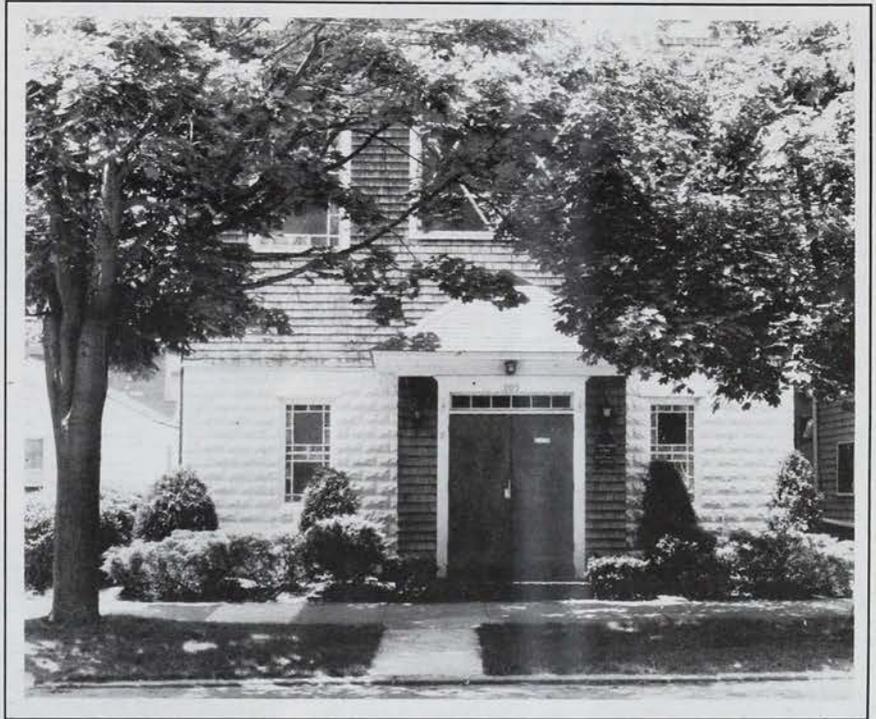
Since the rededication in 1975, membership has grown and includes many out-of-staters from as far away as New York and Florida. One out-of-towner said, "I was just traveling through, attended a service and was spoiled forever, I have never been so moved by a synagogue service." Many other members feel that way too; some live in Providence, Warwick, and other towns in Rhode Island and quite a few classify themselves as "non-synagogue" types, but find the Bristol synagogue to be an exception.

Crausman says it's the service that makes people want to join. "They're taken in by the warmth, the ambiance, the music. Some just want to be part of a historic synagogue so they sign up and come a few times a year, we've become inter-state now."

Harriet Priest, who lives in Providence and has been a member of United Brothers Synagogue for nearly three years, said that Crausman leads an impressive service. "He does a great job making the service interesting; the music is wonderful and it's not a stiff type of service, he jokes a little here and there. At Purim he passed out song sheets that brought back memories of Hebrew school."

Priest says that the other members also make it worth the trip. "You feel very comfortable there, you're not just a number like at some other synagogues. It's a very warm place."

Crausman, who gave up being a professional cantor to be both a doctor and a lawyer, said sarcastically, "Being a cantor was



THE UNITED BROTHERS Synagogue in Bristol.

Photo courtesy of RI Jewish Historical Association

no profession for a nice Jewish boy. I now enjoy the best of both worlds. I have no executive board to jump to, and no rabbi to look over my shoulder. I can use the gift that G-d gave me to innovate with complete freedom."

One example of that innovation was bringing an orchestra into the synagogue. When other temples were debating the role of instrumentation in the synagogue service, Crausman organized a full orchestra in 1982 to conduct what he called "a landmark service reminiscent of the early temple in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago." The service was videotaped and shown on a local television station.

Jewish families as an outgrowth of the Young Men's Hebrew Association that had existed as early as 1895. Services were held in people's homes until the present building was erected in 1916.

During the early part of the century, it provided for the spiritual needs of a relatively large Jewish community, many of whom had come to the area to work in the local rubber plant.

The congregation never had a rabbi. Early congregants led their own services and arranged for a seminarian to officiate on the High Holy Days.

Before the current building was erected, Dr. George Lyman

By the early 1950s, many of the Jews had moved away and the synagogue closed its doors. The scrolls, candelabras and other religious items were distributed to former members for safekeeping and the little building remained in disrepair for over two decades until it was rededicated in 1975.

"This synagogue has always been at the cutting edge of interfaith brotherhood," said Crausman, citing the donated pews, lecterns, and the Christian Hebrew school teacher as early evidence. A electronic pipe organ was later donated by a church in Jamestown.

Even the walls offer messages of peaceful brotherhood between religions. Two stained glass windows on either side of the bimah, donated by synagogue members Marvin and Joan Glickman, show Moses on one side, and Naomi and Ruth on the other. Crausman said that the women symbolize friendship, devotion and positive interfaith relations and also underscore the notion of equality for women.

Early on Crausman fashioned the synagogues services for full participation of women and worked to accommodate the spiritual needs of a growing community of interfaith families.

"I wanted a service that was comfortable for everyone. After a few years I looked out into the congregation and saw a lot of interfaith couples, some with spouses who had converted, others with a non-Jewish spouse, so I fashioned the service so that people who identify with other faiths can be touched and moved by our service too. But it's still a Jewish service."

The United Brothers Synagogue is located at 205 High Street in Bristol. The June 6 service will begin at 8 p.m. and is open to the public.

RHODE ISLAND HERALD, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1976-5

### UNITED BROTHERS SYNAGOGUE IN BRISTOL

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In 1992, he was chosen by Bristol's Fourth of July Committee to conduct the first Jewish Ecumenical Service in 200 years, as part of Bristol's traditional holiday celebration.

Crausman explained that the ecumenical nature of the place reaches much farther back than his recent innovations. "Bristol has always had an ecumenical spirit and has welcomed the Jewish synagogue in its midst."

### A History of Interfaith Cooperation

The United Brothers Synagogue in Bristol was chartered in 1900 by a small number of

Locke, the pastor of St. Michael's Episcopal Church, taught Hebrew and helped find a permanent home for the congregation. St. Michael's Church also gave several reading stands and lecterns to the fledgling synagogue. St. Mary's Catholic Church donated the dark wooden pews that are still in use today.

Because the community was small, unlike larger metropolitan areas, Jews couldn't isolate themselves within a Jewish enclave because there just weren't enough people. This may have contributed to the receptive behavior of the rest of the Bristol community.



# ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

## Anniversary Party Celebrates Cape Verdean Community

by Tara V. Liscianadro  
Herald Editor

There were almost 1,000 guests at the celebration of the third anniversary of the Cape Verdean American Community Development Center just this past weekend. A rainbow of beautiful evening gowns, paired with handsome tuxedos and suits, decorated the Providence Convention Center. While traditional Cape Verdean music was softly played a mix of languages could be heard as guests mingled. Creole was used most often, while others preferred English and some, Portuguese. Guests and performers were busy chatting while Ismael DaSilva, CACD president and event coordinator, was busy making sure everything was ready for the special evening. Special lighting, smoke effects and two large video screens were just some of the special technical props used for the CACD party. It was an elegant affair where so many had gathered for the third year in a row to help support and create a stronger Cape Verdean community in America.

"Celebrating Cape Verdean Music" was this year's theme. A long list of musical guests were invited to perform at the evening's gala event. Fifteen bands played a variety of typical Cape Verdean music which was familiar to so many guests and dancers performed to rhythmic beats. DaSilva stated that the Cape Verdean community could be seen and understood best through its music. Many guests came from the islands of Cape Verde, others from France, Portugal and Holland. Benvido Cabral was the lively CACD spokesman.

Throughout the evening various awards were given such as the Cape Verdean Partnership

award, the Volunteer of the Year award, Athlete of the Year, Cape Verdean Leadership award and the Cape Verdean News award. While dinner was served, Cabral introduced Senator Jack Reed, state Senator Thomas Coderre, Dr. Richard Lobban and other supporters of the CACD. With the supporters' help and that of the community the CACD has been able to grow and provide services to those in need. The CACD is a non-profit organization which offers a variety of free classes such as ESL, GED and citizenship, as well as a food distribution program. The center is open not only to Cape Verdean families but other families in need as well. The CACD center is located in Pawtucket and hopes to eventually create a museum, library and resource center which will help increase awareness and knowledge about the Cape Verdean community.

After the Inquisition, many Jews, now Marranos, fled to the Cape Verde islands. The roles of the secret Jews in Cape Verde varied. Some were fortunate and gained wealth. Unfortunately, some became slaves, others were slave owners. But for the most part, their Jewish identity was kept hidden. Some practiced their faith in secret, while others practiced no religion. After many years, families were no longer aware of their religious heritage. Today, genealogical studies have discovered Jewish backgrounds in many Cape Verdean families.

With the development of the CACD center in Rhode Island many families may be able to become more familiar with their religious backgrounds. Cape Verdeans may also be able to discover and spread their history and culture with the help of the new CACD center.

## 'Grease' Hits Providence For the Weekend at PPAC

One of the most successful musicals in Broadway history, "Grease!" takes audiences back to high school in the 1950s during five performances, May 30 through June 1 at the Providence

Performing Arts Center.

Written by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey, "Grease!" blends the fashion, music, and dances from the early era of rock 'n' roll into a story about a romance

that develops between an unlikely pair of teen-agers. Songs including "We Go Together," "Summer Nights," "Shakin' at the High School Hop," and many others in the show capture the essence of growing up in the late 1950s.

"Grease!" is ranked as the fifth-longest-running musical in Broadway history. After opening on Broadway in 1972, "Grease!" was nominated for seven Tony Awards, including Best Musical. "Grease!" ran for almost eight years on Broadway and had the distinction of being the longest-running musical on Broadway when it closed in 1980.

The popularity of "Grease!" had not been confined to Broadway. Since 1972, there have been five national touring companies of the show that have played throughout the United States. The original London production ran for two years, and "Grease!" was a huge hit in Mexico City where it was called "Vaselino!" The show has gone on to play in a host of foreign countries throughout Europe and Australia.

Tickets for "Grease!" are available by calling 421-ARTS. Box office hours are Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, noon to 5 p.m.

Ticket prices are \$41, \$39, \$37, \$29 and \$27, including a \$1.50 renovation fee. Discounts for groups of 20 or more are available. Tickets are also available through Ticketmaster locations or by calling 331-2211.



TAKE A TRIP down rock 'n' roll memory lane and relive those high school "happy days" when "Grease!" pulls into the Providence Performing Arts Center May 30 through June 1.

Photo by Joan Marcus, The Troika Organization

## Renowned Gardener Elsa Bakalar Speaks at Swanhurst

Elsa Bakalar, a well-known gardener, will speak and host a book signing at McAuley Hall at Salve Regina University on June 10 at 10:30 a.m. as a part of the Swanhurst Showhouse festivities. The focus of her lecture, entitled "A Garden of One's Own," is to educate gardeners and non-gardeners alike how to create and tend to a garden.

Bakalar's work has been featured in *Horticulture Magazine* as well as the *Boston Globe* and *Newsday*. Her lectures and workshops have been offered under the auspices of Harvard University's Arnold Arboretum, the New England Wildflower Society, the New York Botanical Garden and numerous garden clubs and professional organizations across the country. The *Boston Globe* was quoted as saying "Bakalar's success has been abet-

ted by her charming wit, her skill as a teacher and a talent for relating to people as well as plants."

Newport Showhouse Guild is an organization of volunteers who dedicate time to raise funds for local charities and plan designer showhouses every two to three years. Tickets for Bakalar's lecture and book signing are \$35 and include a tour of the Swanhurst Showhouse. Proceeds from ticket sales will benefit Lucy's Hearth and the Women's Resource Center, two Newport area non-profit organizations that support and care for women and children in crisis. Additional funds raised through related special events during the monthlong showing will also be

donated to those organizations.

The Swanhurst Showhouse will be open from June 3 through June 29. Hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Friday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday 1 to 4 p.m. Wednesdays are "Designers' Day" when the designers of each area will be at the house to share their ideas with visitors. The Showhouse will be closed on Mondays. Tickets will cost \$15.00. A gift boutique will be open during Showhouse hours and will be filled with decorative accessories and gifts. Light lunches and refreshments will be served in the Tea Room through the day. For more information, call 841-9375.

## All Children's Theatre Holds Open Audition

The award-winning All Children's Theatre Ensemble announces this year's open teen auditions. These auditions will be held on June 10 and 11 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Fox Point Elementary School theatre located at 455 Wickenden St., entrance on East St., in Providence.

ACT's Teen Auditions are open to all young people (no geographic limitations) aged 13 to 17. Interested teens should come

prepared with two, one-minute, contrasting monologues and a song.

Qualifying to become a part of the ACT Ensemble gives young people the opportunity to study all facets of the dramatic arts with some of the best theatre professionals in the state and to perform in not only the most popular of children's plays but in experimental pieces as well.

For information, call 331-7174.

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# ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT



## The Vatican's Secret Kidnapping

by Tara V. Lisciandro  
Herald Editor

While touring the piazza of St. Peter and walking into the ancient world of the Vatican, I couldn't help but feel as if I were in another world, Italy was somewhere in the background. Maybe for one who fights with her own religious faith, the Vatican becomes a strong point for reflection. Wandering through the private city's various constructions for the first time, their corridors elaborately decorated with traces of gold and enormous paintings from ceiling to floor, I had imagined Vatican City to be different. It was a magical world instead; the riches, the wealth, the art, the beauty. There wasn't a chair, nor tile that wasn't ornate, it was amazing. The grand Pietà was encased in glass so no one could deface it, as there had been attempts. The circular staircases were balanced with beautiful golden hand rails that led to the tombs that lie under the main church. But even there, with the scent of old air and cold winds that came from ancient marble and rock, there was beauty. Paintings that were hung above tombs, gold chalices and other precious objects all were displayed with glory and honor. This was the Vatican, a place I would visit hesitantly, four more times.

Since then I have taken great interest in the Vatican and its mystery, its secrets. Their intention to open their archives is also of great interest. In 1987 they announced that they would make wartime records available to researchers and have not done so. Opening their archives would possibly be one step forward to helping understand the Vatican and their history better. But for now we must suffice with what is available from outside sources and publications released by the Vatican and its researchers.

One of the newest sources of Vatican history is the release of *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* (Knopf publishers) by Brown University professor and author, David Kertzer.

Kertzer's book is a document that portrays a detailed insight

to the core of papal reign and the Vatican while telling the true story of Edgardo Mortara, a 6-year-old Jewish boy who is kidnapped in northern Italy, by Catholic Inquisitors during the mid-1800s. Kertzer has researched a marvelous mixture of 19th-century Italian history and tragic human conflict. He first heard about the Mortara case 10 years ago from a fellow friend and colleague. Then the case "became my hobby," stated Kertzer. The book also has a personal aspect to it as well. Kertzer's father was a Jewish chaplain with the American army. His division was responsible for the liberation of Rome

Kertzer has researched a marvelous mixture of 19th-century Italian history and tragic human conflict.

during 1944. Together with the rabbi of the synagogue in Rome, Kertzer's father presided over the first service held at the synagogue.

While acting as a faculty member at the Università di Bologna and gathering research for several years in Italy, Kertzer was able to get hold of a 700-page document in Bologna about the Mortara case. "It was compelling reading," said Kertzer. The notes from the Inquisitors and the trials that were held were all part of the detailed research that Kertzer was able to find in various archives throughout Italy. Kertzer's research creates an outstanding outline of history while telling the heart-wrenching story of little Edgardo. A knock at the door in 1858 opens the Mortara case and within 24 hours Edgardo is taken away, from his nine brothers and sisters and parents, by the Inquisitors. His mother is left in tears and his father flees quickly to find help. The news spreads in Italy, and abroad, about the kidnapping.

The Mortara family finds supporters, such as Moses Montefiore, who go to Rome to beg for the child's release. But the Inquisitors and church officials state that the boy has been made a Catholic and is no longer permitted to live with a Jewish family.

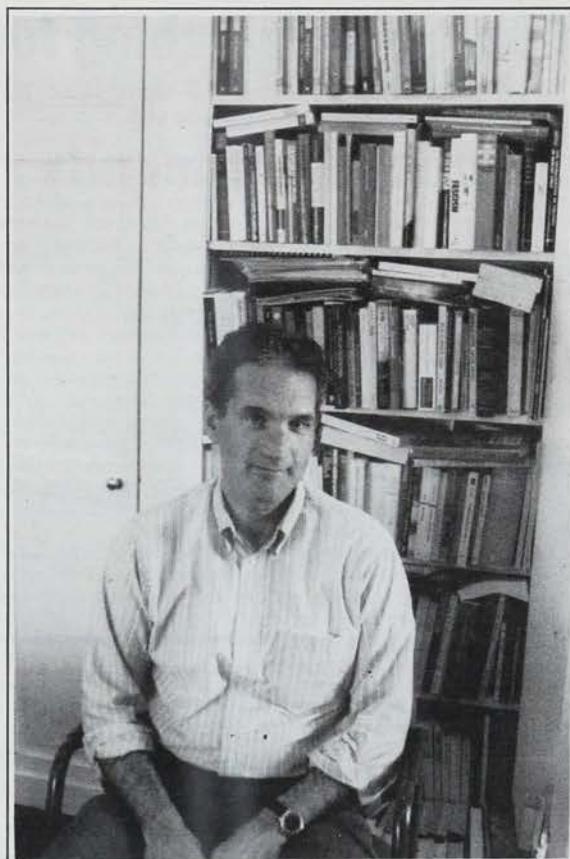
When Edgardo was even younger he was found ill. His illiterate, Catholic servant, Anna Morisi, privately baptized him believing it would cure the boy. This simple service was made known to the Inquisitors who then, by their standards, could legally take the boy from his family. Throughout the various trials that are held, 19th-century Italy and the Catholic Church are revealed. What constituted a true baptismal service? Were a few drops of water and the words of a Catholic enough?

However, the true controversy involved the pope and his orders. Did they come directly from him? How strong was papal authority? Obviously it was the strongest existing force. Edgardo is kept behind the doors of the Vatican and learns to live according to their rules.

Twenty years later Edgardo sees his mother, a final scene which is touching and tragic.

Kertzer has already been recognized for "the extraordinary story of how the Vatican's imprisonment of a 6-year-old Jewish boy helped bring about the collapse of the popes' worldly power in Italy" (Knopf publishers). However, the story of the Mortara family also highlights the history of the Jews in Italy. "The book brings out things about Italian history that haven't been said before," said Kertzer. In fact, as Kertzer points out frequently in his research, the idea of ghettoization and separating the Jews wasn't new during the Holocaust. During the 1500s there were ghettos for the Jews of Italy and in the 1800s the Inquisitors set the rules for the Jewish community to live by. Jews were made to identify themselves in public by wearing armbands, just as they were made to do during World War II.

"My focus wasn't anti-Semitism," said Kertzer. In-



David Kertzer

Herald photo by Tara V. Lisciandro

stead, the author hoped to make his audience realize that there was nothing new about what was done to the Jews in Italy and elsewhere.

One of the most interesting reviews comes from the *Avvenire*, an Italian periodical from the Vatican. Their view ("Rapito da Pio IX"; Kidnapped by Pope Pius IX) is a positive one which supports Kertzer's book and documentation. The review states that the Vatican has done a great deal since the Mortara case to ease relations between Christians and Jews. *Avvenire* says that Kertzer's book can only help to create a better understanding of Christian and

Jewish relations.

The Mortara case opens doors to a little-known and intriguing area of Italian history and politics and gives a fascinating view into the secret depths of the Vatican. The author said he was able to "really understand both mental worlds." Kertzer is a great success at revealing historical relations between the ruling Catholic and the Jewish community of northern Italy.

The beauty of the Vatican and its golden treasures hides many unknown and riveting stories. Although the Vatican is not opening its archives, Kertzer has uncovered an incredible part of history.

## ArtTalk Summer Lecture Series Begin in June

The Arts Council, Pawtucket presents ArtTalk, an entirely new series that will bring artists into communities all across Rhode Island to share their work and experiences. The lectures begin in June and will run through September.

Painter Robert Dilworth starts off the series on June 2 at 6 p.m. at the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council in Pawtucket. On June 26

at 5:30 p.m., Umberto Crenca and the His Panic Band will perform at the Hudson Street Market in Providence's West End. Flippers and Hip Hop Dancers from the Carriage House will perform Healthy Habits at

Johnston Memorial Park on July 11 at 10 a.m.

On July 17 at 6 p.m., sculptor Tony Ascizzi will be at the Blackstone River Theatre in Cumberland. Painter Marcos Antonio will lecture at the Martin Luther King Center in Newport

on Aug. 16 at 2 p.m. And on Sept. 8, quilter Nonnie O'Brien will share her work and experiences at Down City Diner, downtown Providence.

The program, funded by Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, was designed by The Arts Council, Pawtucket, to place a full spectrum of art and artistic media in varying communities throughout the state.

Artists are able to share their work without restriction to the public in areas where their work may not have been presented before.

Founded in 1975, The Arts Council, Pawtucket is a private non-profit agency that provides access to the arts to everyone in the Rhode Island community. The agency is guided by the belief that support of the arts involves embracing the community as a whole in order to be accepted and cultivated by the local public.

For information, call The Arts Council, Pawtucket at 725-1151.

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# FEATURE

## Adoption: Searching for Identity

by Toby Zaitchik  
**W**hy was I placed for adoption?" "What kind of people were my birth parents and their families?" "Are there any medical problems that could affect me?" "What are the strengths and talents that I might have inherited?" Non-adoptees take this information for granted, yet someone who has been adopted often wants to know all this and more as they grow to develop positive self-esteem and personal identity.

Many adoptive parents understand the importance of exploring one's "roots." Jewish Family Service often assists adoptive parents and families in navigating these issues. Frequently, adult adoptees seek help from the agency in searching for and coping with information about their birth parents.

One young woman intensified her search when her adoptive father developed cancer. She realized that if she were his biological child, she would be at risk for developing this kind of cancer. She began to wonder, what was the medical history of her birth parents? Her adoptive family supported her quest.

She was able to obtain non-identifying information about her birth parents. There was nothing worrisome in the medical history. She also found out that her artistic talents came from them, that they were young, creative and rebellious when she was born. She recognized traits she saw in herself. She was pleased to know that they eventually settled down, went to college, had goals and plans in their lives. This, too, was reassuring. In her case, the ability to find out about her birth parents was a comfort and helped her feel good about herself.

The next question for this young woman is whether it is enough to have the information, or whether she should take the next step and try for personal contact. Rhode Island has a passive registry. Birth parents and adopted people are able to register by writing to Family Court and filling out some forms. There is a small fee. Only the adopted person, if over 21 years of age, may initiate contact. Information cannot be given unless the adoptee has completed one hour of mandatory counseling. The birth parents must wait until an adoptee chooses to call. They are not given information about the child, but they can be told that

their child has registered. The registry does not notify people, they must check periodically.

New legislation being considered would promote an active registry which would notify people when their relatives were willing to be contacted. There are questions about whose rights supersede. For example, birth parents may not have told subsequent family members; a child might not want contact; an adoptive family may feel intruded upon. The involvement of a social service agency can be helpful, for they provide an objective viewpoint. If there is traumatic news to come, an agency can defuse the situation and provide support.

Jewish Family Service received a call from a 40-something man who was adopted as

**The involvement of a social service agency can be helpful, for they provide an objective viewpoint.**

an infant. He spoke of his good adoptive family life, yet had always been curious about the circumstances of his birth. In his mid-20s, with the blessing of his adoptive family, he had engaged in a successful search for his birth mother. She had indicated willingness to be contacted. Throughout the process he had the support of a JFS counselor specializing in adoption issues.

He found that his birth mother had had a good life, married happily and with children. She had been open with them about having a previous relationship and making an adoption plan for that son. The man was able to find answers to many of the questions he had been forming: Why was he placed for adoption, what were the circumstances, what was the family history, the medical history? Some of the answers were not easy, but he felt better knowing.

However, there was a gap in what his birth mother would tell him. She did not want him to find or contact his birth father, who had a history of abuse. His search has ended, for now. He has wrestled with the disappointment of not being able to know more about his birth father, and of the anguish caused by some of the things he has

learned. This is where the support of his JFS counselor has been especially helpful.

Someday, if records are opened, he may again face the choice of seeking more information. Contact could be initiated, whether all involved parties agreed or not. Would the benefits outweigh the risks? What about his right to know? Would others engaged in the search process have access to the kind of supportive counseling that has helped him to cope with difficult issues?

Now that adoptions are available with varying degrees of openness between birth and adoptive families, search issues are likely to be much wider-ranging. Some adoptions are arranged with legal understandings that allow for openness throughout the child's life. Others specify a certain age at which information is released to the child. Every situation can be negotiated by the birth and adoptive parents as they make a plan for each child. Trends toward legislation that is more favorable toward openness may result in new concerns being raised. Agency assistance can help all parties as they identify their own levels of comfort and plan together for the child's future.

Issues around search and confidentiality have changed. Jewish Family Service now includes preparation about these concerns during the homestudy process for prospective adoptive parents. It has become a common expectation that adopted children will eventually search for birth parents and acceptance of this trend has proven to be healthy.

Through it all, an agency like Jewish Family Service can provide the necessary support and counseling to help individuals and families cope with both the questions and the answers.

*Toby Zaitchik is the adoption coordinator of Adoption Options, a Service of Jewish Family Service.*

## Tense Days in the Congo

*The following letter was received from the Lubavitch News Service in response to their inquiry to Rabbi Shlomo Bentolila, Lubavitch emissary to Kinshasa, the capital of the newly renamed Democratic Republic of Congo. Rebel leader Laurent Kabila and his forces overtook the capitol last week and ousted dictator Mobutu Sese Seko.*

*The synagogue served as an emergency center for the Jewish community as rebel forces were advancing on the capitol.*

*May 18, 1997*  
 ...Thank G-d, everything is fine.

To brief you on our situation of the past two days:

The synagogue, one block away from the main street and just a couple thousand feet away from the river, was designated as the center for the entire Jewish community in case of crisis. We stocked food, medical supplies and sleeping cots. The place was equipped with multi-band radios and satellite phones. We also installed an electric generator, in case the electricity would be cut. In addition, we arranged for intense security.

Within the last couple of weeks some 80 to 100 Jewish community members left, while 60 of us stayed.

On Friday night we held services earlier than usual, since there was a strong curfew imposed during the week. People were a bit tense, because on Friday President Mobutu fled Kinshasa to his hometown in the north of the country.

In the middle of the Friday night Shabbat meal — for which we had close to a dozen people — we were told that some trouble had occurred on the outskirts of the city and that the Zairian Government Army was starting to loot. Sounds of heavy artillery and sporadic shooting were heard throughout the city. The foreign embassies immediately issued a warning to their

nationals not to move out of their homes, warning that anyone seen outside after curfew could be shot.

We were told by the Americans that rebel troops were already 10 kilometers from Kinshasa. Throughout the night we heard what sounded like bombs and constant shooting and we received word of looting in remote places.

Shabbat morning it was not clear whether the Zairian army would oppose the rebels, so people were afraid.

Thank G-d, we were saved miraculously and what many expected to end in carnage and bloodshed turned out very well. The Zairian Army offered no resistance and the rebels entered Kinshasa and were greeted by the population with song and dance. They paraded peacefully, except on occasion when opposed by a government soldier. By Shabbat afternoon they passed by our synagogue.

During the ordeal I fielded concerned calls from community members and spent the rest of my time checking up on the rest of them. Mostly people were afraid of wild looters, most of whom were government soldiers, and appreciated hearing words of encouragement. Needless to say, none of us slept much during those 48 hours.

Thank G-d, as I write today, May 18, the liberators, as they are now referred to, are passing outside our shul, singing and cheering. And our place in world indexes will now change from "Z" for "Zaire" to "C" for "Congo, the Democratic Republic of," with Laurent Kabila as the new president...

May it be for the good of all humankind...

**Rabbi Shlomo Bentolila**  
 Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo

## Join Israel Bonds New Leadership Delegation to Israel

Each summer, young Jewish professionals, ages 28 to 42, from across the continent join Israel Bonds for a unique travel experience — the annual Israel Bonds North American New Leadership Delegation to Israel (July 6 to 16).

As a financial arm of the Israeli government, Israel Bonds is able to provide its delegates with exceptional privileges, including VIP access to areas normally closed to visitors, trips to Israel Defense Force bases, and meetings with top government officials such as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

Of course, it's not all serious business. The 1997 New Leadership tour also includes wine tasting in the Golan Heights, moonlit pool parties, dancing, and pampering at a Dead Sea spa. The delegates will also attend the opening ceremonies of the Maccabiah Games and have the option of a separate itinerary for repeat visitors.

"This trip is not like every other organization's tour of Israel," said delegation chairman Bob Diener. "We don't just visit the Golan Heights, the West Bank, IDF bases — we meet the people, Israeli and Palestinian, who live there and make the policies. After an Israel Bonds delegation, you haven't just seen Israel, you have a better understanding of it. We show you the real country, not just a tourist attraction."

The price is \$2,799, double occupancy, and includes round-trip airfare from New York, accommodations at five-star hotels, most meals, touring via deluxe motorcoach with licensed guides, arrival and departure arrangements, tips and gratuities, transfers and taxes, entrance fees to all sights, portage at hotels, hosts throughout the tour and bottled water on buses.

The delegation also features optional pre-trips to the ancient sites of Turkey or July 4th week-end in Eilat, and optional exten-

sions to Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Eilat.

To register for the tour, or for further information, call the Israel Bonds North American New Leadership Division at (212) 644-2663 or (800) 229-9650, ext. 500.

State of Israel Bonds/Development Corporation for Israel is an international organization offering securities issued by the government of Israel. Since its inception in 1951, Israel Bonds has secured more than \$17 billion in investment capital for the development of every aspect of Israel's economy, including agriculture, commerce and industry. Throughout its history, Israel has maintained a perfect record on the payment of principal and interest on the securities it has issued. Israel Bonds proceeds play a major role in absorbing Jews from the former Soviet Union, Ethiopia and elsewhere, and in providing crucial financial resources to Israel for a new era of promise and opportunity.

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# SCHOOLBEAT

## Shalom Bayit Workshop Teaches Peace

by Sara Wise  
Herald Editor

Families with children in kindergarten and first grade at the Alperin Schechter Day School explored the theme of "shalom bayit" (peace in the home) at a workshop on May 21.

The students and their parents discussed and acted out peace and conflict resolution strategies through a variety of hands-on activities aimed to foster the traditional Jewish ideal of seeking peace.

The first part of the evening centered on the earnest discussions on the types of problems that cause conflicts between kids, adults, families and countries. On large poster-sized sheets of paper, the parents and kids listed possible reasons why disputes occur. According to the kids, "TV" seemed to be the biggest cause of conflict in most households, followed by bedtimes and what's for dinner. The families also filled in a "peace pie" with suggestions for making peace, and a "trouble cake" with suggestions for fighting.

Workshop organizer Miriam Hyman also organized a skit and a series of role-playing activities to teach ways to resolve conflicts peacefully. Drawing from a story in the Talmud, the first skit depicted a personal disagreement that eventually led to the destruction of Jerusalem. The play was performed first with the traditional ending. After a brief discussion of how the conflict might have been averted, the skit was performed again with the intervention of two peacemakers who brought the feuding parties to the "shulhan shalom" (or peace table).

Rabbi Andrea Gouze, who ran the workshop with Hyman, explained to the audience how inherent conflict is in our daily lives by pointing out the long history of interpersonal squabbles. "The Talmud is a book written about 2,000 years ago that shows you that these kinds of problems always occur, they happened to people a long time ago."

After a second improvisational skit performed by two entertaining parents, each family went to work creating their own shulhan shaloms. The only

requirements were that each cloth peace table have the family name, a list of the 5 rules for peacemaking, and the word shalom written on it. Rabbi Gouze explained how to use the peace tables for peace conferences at home. "When there is a conflict,

bringing this to the table will show that you want to have a serious discussion, whether it be over TV, bedtime or golf."

The workshop was sponsored by the Geshet v'Keshet, a family education project that aims to bring families together to learn, socialize and celebrate.

### How to Foster Peace in Your Home

The following suggestions are from The Jewish Parent's Almanac by Julie Hilton Danan.

- Make your home into a warm, safe, loving place of peace by frequent positive interactions that involve touch, eye-contact, and focused attention. Bedtimes, wake-up times, homecomings, and other transitions of the day are key opportunities for loving interaction. Jewish holidays, especially Shabbat, provide regular, reliable times for being together.
- Encourage cooperation rather than competition among family members; avoid comparisons between siblings; strive to let each one know that she or he is valued as an individual.
- Encourage peaceful, cooperative, life-affirming activities for children, such as caring for plants and animals, gently caring for younger siblings, parent-play with dolls for both sexes, creative art and music, and sports and active games that release energy in positive ways.
- Discourage war play and don't buy toys that glorify violence.
- Seek diversity in your family's social interactions and in your children's experiences as well. Tolerance cannot be learned from books alone.
- Teach children how to acknowledge and express their feelings properly, rather than repress or act out their aggressive feelings. Teach them by example and explanation how to express angry feelings without hurting others.
- Support peace education in your children's school and local school system. Peace education encompasses everything from teaching conflict resolution on the playground to learning about other countries, cultures, and different types of people, to artistic expressions about peace.

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## Eighth Annual Religious Graduation Held in Middletown

The eighth annual graduation and closing exercises of The Samuel Zilman Bazarsky Religious School were held recently. Rabbi Marc S. Jagolinzer, educational director of the school, officiated and presented the address and diplomas to the following graduates: Evelyn Anthony, Jocelyn Anthony, Gabe Erhartic, Hannah Lichtenstein, David Reidy and Ben Snyder.

Tribute was also paid to the teachers of the school: Barbara Jagolinzer, Rena Shamah, Jennifer Lakoff, Esther Wolk Cohen, Sarah Jagolinzer and Jonathan Jagolinzer. Awards for excellence in academics, attendance and effort were presented by David Bazarsky. Receiving the Samuel Zilman and Beatrice Berman Bazarsky Awards were Davis Spohn, Helena Touhey, Sam Reiter, David Reidy, Kevin Bartell and Sarah Romanelli.

## Schechter Students Study Rhode Island

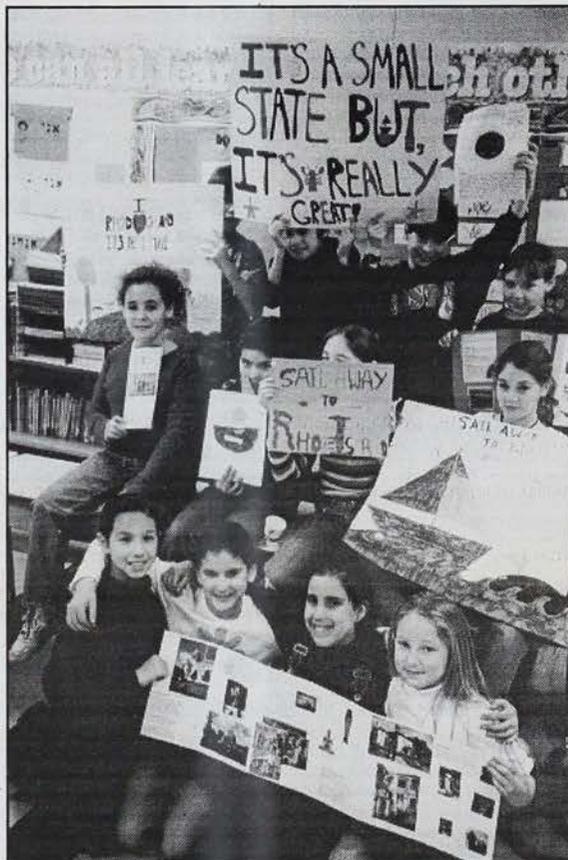
Teacher Donna Sennett wondered how to make her fourth-grade students enthusiastic about their curricular objective: to learn about the state of Rhode Island. She devised a great project, which enabled students to think creatively as well as to master a body of knowledge.

"Your job," she told students, "is to introduce strangers and newcomers to what Rhode Island has to offer them, from tourism to recreation, to give them information about

Rhode Island history, landmarks, resources, business opportunities and so forth. You must find a way to communicate all your information and to interest your audience." It seemed like a tall order, but the students responded with energy and creativity.

They displayed their work at a Rhode Island fair, including posters, maps, brochures and information booklets.

Students agreed, "It's a small state, but it's really great!"



SCHECHTER STUDENTS say, "R.I. is a small state, but it's really great."  
Photo courtesy of ASDS

## Rabin Book Wins Children's Award

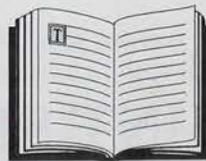
The Sydney Taylor Awards Committee of the Association of Jewish Libraries is pleased to announce the winners of the 1996 Sydney Taylor Awards. Chosen as the best Jewish books for children published in 1996, they are both emotionally charged works that teach about Israel.

The winning book for young children is *Shalom, Haver: Goodbye, Friend* written by Barbara Sofer (published by Kar-Ben Copies, Inc., Rockville, Md.). This eloquent photo essay is a moving tribute to slain Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Inspiring photographs, many borrowed from the private albums of Rabin's sister, combine with poignant prose in Hebrew and English to create a fine testimonial to the power and importance of friendship.

For the older child, the committee has selected *When I Left My Village* by Maxine Rose Schur, illustrated by Brian Pinkney (published by Dial Books for Young Readers, New York). The sequel to *Day of Delight*, it follows Menelik, a young Ethiopian boy, and his family on their treacherous journey to new lives as *Beta Israel*. Pinkney's unique scratchboard art enhances the mood

of this sensitive story. The runner-up for the award for young children is *Dybbuk: A Story Made in Heaven* by Francine Prose, illustrated by Mark Podwal (published by Green-willow Books, New York). For the older child, the runner-up is *Esther's Story* written by Diane Wolkstein, illustrated by Juan Wijngaard (published by Morrow Junior Books, New York).



## Schechter Second-Graders Are Good Deeds Champs

Second-grade students, with the help of their Judaic studies teacher Wendy Garf-Lipp, took on the project of collecting food as part of a Feinstein Foundation project.

Students made signs, visited each classroom in the school, and exhorted their peers to contribute non-perishable food items. They also worked with school administrators to arrange for the donation of extra milk and juice.

The results of their efforts were better than anyone could have expected. Cartons set aside for the food drive were filled, and in the end, students collected more than 500 pounds of food.

Congratulations to the second grade! They are truly Good Deeds Champs!



ASDS second-graders collect more than 500 pounds of food.  
Photo courtesy of ASDS

# OBITUARIES

## LAURA BERNSTEIN FORT LAUDERDALE —

Laura Bernstein, 77, of 6901 Environ Blvd., Lauderdale, Fla., died May 18 at the Florida Medical Center in Fort Lauderdale. She was the wife of Sidney Bernstein.

Born in Providence, a daughter of the late Hyman and Esther (Zuckerman) Dressler, she had lived in Florida for the last 20 years, previously residing in Quincy, Mass.

She had worked in the Social Services Department at Quincy City Hospital, retiring 20 years ago.

She was a member of Hadassah, the Brandeis Women's Association, and a former member of Temple Beth El in Quincy.

She leaves a son, Rabbi Morris Bernstein of Plainview, N.Y.; a daughter, Gail Olars of Hacktstown, N.J.; a brother, Max Dressler of Warwick; a sister, Ileana Hamer of Pawtucket, and five grandchildren. She was a sister of the late Earl Dressler, Naomi Keller and Priscilla Baker.

The funeral was held May 21. Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick. The family was assisted with the arrangements by Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St., Providence.

## MAE FERDMAN

PROVIDENCE — Mae Ferdmán, 84, of 41 Unity St., Pawtucket, co-founder and partner with her late husband of the former Ferdmán Upholstering Co. for many years, died May 21 at Miriam Hospital. She was the

wife of the late Benjamin Ferdmán.

Born in Providence, a daughter of the late Morris and Fannie (Goodman) Levy, she lived in Pawtucket since 1939.

She was a member of Congregation Ohawe Sholam, the Pawtucket Hadassah and the Women's Auxiliary of the Jewish War Veterans of America.

She leaves three sons, Gary Ferdmán of New York City, Michael Ferdmán of Buffalo, N.Y., and Harvey Ferdmán of St. Louis, Mo.; a daughter, Susan Anderson of Lansing, Mich.; two sisters, Rose Hirsch of Cranston and Lillian Levy of Pawtucket; and seven grandchildren. She was sister of the late Samuel and Louis Levy and the late Ruth Bader.

The funeral was held May 23 at Mount Sinai Memorial Chapel, 825 Hope St., Providence. Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Post Road, Warwick.

## FLORA F. KRONICK

NORTH MIAMI BEACH — Flora F. Kronick, 99, of North Miami Beach, Fla., died May 9 at Aventura Hospital and Medical Center in North Miami Beach. She was the wife of the late Charles E. Kronick.

Born Jan. 3, 1898, in Woonsocket, daughter of the late Samuel and Lena (Brenner) Schlansky, she lived in North Miami Beach for the past 21 years. She moved to Florida from North Adams, Mass., in 1976.

She was a former office manager at Woonsocket Falls Mill. She was active in social and

organizational work in North Adams, and was president of Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood for two years and a member of Hadassah for 27 years.

She was also a member of the North Adams Women's Chapter of B'nai B'rith Western Division.

She received the Woman of Year Award in 1971 from the North Adams Congregation Beth Israel Sisterhood, and was a gift shop volunteer at North Adams Hospital.

She is survived by a stepson, Lewis Kronick of North Miami, Fla.; a niece, Ethel Mendeloff of Norwood, Mass.; two grandchildren and one step-great-grandchild. She was the sister of the late Anna Kondy, Rose Berger, Esther Russian, Avery Shallen, and Louis Schlansky.

Her funeral was held May 11 at Congregation B'nai Israel, 224 Prospect St., Woonsocket. Burial was in B'nai Israel Cemetery.

## BARBARA M. LEVIN

BOSTON — Barbara M. (Loeber) Levin, 72, of Boston, died on May 19 at the Deaconess Hospital, Boston. She was the wife of Sumner Levin.

Born in Providence, she graduated from Hope High School and Bryant College. She was a member of the board of directors of the Friends of the Deaconess Hospital.

Besides her husband, she is survived by two sons, Lawrence D. Levin and his wife Susie of Nanuet, N.Y., Richard Levin of Harvard, Mass., and three grandchildren.

Graveside services under the direction of Breznik-Rodman Funeral Directors, West Newton, were held May 22 at the Temple Beth El Cemetery, Fall River.

## KHANA NAYDICH

PROVIDENCE — Khana Naydich, 75, of Providence died April 23 at the Philip Hulitar Center in Providence. She was the wife of the late Boris Naydich. She had lived in the Ukraine prior to moving to Providence eight years ago.

She is survived by her sister, Kranya Gabovich of Pawtucket.

Funeral services were held on April 24 and burial was in the Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick. The family was assisted with the arrangements by Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St., Providence.

## ROSE ROSENFELD

PROVIDENCE — Rose Rosenfeld, 87, of 18 Burnside St., Cranston, died May 19, at the Philip Hulitar Hospice Center. She was the wife of Philip Rosenfeld.

Born in Providence, a daughter of the late Samuel and Dora (Gerstenblatt) Port, she had lived in Cranston for 32 years, previously living in Providence.

She was a member of Congregation Shaare Zedek. She was a member of the Majestic Senior Guild, The Miriam Hospital Women's Association, and the Jewish Home for The Aged Women's Association. She was president of the Jewish War Veterans Auxiliary No. 23 and a past president of the Rhode Island Department of the Jewish War Veterans.

Besides her husband she leaves two brothers, Seymour Port of Cranston, and Hyman Port of Providence.

The funeral was held May 22. Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick. The family was assisted with the arrangements by Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St., Providence.

## AIDA SEMANSKY

NEW BEDFORD — Aida Semansky, 100, of 435 West Clinton St., New Bedford, died May 19 at St. Luke's Hospital. She was the widow of Harry Semansky.

She was born in Fall River, a daughter of the late Jacob and Fannie (Cutler) Epstein, but lived in New Bedford for the past 70 years.

She was a member of the Sisterhood of Congregation Ahavath Achim, Hadassah, the Hebrew Ladies Helping Hand, the Hebrew Free Loan, and the VFW Auxiliary.

Survivors include a daughter, Ann Lee Siegel of West Hartford, Conn.; a sister, Irene Feinberg, also of West Hartford; five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

She was the mother of the late Jackie Greenberg.

The funeral was held May 21 at Congregation Ahavath Achim, 385 County St., New Bedford. The family was assisted with the arrangements by Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St., Providence.

## DORIS MARION SOLOMON

MESA, Ariz. — Doris Marion (Miller) Solomon, 60, died April 30 in a hospital in Mesa, Ariz. She was the wife of the late Alvin Solomon.

She lived in Providence and moved to Arizona in 1969.

She is survived by two sons, Joel Solomon of Simi Valley, Calif., and Mark Solomon, of Wynnewood, Pa.; a brother, Seymour Miller of Scottsdale, Ariz., and mother-in-law, Cecile Roth, of Warwick, R.I.; a granddaughter, Sarah, and grandson, Avraham. Donations can be made to the American Cancer Society.

## SELMA K. WEISER

NORTON, Mass. — Selma K. Weiser, 87, of the Country Haven Nursing Home in Norton, formerly of Warwick, a teacher for 30 years at Central High School and Rhode Island School of Design, died May 24 at home. She was the wife of the late Isaac "Buddy" Weiser.

Born in Providence, a daughter of the late Harry and Etta (Lister) Katz, she lived in Norton since 1990, previously living in Warwick.

She was a graduate of RISD. She was a member of the Jewish Home for the Aged and a former member of Temple Beth-El.

She leaves a stepson, Burton Weiser of Norton, Mass.; a sister, Pauline Adler of Cranston; and three grandchildren.

A graveside service was held May 26 at Lincoln Park Cemetery. The family was assisted with the arrangements by Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St., Providence.

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## Jerusalem Population Statistics Released

ISRAEL LINE — The overall growth rate of Jerusalem's Jewish population is decreasing every year, *The Jerusalem Post* recently reported.

At the end of 1996, the overall population of Jerusalem was 603,000, of which 422,300, or 70 percent, were Jews. The total population grew 139 percent since the Six Day War, with Jewish population growing by 114 percent and Arab population by 163 percent. The average Jewish household has 3.6 people, while the average Arab household has 5.4 people.

These figures were released this week by the Jerusalem Institute for Israeli Studies, in its annual *Statistical Yearbook*.

Projections for the year 2010 predict a population of 817,500, with 251,000 Arabs and 214,000 ultra-Orthodox Jews. The ultra-Orthodox will comprise 38 percent of the Jewish population and 26 percent of the overall population.

Since the city was reunified in 1967, the Jewish population decreased from 74.2 percent to 70.5 percent as of 1995. At that time, 55 percent of the city population lived in areas that were added to Jerusalem after the Six Day War, and of this group 48 percent are Jews.

Only 5.9 percent of immigrants arriving in Israel in 1995 chose to live in Jerusalem, compared with 8 percent in 1991.



# Olympic Club Convenes for Historic 70th Anniversary

by Sara Wise  
Herald Editor

*Where somebody waits for me,  
sugar's sweet, so is she, Bye, Bye  
Blackbird...*

They sang songs of their youth around the piano, asked about relatives, and gave enormous heartfelt hugs. They may walk a little slower, or lean a little closer to hear each other's stories, but the spirit and camaraderie that has held these men together over the years shone through last weekend when "the Olympics" gathered in Providence to celebrate their 70th anniversary.

"It's a most unusual club," said Lou Yosinoff, a founding member and the first president of the boys club that was known for both its sports prowess and its social and charitable activities. "You don't see clubs like these today."

With five of the eight founding members of the William Cutler Gates Olympic Club in attendance, the event brought together old friends and, for out-of-towners, showed off a city that had changed considerably since the eight 8- and 9-year-old boys marched up to the new Jewish Community Center on Benefit Street in 1927 to ask if they could form a sports club.

After a full day of touring Providence and reminiscing with friends at the new Jewish Community Center, the weekend culminated in a "blowout" luncheon at the Marriott Hotel on Sunday afternoon. Tables covered with scrapbooks and old photos helped tell the story of a unique organization that created lifelong bonds.

According to Yosinoff, the boys took the club very seriously. "We learned Robert's Rules of Order to conduct our meetings and had our fingernails checked, just like the Boy

Scouts. If you were a good boy like me, you earned certificates."

In addition to sports, there were charity projects, social events and declamation contests, for which Yosinoff said the boys would practice for weeks. One scrapbook contained anniversary cards that each married member received, a Mother's Day card for the boys' mothers, a 1927 list showing who had paid their 10 cent dues, and a menu from a banquet in Taunton, Mass., priced at \$1.50.

As former members and their wives pored over the old photos, event programs, plaques and news clippings, it seemed hard for some of them to believe they were ever so young.

*"We were all schoolmates, we didn't care about differences in those days, it was a fraternal thing."*

*Johnny Miller*

"I was really a skinny kid," said Bernice Cohen, whose first husband was an Olympic member, as she looked at the low-cut dresses she and her friends wore in a dinner-dance photo. "That was a day of no wrinkles. But hey, I thank G-d we're here," added Sylvia Levin who came with her husband Hy Levin, who pointed out with amazement the fact that out of 15 team members in a 1939 championship basketball photo, all but 5 or 6 in the photo were at the luncheon.

Jos Presser, another founding member of the club, thought back on old friends as he went through the photos, "It's a lot of

water under the bridge, you look at the old photos and see all those who are no longer with us."

During the '30s and '40s, Olympic club membership grew to a peak of 102 until the attack at Pearl Harbor drew the United States into the war and many of the group's members enlisted. The Olympics reorganized after the war and were active for another six years, until they formally disbanded in 1952. Since then, the group has kept in remarkably close contact. Yosinoff says he has been corresponding monthly with one former member in Los Angeles for the past 25 years. They also try to meet for reunions every five years, although many of the former members seemed surprised that the club had actually made it to their 70th anniversary. "This is the fourth reunion since the big 50th anniversary," organizer Sid Green told the crowd. "Can you believe we're all here?"

Green mentioned that the club had earned congratulatory proclamations from both Mayor Vincent Cianci and Governor Lincoln Almond in honor of their 70th anniversary reunion and that seven local publications carried stories about the reunion.

Although a majority of the former members still live in Rhode Island (at least part of the year), there was an impressive showing from as far away as Tennessee, Wisconsin and Arizona. Isodor Fine, a retired University of Wisconsin professor, combined the trip from Madison with his 55th college reunion at URI. According to his wife, "There were more people at his Jewish boys club reunion, than at his college reunion last time."

Leonard "Horse" Chernack, a student of the Charles Atlas

## Roses Help Support MADD

A Rose is a Rose is a Rose, but these beautiful creations in the form of a pin will not only delight your loved ones, it may keep them safer. Tona, Inc. of Johnston, RI, has donated proceeds from the sale of the rose pin to Mothers Against Drunk Driving in Rhode Island. Remember someone you love and help keep our roads safe at the same time. For more information, call 1 (800) 242-MADD.



SYLVIA AND HY LEVIN reflect on a photo of the 1939 Olympic basketball team at the club's 70th anniversary reunion.

*Herald photo by Sara Wise*

body-building program, was also there. A yellowed news article told how Chernack once fought 1934 New England welterweight champion Russell "Red" Golden, with no boxing experience. Chernack, a retired businessman who sold American Tourister 15 years ago, now writes poetry and helps out at children's hospitals which he enjoys immensely, "I get a kick out of hearing them call me 'Uncle Lenny'."

Johnny Miller, who claimed to be the oldest member at 80, was only 10 years old when the club formed. He was also the only non-Jewish member, but said that he always felt at home in the club. "We were all schoolmates, we didn't care about differences in those days, it was a fraternal thing."

Miller lived on Benefit Street

near Lou Yosinoff and joined with the other neighborhood boys. "This isn't like the Elks or other clubs that go on and on with younger members; it's just one club, after us there are no more."

Yosinoff, the club's first president who served for 11 years (from 1927 to 1938), addressed the group before lunch began. "Our cherished memories of our youth remain clear, we have so many lasting friendships that have flourished over the years."

Jack Jacobson, who succeeded Yosinoff as president, offered a special L'Chaim toast. "This L'Chaim toast is not just 'to life,' but to everyone here for a long, enjoyable, sweet life."

For these gentlemen, belonging to the Olympic Club clearly played a large part in making their lives so sweet.

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**The Most Versatile Jewish Food**

When one thinks of Jewish foods, one thinks of blintzes, latkes, corned beef, and so on. But as far as versatility in Jewish food is concerned, most scholars agree that the bagel stands supreme. According to records at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, bagels have been used for:

- holding up a table during a meal in a sukkah
- placing the handles of the holy Torah scrolls in, to steady the precious object in the Ark
- a skullcap, when no other was available
- a wedding ring, when

the best man at the wedding of Larry Cornblum, of Toronto, forgot to bring one for the bride

- felling the mighty Goliath, as reported in the Book of Samuel.

"Had it been a fresh bagel that the young David threw at the giant Philistine, instead of a stale one," notes Yaacov Lupkofsky of Bar Ilan University in Israel. "Jewish history might have turned out quite differently."

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