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245 Lex Front Doors Open as Construction Commences on Seventh Floor Beit Midrash

BY CHAYA CITRIN

After a semester of dust, noise, and obstructed entrances, the students of Stern College for Women (SCW) were rewarded for their previous forbearance with the sight of a nearly-completed and transformed ground floor at 245 Lexington Avenue. The new renovations marked the first sign of progress in the college's ongoing construction project, which commenced last summer.

A broadened front lobby complete with gleaming white floors and wood paneling awaited the undergraduate women upon their return from winter break. The comely entrance hall generated a welcoming atmosphere, furnished with armchairs and tables to provide students with a sizeable seating area. The space maintained its academic character by housing

two new classrooms, complete with state-of-the-art audio-visual technologies, to serve as settings for business and science courses, as well as guest lectures. As the first-floor renovations come to a close, work will begin shortly on

she said. "There's nowhere else to sit in 245 Lex; it will give students a chance to breathe easier." Unterman also noted the lobby's more polished appearance, which, she explained, "helps [to] give a more academic, serious

"Facilities, in order to change the façade of the building, asked the library to give up space," explained Edith Lubetski, head librarian at the Hedi Steinberg Library at SCW. "The library's main concern was that the collec-

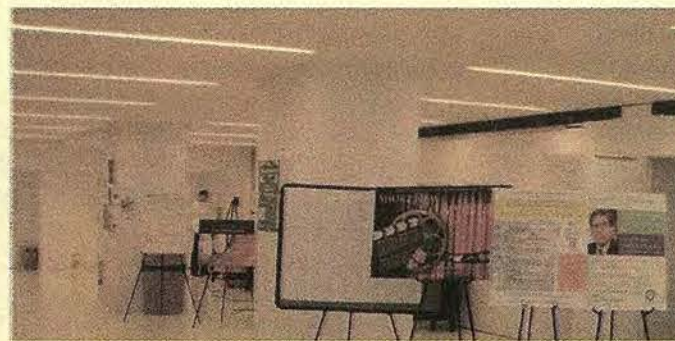
Since the bookshelves supplanted the usual seating space, Lubetski arranged for Room 250 to be reserved for library-users. "Construction projects are difficult to cope with since there is dislocation and noise, and we look forward to returning to normal," she remarked. "We are happy to say that staff interaction with faculty and students has not been affected and there has been no interruption of service."

The success of the lobby renovations portends well for other areas of the building, especially the seventh floor.

Plans call for an expansion of the floor onto its balconies and its conversion into a large Beit Midrash, with one additional room remaining for class usage. The new Beit Midrash is set to replace the current overly crowd-

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The seventh floor of 245 Lexington Avenue



The newly renovated lobby of 245 Lexington Avenue

the next target area: the long-awaited seventh floor Beit Midrash.

Tiffany Unterman, president of the Student Life Committee at SCW, related her excitement about the construction on campus. "The lounge area is going to be a great asset to the students,"

look to the building, allowing a serious institution to present itself seriously."

While efforts were underway to improve 245 Lexington's façade and first floor, the building's second floor library had to grapple with the disruptions posed by the construction.

tions remain available to the students and faculty and that alternate seating be provided. Working together with Facilities, we shifted books so that the final arrangement, while somewhat inconvenient and crowded, provided the needed accessibility to the collections."

Spring Semester Sees Unprecedented Increase of Students on Beren Campus

BY HILLY KRIEGER

Stern College for Women (SCW) has nearly caught up with its counterpart on the Wilf Campus, enjoying the largest enrollment in the school's history, according to University Director of Enrollment Management Dr. John Fisher. The 2006-2007 academic year has seen the highest number of matriculating students at SCW, a trend which is expected to continue in the future.

"In a typical year the spring semester sees a 30 to 40 student decrease from the fall semester, but in the past two years, we have seen a change in this trend,"

reported Dr. Fisher. The number of students leaving after the fall semester was matched and even exceeded by the number of those entering in the spring. As such, a total of 1,046 undergraduate women stayed approximately the same. As in the fall, 80% of those entering in the spring were Israel returnees, while the remaining 20% was divided between transfer and foreign students.

Dean Zelda Braun, associate dean of students, delineated a few of the reasons undergraduates provide for transferring to SCW. "Often the [former] college doesn't meet the expectation of the student, but usually the transfer

students are looking for the Jewish aspect of college that Stern offers." Transfer students have mostly come from Brandeis University, Barnard College, New York University, and University of Pennsylvania.

Foreign students often enroll in January, due either to delays in receiving their visas or because the academic year in their native countries such as Venezuela and Argentina begin in the spring. As such, the spring semester often furthers the geographic diversity on campus, bringing women from across the United States and

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New Women's Fellowship Marks Watershed in CJF-SCW Alliance

BY SARA LEFKOVITZ

The Center for the Jewish Future (CJF) unveiled its most recent initiative with the commencement of a new Women's Leadership Fellowship during the first week of the spring semester. Responding to the dearth of female Jewish communal leaders, as well as to previous periods of detachment from the Beren Campus, the center has realized plans to develop its first program geared specifically to the undergraduate women of Yeshiva University (YU).

Aiming to strengthen the

leadership skills of participants, the fellowship grants students exposure to prominent Orthodox women through a series of weekly seminars. The guest lecturers, among them Dean Karen Bacon, the Monique C. Katz Dean of Stern College for Women (SCW) and Virginia Bayer Hirt, vice president of The Jewish Center, a synagogue on the Upper West Side, share their expertise and experience in assuming active roles within their respective communities. The seminars cover an array of subjects, including the balance between power and mod-

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Letter to the Editors:

Dear Madame,

Having graduated a coed high school class in which both editors-in-chief of the student newspaper, the salutatorian, and the valedictorian were female, I maintain serious doubts to Adinah Wieder's argument in her nameless column in the December edition of The Observer. Her claim that women can only succeed in all female environments flies in the face of 40 years of progress toward sexual equality and begs the question of why every high quality school in the nation has broken down their single sex system over that same time period. Does Stern know something they don't? It is insulting for her to make such a broad generalization that women cannot compete with men for high power positions, especially

in light of her admitting that she has never experienced a coed academic culture. If Ms. Wieder's sexist argument is the best reason for maintaining a single sex structure, it is not surprising that some of the women in Stern are spending more than a nanosecond ruminating over the articles in circulation about the value of coeducation.

Eitan Kastner YC '08

Editor's Note:

We would like to dispel some of the erroneous generalizations made in the above letter. The letter references the breakdown of "every high quality school in the nation." To the best of our knowledge Wellesley College, Barnard College, Wesleyan College, Tulane College, Smith College and Bryn Mawr College are among many single-sex institutions still in existence today. While universities which had previously been all men institutions have opened their doors to women, this only proves the point that a co-ed environment is beneficial exclusively to men. These institutions of higher learning have welcomed women while many women's colleges have remained single-sex. They are doing this to

benefit their students, seeing how women prosper in single-sex educational facilities. Furthermore, research has shown that one of the main reasons that all male colleges began opening their doors to women was to increase their funding.

Secondly, the women referenced in the above letter are exceptional women. Each is hard working, intelligent and motivated. Currently, two of the women are students at Columbia University, one is a student at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the fourth is a graduate of New York University. It would be unfair to attribute the accomplishments of these women to their co-ed high school instead of to their personal strengths and characteristics.

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The Backseat is Not an Option



ADINAH WIEDER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

I spent my formative years in institutions that dictated very specific roles for women. We were taught to be amorphous; in this way we would be able to adapt to any situation, for a woman must always be the flexible one. We were taught to be amenable. Being amenable and amorphous enables women to very quietly come into a situation of conflict, resolve the conflict and then slip out, unnoticed.

A woman's role was not the only thing that was very much specified. It was written clearly in our school policy handbook how long our skirts had to be. They were to rest four inches below the knee but at least two inches above the ankle because if they were too long then the look was no longer refined. To further emphasize the importance of modesty, guest speakers frequently delineated what it was that made women so special. We were diamonds. However, what makes diamonds special is that not everyone has them, and those that do, keep them covered for fear of them being defiled by outside factors. The more precious something is, the more covered and hidden it should be. That was a synopsis of the usual lecture.

Those years very much positively influenced who and what I am today. They served as a foundation upon which the rest of my education was built. However, as I matured, my desire for something greater continued to grow. I wanted to learn for the sake of knowledge and I wanted to be in an institution that supported that type of learning. I wanted to be in a place that afforded me the opportunity to hear lectures on disciplines other than modesty. I did not want to wait until I got home from school to be challenged intellectually, spiritually, and emotionally. I wanted to forge my own path and form expectations for myself that were very different from the expectations that my teachers and principals had for me.

I entered high school excited by all the opportunities that awaited me in a new institution with a different approach to Judaism and learning. I spent my high school years trying to mentally create a vision of what kind of Jewish woman I wanted to be. I wanted to clearly define that role for myself. I no longer wanted to conform to the role of the amorphous woman. I did not want to be the woman who spends hours creating an idea and then lets someone else walk off and market it as his own. I didn't want my sole aspiration to be the woman that my teachers lauded; the one with dinner on the table and a little bit of blush on her cheeks waiting anxiously for her husband to walk through the door. I didn't want to be the woman who helps clean up the mess but never gets to pitch ideas.

Through all my years of education

I have had the unique opportunity of learning in places that each profess to have very different views toward women and women's roles in society. However, while in some sects the effects of the different views may be more dramatic than others, there are some issues that plague societies from all across the spectrum and impact the women in those sects equally negatively.

I must say that Stern College for Women (SCW) is the place that provided me with opportunities that I only dreamed of. SCW bestowed me with the forum to create change, as well as the ability to stand up for what I believe. It is here that I discovered passions I never knew I had and here that I formulated opinions on ideas and topics that I was previously told I should not concern myself with. However, SCW has left me in a quandary. While we are pushed to excel and demand much of ourselves, at times we are approached with the same attitude that I thought I left behind back in grade school. The academics and learning opportunities appear to be greater on the Wilf Campus rather than on the Beren Campus.

Despite the fact that SCW has made tremendous strides in women's formal Torah learning, which ranges from the institution of five-credit Tanakh and Gemara tracks to the renovations on the women's *beit midrash*, which is currently underway, we are still sorely lacking. The men enjoy numerous *batei midrash* while it took the women months of discussion and hard work in order to have construction commence on our single *beit midrash*. While the *limud* Torah on campus is increasing, the establishment of a central community on the Beren Campus consisting of halakhic women who wish to fulfill certain *mitzvot* in the presence of an all female community is still absent.

While our campus may boast a cafeteria that costs millions of dollars as well as enough sushi to send tuna and salmon to the endangered species list, the classes here need improvement. Students are not appeased by the beautiful buildings and classrooms that have technology that is seldom ever used. The Beren Campus may have the most posh lounges in the history of undergraduate lounges, but students would forego the lounges in exchange for a wider selection of courses, as well as for more advanced courses. Students want professors who can explain information well enough so that three-quarters of the class doesn't need to higher private tutors. Every dorm building may have a gym, but only one out of the three is functioning.

However, the responses that women receive here upon voicing their concerns for what is lacking on campus are

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Curtains Can Only Cover so Much



ALANA RUBENSTEIN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The decision to attend Stern College for Women (SCW) guarantees many things, some of which are the very reasons I decided to attend the college. By committing to SCW I was committing to living in a big city with a diverse group of women in a modern Orthodox environment. All three of these aspects excited me. Manhattan has always been one of my favorite places, I had never been in a non-coed academic institution, and I knew that the 12 years I had of yeshiva education were not enough. While college life would still be full of unforeseen experiences and challenges, the aforementioned aspects of SCW were both expected and welcome.

There is however, one thing I did not realize would be ever present during my three year stay on the Beren Campus: Construction. Since 2004, the presence of yellow tape and construction workers has been a on both Lexington Avenue and 34th Street. I began my SCW experience when the construction of Le Bistro was in its final stages and will graduate as the *Beit Midrash* is being worked on. The exercise room and lounges in the Brookdale Residence Hall are not those I saw on my first day of orientation. The offices I trekked to in the Shottenstein Cultural Center are no longer there. The Registrars Office and deans offices are not where they used to be. The furniture in the cafeteria has been modernized and the centerpieces make the tables a bit homier than I first remember them being. Unlike my first few months as a SCW student, I can now eat a dairy dinner if I am in the mood.

These improvements have enhanced our campus. The facilities in midtown are modern, airy and nice to look at. It is precisely for these reasons that our campus hosts conferences, speakers and guests on a regular basis. It is rare to not see individuals congregated in the Levy Lobby for some sort of meeting. The lounges in the Shottenstein Residence Hall are often in use. The Beren Campus is both centrally located and aesthetically pleasing. Who can ask for anything more?

We can; and we should.

All the aforementioned changes are great. I like sushi and comfortable areas to sit in. I like not having to trek uptown for every concert and speaker. Having been on The Observer staff for three years, I am extremely happy and grateful that construction on the Beit Midrash has finally begun.

Yet, it is not enough. We have a more beautiful campus than ever

before but do we have a better college? Though the Beren Campus is the location of SCW, it is not the same thing as SCW. Our campus has been, and is constantly being, expanded and beautified but this isn't sufficient. We cannot let the external amenities distract us from what is still lacking in terms of academics and services. Our college is lacking in many important things – things the women of SCW deserve both as intelligent university students and because as members of the Yeshiva University (YU) community we are entitled to as much as our counterparts uptown.

We are getting pretty decorations, but exterior upgrades can only be used to mask the real problems of SCW for so long. Energies need to be refocused if the Beren Campus is ever going to be a place that can contend with the Ivy League universities President Joel often references when he addresses our campus. Considering the cost of our tuition, the students of SCW need to be offered more serious and more equal options.

More and better quality classes need to be offered across the board in every department, from the sciences to Judaic Studies. What makes YU unique amidst the vast amount of universities in the United States is its dual curriculum. Many women come to SCW with the sole purpose of continuing their formal Jewish education. Therefore, wouldn't it make sense for the administration to make sure the Judaic studies at SCW are top notch? Yet, this is not the case. I have heard numerous women complain about the lack of options and overload of Judaic studies requirements. Students are taking classes they have to take, rather than classes they want to take. I have heard many Judaic studies majors express their disappointment in both the classes being taught and the level they are being taught on. If one of SCWs main selling points is nothing to brag about, why should students come here for that in the first place? While taking a Judaic studies course at another university may not be the same as learning Torah from a *talmid chacham* on the Beren Campus, it is interesting to note that my friends at Rutgers University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology seem more enthusiastic about the Judaic studies courses they are privy to than many of the women at SCW.

Similarly, it speaks volumes about the academic departments in midtown when a biology major feels she

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OPINIONS

The Yeshiva University

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The Observer
245 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10016
(347) 236-6555
www.yuobserver.com

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Sinking into the Muck: Why Auschwitz Must Be Renovated

BY PEREL SKIER

Rebuild Auschwitz.

It's an ugly thought, not something people like to think about. Auschwitz, the death camp that witnessed the horrific mass murder of millions and every structure was designed to inflict brutality. Rebuild it? We do not want to rebuild it. We do not want to fortify it. We do not want to renovate the machines of the Nazis. It feels evil to prolong the functionality and existence of Auschwitz, as though by reinforcing these structures we are condoning the atrocities they caused.

What an ugly thought. Yet, our generation faces an ugly choice, one in which there are no true winners. Two of the Auschwitz gas chambers are sinking into the ground and reports indicate that if nothing is done they will disappear from sight entirely within the next two decades. This is hardly surprising given that the death camp is more than 65 years old. The Nazis didn't design these sites with permanence in mind; the original plan was to exterminate all the undesirables within 10 years. Structures hastily flung up to last a few years are now eligible for retirement, and their age is starting to show. The question is: do we rebuild Auschwitz, cementing its place in the world as physical testimony to the cruelty perpetuated there? Or, do we let it sink? Do we let it sink into the mud,

rotting and warped, along with the generation that constructed it?

The latter option is undeniably appealing. There's a measure of poetic justice, however woefully inadequate, in allowing the camps to decay and fade, denying them the immortality the Nazis sought. Looking at them, we feel a sense of defiance: they thought they would wipe us off the face of the earth and reign forever but it is they who are slipping, rusted, into oblivion.

In reality though, we cannot allow this to happen. We may wish to forget the Nazis and to refuse them even passing notoriety but the price is too steep. As Jews, we have been victims to the world's convenient lapses of memory since our people's inception. The crimes committed against us, and consequently ignored, span the spectrum: merchandise stolen under the noses of police who 'saw nothing,' entire towns decimated without culpability, all of it declaimed as fabrication and exaggeration-easily dismissed by those who prefer not to believe. We're just Jews, after all, relying on trickery and deceit to elicit sympathy for ourselves where none is deserved. There is only our word to rely on, to prove that we have been wronged and our word can be gainsaid by anyone.

Auschwitz, however, is harder to explain away. Confront someone with a gas chamber and

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A Place That Can Make You Cry

BY JAIME FOGEL

Everyone has a story to tell about this past winter break. Many students from Stern College for Women and Yeshiva College spent the break in Israel partaking in a life-changing mission to help those affected by this summer's war in northern Israel. I also traveled up north to a small, quaint town called Ma'alot, located a mere nine kilometers away from the Lebanese border. Around 10 students from different local universities embarked on this small trip to help the town of Ma'alot recover from the physical and emotional damage caused by the 20,000 rockets that hit during this past summer's war.

The men who came on the trip were assigned to work on physical repairs in the boys' elementary school. Windows had been left shattered with broken pieces of glass scattered on the ground beneath them. Some classrooms were still filled with debris and dust, left in disarray. The maintenance staff had not had enough time to complete all the repairs before the school season resumed and, until we showed up, there had been no one available to do the job.

The women on the trip spent the two mornings in the all-girls religious high school and elementary school. The teachers had prepared lesson plans that incorporated us into their English classes. In the ninth grade class

we visited, the teacher instructed the Israeli students to ask us questions about ourselves in English and based on the answers we were supposed to construct a Venn diagram. On one side we were told to list what typified Israeli society, on the opposing side qualities of American society, and in the middle we were instructed to list the commonalities.

I was surprised at how excited the girls were to sit and talk with us. Many of them had never spoken with Americans and were baffled by the fact that *frum* Jews existed outside of Israel, a concept which, unfortunately, doesn't baffle us all. What shocked them even more was when I shared with them my desire to move to Israel with them. With such naiveté and idealization of American life (you know, where everyone's rich and has the time to laze around their mansions), they could not believe that someone would want to leave perfect America to come rough it in the Holy Land. Aside for this difference in perspective, the diagram illuminated the many similarities between us. The middle columns in our diagrams quickly began to fill up with the important things in life. Yes, we may not have to wear uniforms in school and they may go to the army, but we all have families we cherish, a religion we respect as the truth, and a land we both love.

When we entered the

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Death-Warrant for The Family: Forbidding Knowledge

BY CHANA WIZNITZER

Education is a tricky task.

To educate a child, student, or adult, and to educate them in a manner that allows for questioning and thought, but simultaneously exposes them to ideas helpful for their personal growth is a difficult thing to do.

And yet, nearly all of us (excluding various tyrants, dictators, and other less exemplary figures) believe in the dissemination of information. The question becomes, how much? How much information is good for us, and is there a concept of a limit? For example, I am not privy to government secrets; neither do I know the name of our country's spies. And this is for the good of our country, for if every man could demand to know government secrets and receive the

answer he wished, any man could betray us.

As I understand it, the concept behind Yeshiva University, behind Stern College for Women, is a kind of synthesis of Torah u-Madda, to use Richard Joel's expression, an environment conducive to forming the "klei-kodesh" (holy vessels) and "lay-kodesh" of tomorrow. We are the future, and for this reason, we must learn both Judaic and secular studies, must be exposed to ideas beyond our own, and must look to other sources and philosophers and believers. Of course, we have the option of taking or refusing to take a certain course, and we are not forced to take classes that might perhaps conflict with our philosophical outlook.

The idea behind this system is that information is helpful to us. Knowing about

other people, cultures and ideas is necessary for being and acting as a committed Jew. Rather than putting on blinders and shutting out the world, we embrace the world and believe that we can join it, believe that we have the ability and capability to act as leaders and revolutionaries in a world where change is necessary and vital.

This is why we do not live in ghettos and do not attempt to block out American society and culture. Rather, we sift through American culture. We discover what is beneficial to our growth, what helps us to learn, and we take that unto ourselves while discarding all that which is unhelpful. I personally believe that "nothing in the world is good or bad, but thinking makes it so," as Shakespeare states, hence every idea has the

capacity to be understood in a light which relates it to Judaism and our lives. We can learn from all things.

The sage Elisha Ben Avuyah was so brilliant an individual that even when he defied God, and acted under the impression that he was unable to return to God, his student accompanied him and learned from him. While some disagree with his student's actions, there is a definite approach which suggests that the student was able to take the "kernel" of good from Elisha ben Avuyah and discard the chaff. We admit that this approach is at least possible.

And yet, today we negate that possibility.

Because today we simply erect barriers. We close off doors. We forbid women from

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For Your Protection: Who Should Decide What's Best For You

BY CHAVA ZAKHAREVICH

My usually sleepy, retirement-oriented Northern California hometown of Belmont had made some rather 'progressive' changes since I had last been home. Joining the bandwagon of almost any city you can think of, the Belmont Council of Elders decreed a ban on smoking. Unlike other dinkier smoking bans that prohibit smoking in public places, the new law passed in November 2006 has not only made it illegal to smoke in all public indoor and outdoor locations, but also inside private cars, apartment complexes, and condominiums. As the law is difficult to enforce, caring folks who happen upon their neighbor smoking inside a car or apartment are welcome to inform the authorities, who will issue a fine reminding the misguided individual of his error.

Perhaps if this were an isolated event limited to the People's Republic of Northern California I would not be so

frightened. Yet, the Big Apple has finally decided to step up to the task of 'keeping the doctors away,' proposing a ban eliminating the use of trans fats in restaurants. This change would incur significant costs from retailers and the end of most pareve kosher baked goods which are usually made with margarine.

This trend of increased government intrusion does not stop at U.S. shores, but continues to grow and prosper in supposedly democratic countries around the globe. In an effort to curb increasing occurrences of child obesity, the British have waged a campaign against the producers of junk food, banning broadcasters from showing advertisements for unhealthy snacks during children's television shows. Thanks to this protective measure children will finally be able to retain their slim physiques and their innocence. They will be sheltered from dangerous foods such as cheese, one of the foods that was victimized as a result of 'nutritional profiling.'

Do not misinterpret the blatant tongue in my cheek as a sign that I condone smoking, eating trans fats, or advertising junk food to children. I do not smoke, hate the noxious fumes, and frankly wish smoking would disappear altogether. I prefer good old monounsaturated olive oil to margarine, and, in the future, may even be opposed to my children watching commercials for dairy products. However, the idea of a government dictating what otherwise legal activity a person can do inside his own home or automobile is one that is ostensibly hazardous to our freedoms. Childhood obesity is a horrifying phenomenon, but the solution is not a heavy-handed ban on all foods deemed unhealthy or the penalization of those companies who legally engaged in sales of those goods. Such measures suppose that parents are unfit to make decisions regarding their children's upbringing, and on a larger scale, the acknowledgment that people are too stupid to know what is good for them. This

perpetuates an unhealthy dependency-mindset, whereby it becomes natural to expect government intrusion in even the most mundane issues.

The creation of government agencies and committees to resolve an issue like smoking is another confirmed method to assure the continued existence of the problem, for if the issue is ever resolved the agency loses its *raison d'être*. This violates the fundamental precept that a given power is not likely to be given back. While much uproar has been made regarding the loss of privacy due to increased security measures as a result of the War on Terror, relatively little has been said regarding another, seemingly invisible global war. This war is so invisible that even those waging the war are unaware that they are sabotaging the same harrowed tenets of freedom so eagerly cited as justification for imposing the limitations we have suffered for the War on Terror. The fact that the enforcement of such laws as

the Belmont smoking ban is contingent upon the reports of 'informed' citizens conjures up images of the totalitarian regime my family left behind. Neighbors informing upon one another was a daily reminder of Marxist brotherly love, and Paulik Morozov, a kid who duly informed Soviet authorities of his parents' treachery, was a national hero. These scenarios beg the question: is the proper role of government to serve the people, or to be served by the people? As a person who has experienced both, I would prefer to stay in the first mode, not the latter.

POINT-COUNTERPOINT

Should SOY Join with TAC to Create the Annual Seforim Sale?

BY SHOSHANA FRUCHTER
AND
ESTHER GENUTH

With the advent of winter, the time of year has come again for seforim seekers to swarm the Wilf Campus in search of Jewish books, Jewish music and various other Judaica. For 35 years the Student Organization of Yeshiva (SOY) has operated the Seforim Sale. However, since the number of joint programs between SOY and Stern College for Women's (SCW) Torah Activities Council (TAC) has been on the rise, there are a variety of reasons as to why the partnership should extend to the Seforim Sale as well.

Currently, the primary student council representing students of the Mazer Yeshiva Program within Yeshiva University (YU) operates the Seforim Sale, which has come to assume the role of North America's largest Jewish book sale. Despite the fact that the majority of workers at the seforim sale are men, women have come to assume important roles. The women of SCW have been integral in the book sale's success by taking on the roles of floor managers, cashiers, and accountants. These women often travel daily, or at least every other day, uptown and dedicate many hours to the sale.

Although some may view the labeling of the Seforim Sale as a joint SOY and TAC effort as merely a semantic difference, it more accurately

represents the proper acknowledgment of the students on both the Beren and Wilf Campuses. The SOY Seforim Sale may be a fundraiser for the students of Yeshiva College, but with proper negotiations the women's work could be acknowledged without losing substantial funds for the men's campus.

Considering that the joint programs between SOY and TAC have been on the rise, it is only appropriate for YU's greatest student operated business and book sale to acknowledge the work of SCW students and bring them to the forefront of the planning and implementation of the sale as well. Giving credit to the women, although they may be a minority, is crucial in setting the stage for more collaboration between both student councils.

The Student Organization of Yeshiva's (SOY) unwillingness to join the annual SOY Seforim Sale with the Torah Activities Council (TAC), its counterpart on the Beren Campus, is not an act of random exclusivity or chauvinism. SOY created the SOY Seforim Sale. This impressive book sale is a project of Mazer Yeshiva Program students who are proud to have their very own sale bear the name of their very own student council. So it has been for over 30 and so it should remain.

Why? Because sometimes student councils projects make it big. The confluence of filling a great student need or interest, finding a viable and practical implementation, and keeping the students continuously engaged throughout a sustained period of time is what makes a very popular program. That confluence is hard to come by. SOY made it huge 35 years ago with the creation of a Jewish book sale to service the entire Jewish community. Certainly the entire Modern Orthodox community in New York celebrates the SOY Seforim Sale and makes use of its great selection. Why should SOY have to share that success?

SOY's joining with TAC would not only leave the organizers without a name for the sale but also leave SOY with many fewer funds for events on campus. In contrast to TAC, whose resources come exclusively from the student activity fee paid by each student, SOY raises money for its events through the sale. The creators of the SOY Seforim Sale are rightfully concerned about the idea of joining with TAC since that will require splitting their funds with TAC.

Officially joining with SOY to run the sale may seem like a worthwhile project for TAC, but as the only religious activities council on the Beren Campus, (as opposed to the four councils for religious activities at Yeshiva College (YC), one for each morning program), TAC has a lot to do. While on paper SOY and TAC's mission statements may be the same, their roles on their campuses are very different from one another; while at YC a great system of many overlapping communities of organized learning and prayer is in place and SOY largely functions as a facilitator to that existing system, TAC's place at Stern College for Women (SCW), where organized learning is just beginning to take shape, is to continue to build up such a community. Joining TAC with SOY to work on the sale would drain the women on the TAC board of much needed time and energy. Instead of working long and hard to cultivate a more involved religious lifestyle for the strong Torah community that SCW has become, as they do now, the board members would be stretched thin working on the sale.

The SOY Seforim Sale has come again and, like every year, it appropriately carries the name of only SOY. SOY invented the sale and deserves to run its project on its own. Considering that TAC's joining with SOY would also distract the TAC board from very necessary work at SCW, the SOY Seforim Sale should continue to be run by and for SOY alone.



LIZ SHELTON
PRESIDENT OF SCW

Contact Liz at
eshelton@yu.edu

Welcome back! A new semester welcomes new faces and old familiar ones. It allows us the opportunity to meet new people as well as to reconnect with those we haven't seen these past two weeks. Hopefully, everyone is well rested and ready to start the semester with a bang.

Stern College for Women's Student Council (SCWSC) has been planning a wonderful semester so look forward to fresh ideas and amazing programming and activities to participate in with your fellow students. Student Council is a great forum to meet students with the same interests as you all while having a great time.

We started the semester by bringing back last semesters used book sale and later this week we will be bringing back a favorite

from last year. Oh yes, it's true; Survivor, otherwise known as Assassin, is back new and even better than before! For all those who remember that crazy week last year, tell your friends, spread the word, and get ready for another crazy week on campus. SCWSC and Yeshiva Student Union are also in the midst of planning major off campus activities in February and March, so stay tuned for more information and keep your planners open and ready to pencil in student council activities.

Another thing I would like to announce is that SCWSC is making a sub-student council board called AIS, Activists In Stern. AIS will work closely with SCWSC in creating new and innovative programming for their fellow students throughout the

semester. If AIS is something that peaks your interests and gets your creative juices flowing, email me at eshelton@yu.edu for further information. I anxiously await your emails.

As I hope I have made clear throughout this article, I am ecstatic about the spring semester and all that it brings. I hope that all my fellow students are also excited and ready to jump in!



SHOSHANA FRUCHTER
TAC PRESIDENT

Contact Shoshana at
srfruch1@yu.edu

CU @ CU!

We are here. We've arrived at second semester. Looking back at first semester, it's unbelievable to realize what we the student body has accomplished. The Batei Midrash are clean and neat thanks to the Beit Midrash Committee. Rosh Chodesh is a time for the community to join together in festive prayer, song and breakfast, as it should be, thanks to the Rosh Chodesh Committee. The Israel Club created an amazing mission to the north of Israel to learn about Israel in the aftermath of the war, and with it a great community of enthused Israel activists to step up the Wilf and Beren Campuses' love of Israel and Israel action. The Chabad Club worked with tens of students outside Brookdale, which was a public display of the miracle of Chanukah, explaining the holiday to those interested and giving out Chanukah cards and *chanukiyot*.

And Torah on Tuesdays with TAC has become standard at

Stern College for Women (SCW). T Cubed stepped up the community of learning on the Beren Campus. That makes all of us, those of us who go each week, those of us who stopped in a couple of times and even those of us who haven't been able to attend but aspire to, so proud.

This semester, schedule your learning for the T Cubed hour. Learn with a friend or be set up with a learning partner to learn something you're interested in, improve your text skills or help someone else with their skills. Tuesday nights at 7:30 p.m. on the 6th floor of 245 Lexington - be there or be squared.

All of this is so exciting. And there's more. Many have asked about *chesed* on campus and now it's here. CU, Chesed Unites! is every Thursday afternoon at 3:15 p.m. Each week has a bunch of different *chesed* organizations waiting on hand for volunteers. Some of the opportunities include visiting elderly homebound in the area, packaging food for City Harvest or visit-

ing a homeless shelter. The program is great for consistent participation since you can join a specific group and really form a relationship with those you visit weekly. For those who can only come once in a while, it's great since the *chesed* opportunities are easily accessible and require little training.

Torah Activities Council (TAC) and Stern College for Women Student Council (SCWSC) are so proud to present Chesed Unites! and are so excited to CU there!

For more information on CU! Email Rebecca of TAC at rbar-net@yu.edu or Rena of SCWSC at rwiesen@yu.edu.



ESTHER BIRNBAUM
PRESIDENT OF SSSB

Contact Esther at
ebirnbaum@yu.edu

I was recently reminded of a conversation I had during my senior year of high school. At that time, with our upcoming graduation bearing down on us, my classmates and I were discussing whether this monumental time in our lives was the beginning of the end or the end of the beginning of life. That meaningless conversation which I partook in about four years ago seems to be very pertinent to the stage that I, along with many of my fellow seniors, currently find myself in.

Upon the beginning of this semester coupled with the usual excitement which comes naturally with the beginning of any semester, for many graduating students there is a sense of anxiety and angst with the knowledge that this is the last semester which will be spent in Stern College for Women (SCW) or Sy Syms School of Business

(SSSB). In a scenario familiar to many students which takes place on the first day of the semester in many classes, is one in which the professor asks students for varying information usually asking them to go around and say their name, year, major and so on. This year in many classes I encountered a different follow up question from the teacher. This question is the one most dreaded by the majority of graduating seniors; "What are your plans for next year? That simple sentence is just horrifying. Many seniors are still at loss to the direction which they will be taking next year.

I personally am filled with anxiety at the prospect of graduating at the end of this semester. It is daunting to think that at the end of this year I will no longer be at SSSB. Although this time of the year is filled with this anxiety

towards the future I want to remind seniors not to forget to take advantage of their last semester here. The opportunities which you take advantage of in these last few months while you are at SCW will cause you to create memories which will last you a lifetime.

On the same note, for all incoming freshmen and sophomores who have just begun your time here, I challenge you to simply look around. Open your eyes to all the opportunities which will be presented right in front of you for the next three or four years. If you partake in what Yeshiva University has to offer you I promise you will enjoy your time here. The next few years are what you make of them, so do not hesitate to begin getting involved right now in anything and everything which interests you.

A Place That Can Make You Cry

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elementary school the next morning we were told to sit down and listen to a short English presentation prepared by the sixth graders. The six girls chosen entered the room nervously and began to tell us about the events that took place in that school on May 15, 1974, not coincidentally the 26th anniversary of Israel's independence. What is now referred to as "The Ma'alot Massacre," was a terror attack in which Lebanese gunmen, demanding the return of 23 political prisoners, took approximately 100 students hostage on the top floor of the school we were sitting in. The students had returned to sleep in the school after a long day of hiking and 21 of the students were ultimately killed. Having just arrived for a day of what we thought would be coloring and singing with the elementary school children, we were caught off guard by the serious turn our morning had taken. The children spoke to us as if the words they were reading were from a common storybook and were more focused on correctly pronouncing the foreign words written on their paper than relaying emotional sympathies. They had grown up with this story; the legacy of these students has always been present in their lives along with the awareness of a

hostile northern neighbor. These events no longer shocked them, especially after having lived through the frightening events of this past summer.

I sat in my seat astonished. I finally understood the shocking photos I had noticed hanging on the walls when we entered the room. The school had decided to take the top floor, the site of the attack, and turn it into a living memorial. There were graphic pictures of wounded students and a small monument with 21 candles burning for those who perished that day. The school's principal explained to us that the town had decided against constructing a memorial that the children would visit just one day of the year and then lock the doors on until the following May. Instead they chose to rebuild the library in that same room, so that it would become a memorial filled with the sound of life and not the silent screams of death.

At first I was taken aback by this confrontational attitude toward the event. But the more thought I gave it, the more I realized that it is this attitude which enables Israel to survive. The principal told us that this past summer the majority of the residents fled to the center of the country. A few stayed back, guiltily feeling they could not abandon their homes and town. But he also told us that the resi-

dents all returned once the rockets stopped falling. They were determined to continue living normal lives, rebuild that which was damaged, and look towards the future with the same resilience that enabled the community to build this candid memorial. Not only did this town open up my eyes to a side of Israel tourists often miss on their insular tours from the Inbal Hotel to the David Citadel, but it also reminded me of the reason Israel still exists today.

A teacher of mine who lives in Israel gave me a book to read over this past vacation. In 1998, Daniel Gordis, a well-known author and teacher, decided to travel to Israel with his family on a year long sabbatical. He began to write beautiful, passionate emails to family members and friends about his family's experiences living in a new country, explaining their eventual decision to stay despite the breakout of the Second Intifada. These emails have been collected in a book called "If A Place Can Make You Cry." The line from which the title was taken has not stopped running through my mind since I read it, and it seems to typify the Israeli resilience I felt so strongly present in Ma'alot. I think it is as Gordis says: "For after all, if there's a place in this world that can make you cry, isn't that where you ought to be?"

Why Auschwitz Must Be Renovated

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they will definitely sweat a little as they attempt to tell you the Holocaust never happened. We have a rarity in the world court: unmistakable evidence. Auschwitz is there. Auschwitz happened. You can see it with your own eyes.

If we lose that, we lose everything.

Yes, there is documentation, yes there is footage, and yes there are museums. Any reminder is a good reminder; any education is necessary and then some. But memorials can be biased and footage can be doctored. Any secondary source can be slandered. Furthermore, if we allow Auschwitz to disappear then we lose the emotional impact. Reading a placard in an exhibit at a clean, humane museum is not the same as staring at the chamber which was the last building many people ever entered. The memory of these horrific, despicable acts—ones we desperately want the world to remember and be appalled by to prevent ever reoccurring—will fade, just like the buildings in Auschwitz. They will dwindle in elementary school curriculums. They will become just another chapter in a textbook. They will hold little relevance for subsequent generations.

And that is the deadliest pos-

sibility of all. If the Holocaust becomes a meaningless term, if it fails to evoke that gut reaction of sorrow, regret, anger, and mourning, then what is there to stop its repetition? United Nations resolutions? Not a very comforting prospect, is it?

It's true that even if we do fortify Auschwitz—if we touch it at all—we open ourselves to the same allegations Holocaust deniers lay daily at the doors of museums and memorials. One of the concerns mentioned by the International Auschwitz Council, which recently voted to modernize the exhibition, was that even simple repair work might enable people to claim that the gas chambers themselves had been tampered with. Frankly, it's a risk we must take. There may be a way to circumvent those claims (perhaps, as one suggestion goes, by placing cement beneath the ground), and there may not. But we cannot let Auschwitz sink out of sight; we cannot let the evidence be erased.

They say those who forget history are condemned to repeat it. We cannot let Auschwitz be forgotten.

Death-Warrant for The Family: Forbidding Knowledge

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learning.

Does this sound disconcerting? Good, because it is.

The newspaper Ha'aretz displayed a shocking headline on January 2: "Rabbinical Panel bars Ultra-Orthodox Women from Continuing Education Programs."

"What?" we may initially think. How could this possibly be?"

It appears that "for years, haredi women high-school graduates have continued their studies in teachers' seminaries. In two years, they receive a certificate enabling them to teach in the haredi schools. Then they continue to study for a third year for a degree equivalent to B.A. and take continuing education programs specializing in certain subjects. This enables them to obtain higher teaching positions and, in turn, receive higher wages."

But the Rabbinical decree changes all of this.

It forbids women to participate in these programs, causing them to be unable to function as the primary breadwinners in a society that supports kollel-learning, forcing them to turn to other jobs, if they will still exist for the new uneducated crop of minds this law hopes to create.

The new laws cancel

programs equivalent to B.A. studies, other programs for people involved with understanding and helping those with learning impairments, and imposes a new requirement that "graduates of teacher seminaries will be able to apply for teaching certificates only after a hiatus of at least one year - to enable them to get married."

And why all this?
Because of fear.

Rabbis are apparently disturbed by women's "academic studies, career ambitions," and the fact that they are studying in programs that are not entirely overseen by rabbis, which means that "all manner of heresy" can creep in; Freud and Western psychology appear to be the worst offenders.

And I have to wonder why there is the need for such fear.

Remaining inclusive, keeping apart, attempting to shut oneself away in a ghetto in order to keep out the outside world—why do these things when our very predecessors did not? We see that Noah followed a similar approach in excluding himself and keeping himself away from the wicked, but he was considered in the wrong for doing this as is later made evident in Yeshaya, where the flood is termed the "waters of Noah."

Why the waters of Noah? Because Noah is blamed for the flood; perhaps he could have prevented it had he pleaded on behalf of the others. He ought to have followed Avraham's later example and pleaded on behalf of the wicked men, men similar to those who inhabited Sodom and Gemorrah. Instead, as Rabbi Chaim Shmulevitz states so beautifully, he refrained, acting off of cold rational judgment rather than emotional feeling—and for this he was punished.

Look at Avraham! Avraham was the son of Terah, the son of an idol-worshipper, and according to the *midrash*, the owner of a shop for idols! And yet he was able to find and discover God. Not only that, but he was able to "create souls," to engage in conversation with others of different faiths and bring them close to God. The Gemara itself describes how Avraham would accomplish this, sometimes using coercion. He would tell those who had supped with him to praise and thank God after the meal. If they refused, he named an exorbitant price as the cost of their meal. If they became alarmed and upset, he asked, "Where else would you find an oasis in the middle of the desert, and someone willing to give you food?"

While Avraham's tactics

may or may not be ideal for use in the modern day, the point remains—he associated with others, had initially been like them, and brought others close to Judaism. His tent was open to all; he was not an isolated individual like Noah was. As Rashi cites, while Noah was righteous in his generation, had he lived in Avraham's generation he would have been an ordinary man, but not particularly righteous in comparison. It is clear that Avraham's way of interacting with people is considered to be greater.

The people who live amongst us are not the seven nations we are commanded to destroy, but rather Noachides, commanded to keep the Noachide laws. While it is true that some do not, and perhaps some are wicked people, the vast majority of them are normal people attempting to lead normal lives and muddling their way through, just as we do. Ascribing to them the desire to destroy or hurt the lives of others through subversive ideas seems absurd. Suggesting that their words are the cause of "women students' defilement" seems irrational.

Perhaps the most poignant part of this issue is the following excerpt of a letter from a haredi woman: "You don't allow the yeshiva students to work for a living, every new ini-

tiative is immediately cut down ... everyone says the women must be the breadwinners, fine ... but let me make a decent living for my family."

While I personally differ on the matter of the philosophy of an approach which limits one's learning based on fear of heresy, feeling that approaching the matter in an open forum is much more conducive to finding truth, the practical ramifications of closing down women's attempts at further study and learning are much more dire. In effect, forbidding women these degrees is to sign a death-warrant for their family, for how will they be able to make a living? What are they supposed to do?

I do not know.

Forbidding knowledge causes a chain of dire events, some with terrible consequences. As well as write a death-warrant for a peaceful family existence. Because under these circumstances, that seems impossible.

NEWS

Dean Bacon, Along with President Joel, Attends White House Meeting Sole Female Representative of Higher-Ed Institutions Communicates Voice of Jewish Women

BY SARA LEFKOVITZ

Dean Karen Bacon, the Monique C. Katz Dean of Stern College for Women (SCW), visited the White House in mid-December, attending a meeting of Jewish educators convened by U.S. President George W. Bush. She was the only administrator to accompany Yeshiva University (YU) President Richard M. Joel, as the two comprised the school's delegation to the conference.

Since his inauguration in 2001, the U.S. President has held formal discussions with Jewish leaders before hosting his annual Chanukah dinner, which brings together prominent American Jews from across the ideological spectrum. Previous meetings have convoked organizational leaders, community rabbis, and day school educators.

This past December, President Bush broadened the scope of his dialogue with the Jewish community, inviting those individuals at the forefront of higher Jewish education. Arnold Eisen of The Jewish Theological Seminary, Dr. Bernard Lander of Touro College, Rabbi Zalman Gifter of the Rabbinical College of Telshe, as well as four undergraduates, were among the 14 in

attendance. The largest institution in this category, Yeshiva, fittingly constituted the largest delegation to the meeting, as it was represented by both Dean Bacon and President Joel.

Though both YU administrators have been previous guests at the White House, this is the first time the two were invited to meet with President Bush as part of a formal conference of Jewish leaders. Both recounted the thrill of the experience. "I was very impressed to be in the White House in this fashion," said Dean Bacon. "Being part of a direct conversation with the president is not something most people experience in their lifetime."

"[My] overwhelming reflection has nothing to do with the president himself," remarked President Joel. "It's really a statement as to the Jewish journey. It's a dual statement- it's a statement about *netzach yisrael* (the continuity of Israel) and the goodness and greatness of the opportunity provided by the United States." With a hint of candid levity, President Joel also admitted his excitement at seeing the Oval Office. "From a little boy's point of view, I always wanted to be in the West Wing," he said.

Though initially scheduled for 30 minutes, the meeting was adjourned after nearly an hour, as the president thoroughly addressed the most salient issues of concern to the Jewish community, namely the general state of world affairs, Israel, and government support for higher education. In that venue, President Joel shared the university's mission of "ennobling and enabling," stressing the importance of educating and instilling students with values.

According to the university president, President Bush spoke without notes for 25 minutes, demonstrating a relative ease in discussing a range of subjects. He offered his assessment of the nation's president as "an intelligent man, a religious man, but not a fanatic, who is comfortable in his skin."

Dean Bacon said she was specifically encouraged by the 43rd President's distinct focus on the repression of women throughout the world. President Bush expressed his belief that these women would eventually rise up in the name of freedom, reclaiming their individual rights. "This is a man who values women and their extraordinary ability to effect change in the

world," Dean Bacon said of the U.S. President. "It was interesting to see that he was so attentive to the role, importance, and power of women."

It is this idea, the notion of the centrality of women, which originally prompted President Joel to request that Dean Bacon be present at the White House meeting as well. During the table discussion, she referred to the efforts of SCW students on behalf of the crisis in Darfur, Sudan. "I was happy to represent our students," the dean of SCW continued. "There's no question that being the only woman who was acting as a representative of an institution made women's presence in the conversation much more pronounced."

"Dean Bacon adds a dimension to any space she occupies," said President Joel. "She is a grand woman and a premier educator who conveys a passion for education and our values. She is a great representative of the Jewish people and of Jewish women."

Despite her uniquely conferred status as the conference's leading female, Dean Bacon harbored no scruples in partaking in the meeting's discourse "along with the rest of

them." President Joel recalled a moment when President Bush used an expletive when referring to a certain demagogue, upon which he turned to Dean Bacon, who was seated next to him, and apologized to her. President Joel cited his amusement at hearing the response of the unfailingly refined dean of SCW, who replied with "say it again, because that's what he is."

The significance of Yeshiva's presence at the conference was not lost on the university's representatives. "The meeting certainly gave prominence to YU," asserted Dean Bacon. "The fact that they have this kind of thing [demonstrates] a recognition that the Jewish community is contributing very profoundly to the development of the U.S." President Joel concurred: "Though this really was just a proforma meeting, we got a sense of strength from the president. We felt like we were part of history."

University President Ahead in Newsweek "Baby Boomer" Poll

BY SHAYNA HOENIG

In a recent survey conducted by Newsweek magazine, Yeshiva University (YU) President Richard M. Joel was nominated for the title of "Most Influential Baby-Boomer" in the category of "Religion and Education." Though the victor has yet to be announced, the university president has enjoyed a comfortable lead over the other contenders.

The aim of the survey, currently in its second year, was to designate successful and prominent individuals who are members of the baby boomer generation, which is roughly defined as those born during the postwar period, between 1945 and 1964. According to Newsweek's Projects Editor Mark Coatney, the magazine was looking for a

"wide cross-range" of candidates for each of the survey's categories. "[President Joel is a] good representative of both the religious and educational aspects that we were looking for," he explained. Other nominees in the category of "Religion and Education" include Archbishop

Summers, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology President Susan Hockfield, among others.

Despite the prestige of his competitors, President Joel claimed an early lead in the poll, earning 36% of the 30,313 votes cast as of January 19, 2006. Coatney suggested that the statis-

tics reflect the widely-held perception that YU is a well-established university. Rabbi Josh Joseph, chief of staff to President Joel, shared his enthusiasm about the survey. "It was fun and exciting to see the

students, alumni and the rest of the community rally around and vote for the university because it really was a vote for Yeshiva University more than anything else," he said. "It shows that Yeshiva University's name is out there and it was a nice showing of spirit. The key thing is that it's

online polls boasted President Joel's nomination, a university-wide email was circulated by Jonah Raskas (YC '07), president of the Yeshiva College Student Association, encouraging students to participate in the survey. Coatney reported that "it was pretty clear when all of you guys decided to vote," recalling the sudden influx of ballots cast in favor of President Joel.

"I think it's important to show that a Jewish leader can be recognized for his impact beyond just our inner circle of Jews," remarked Shani Chesir (SCW '08). "It's important that other people can recognize that there is [an] interaction between Jews and [the] world at large."



of Atlanta Wilton Gregory, Tom Vander Ark of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Sandy Kress of the "No Child Left Behind" project, Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, former Harvard President Larry

was fun and exciting to see the

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First SCW Dean of Students Remembered for Her Dignity and Dedication

BY DEBORAH ANSTANDIG

Last month the presidents of the three top-ranking universities in New York City participated in a colloquium entitled "Academic Integrity, the Middle East, and the State of the Academy" at The Jewish Center on the Upper West Side. Yeshiva University (YU) President Richard M. Joel moderated the panel discussion between himself and his counterparts at Columbia University (CU) and New York University (NYU): Lee C. Bollinger and John Sexton, respectively. The dialogue, part of the Rudin Lecture Series, focused on the core elements of undergraduate education and was attended by over 600 people.

The Jewish Center serves not only as a synagogue, but also as a center for life and learning in the broader Jewish community. Rabbi Ari Berman, an alumnus of Yeshiva College, the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Judaic Studies, and the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS), serves as the synagogue's rabbi, and was the coordinator of the event.

"We created the panel in order to consider issues about the nature of today's university," explained Rabbi Berman. Among the topics of discussion were how a university develops its mission, to what extent a university is responsible for the moral education of its students, and how Israel is portrayed on campus. Rabbi Berman also mentioned that this was the first forum for Presidents Bollinger and Sexton to speak publicly about these issues.

Bollinger articulated his belief that a university should teach students how to "hold in one's mind the complexity of a subject and see things in a complicated way." Sexton agreed, explaining that universities must serve as havens for "scholarly temperament" and critical thinking. The presidents also expressed their views about pre-

senting multiple voices and opinions pertaining to issues of anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias.

President Joel subsequently posed a question concerning Bollinger's and Sexton's responses to allegations that their universities tolerate anti-Semitic and anti-Israel activity on campus. The most recent example occurred in September, after Lisa Anderson, dean of Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, invited Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has achieved notoriety for his anti-Israel invectives and denying of the Holocaust, to speak at the university's World Leaders' Forum. After much student opposition, Bollinger withdrew the invitation, explaining that he could not ensure adequate security for the event.

Both Presidents discredited the notion that their institutions are anti-Semitic and anti-Israel. In fact, Sexton asserted that "we charge our faculty not only with imparting to the students fixed and permanent truths, but extending our comprehension of truth." "There's a difference between trying to inculcate an ideological agenda and teaching techniques which try to explore the complexity of the subject," added Bollinger.

Despite the serious nature of some of the issues addressed, the tone of the evening was both pleasant and engaging. Rabbi Berman credits President Joel with facilitating conversation that was both "delicate and insightful while delivering an evening of humor, charm, and pointed conversation about the essence of higher education. President Joel was the natural person to moderate this discussion because of his background and knowledge of a variety of universities from his careers at both Hillel and now at Yeshiva," he said. "As a Modern Orthodox congregation, The Jewish Center feels very connected to Yeshiva and its ideals."

Eisenberg Presidential

Fellow for Institutional Advancement at YU, Menachem Menchel (YC '06), was inspired by the dialogue that ensued between the presidents. "For Presidents Bollinger and Sexton, the purpose of a university education is exposure to both scholarship and the complexity of ideas," he noted. "Yet for Yeshiva, academic study on its own is incomplete. While education for its own sake is significant, Yeshiva teaches that knowledge must be channeled to serve the community at large. Listening to President Joel express this message makes me feel like I am a part of something glorified by being connected to Yeshiva."

Hindy Poupko (SCW '05), a former presidential fellow for YU's Center for the Jewish Future and current Wexner Graduate Fellow pursuing a master's degree in both public policy and Israeli studies, was also in attendance. "As a graduate of Yeshiva I felt proud to be a member of the audience," she said. "And a current student at NYU, I appreciated hearing how much President Sexton values the Yeshiva dual curriculum system. I actually bumped in to President Sexton the next day on campus and he told me how much he felt like he gained from the evening."

A transcript of the event is available at The Jewish Center website at www.jewishcenter.org

President Richard Joel Chairs Panel of NYC University Presidents

BY ESTHER BARUH

Elizabeth Isaacs Gilbert, the first dean of students at Stern College for Women (SCW), passed away in late December at the age of 104. Dean Isaacs, as she was known by her students, left an indelible impression on all who passed through the doors of the college during her 12 year tenure at SCW.

Dean Karen Bacon remembers Dean Isaacs vividly. "Highly cultured, with enormous dignity and a regal bearing despite her diminutive height, she inspired generations of Stern College Women to develop themselves both intellectually and personally," she said. "However, that inspiration did not come without a price. Dean Isaacs was demanding of herself and of others. In that sense she often intimidated the meek who only discovered over time that under her stern demeanor was a woman who truly cared for and believed in each and every student."

Dr. Samuel Belkin, then president of Yeshiva University (YU), asked Dean Isaacs to serve as an advisor and director of general student affairs in 1955; she became the first dean of students at SCW. SCW had been founded the previous year, establishing itself as the foremost Jewish liberal arts college for women. As an alumna of Barnard College, Dean Isaacs aspired for her students to achieve parity with undergraduate women from other institutions of higher learning. Dean Isaacs introduced her own personal vision, which was for the women of SCW to become community leaders, said her daughter, Nancy Klein. "The idea was hopefully that they were training women to go out and be active in the Jewish community, not only as teachers but as community leaders, in the business world, scientific world - everywhere they went, they should be leaders."

Dean Isaacs, as the first dean of students, was instrumental in laying the groundwork for what later developed into a full-fledged Office of Student Affairs. "[She] really set up the student counseling," recalled Klein. "She kind of invented the job. She handled all the problems that the women had with teachers, friends..." Dean Isaacs also initiated a Shabbat hospitality program where she arranged for undergraduates to be housed with various families in the vicinity.

The current associate Dean of Students at SCW, Zeldia Braun, attended SCW as an undergraduate while her predecessor still occupied the posi-

tion. She remembers Dean Isaacs as a strong supporter of women's education and as someone who empowered students to "give better than their best." Dean Braun reflected on her role in comparison to that of Dean Isaacs. "The dean of students and student affairs has always been [to deal with] the non-academic side of student life and that's consistent," she noted.

However, the life of women in the 1950s is substantially different from what it is today, and with the changing of the times, the role of the dean of students has shifted as well. The growth of the university and SCW itself has also impacted the nature of the position. Fundamentally though, the core elements of the job have not changed. "Student Affairs still has the same richness," Dean Braun emphasized. "The office is still very much concerned with the well-being of the students of SCW and each individual student's experience."

Dean Braun is involved in the planning of a special lecture to be held on January 24, 2007 in memory of Dean Isaacs, entitled "When Ordinary People Do Extraordinary Things." Rochel Berman, author of "Dignity Beyond Death: The Jewish Preparation for Burial," will speak about the purification process performed on the deceased in accordance with Jewish law. Dean Isaacs herself was a member of the Westchester *chevra kadisha* (Jewish burial society), and the lecture was designed to honor her legacy as well as to further the causes which Dean Isaacs so strongly championed.

Klein reiterated her mother's dedication to the YU community. "I have to say that her twelve years at SCW were probably the happiest and most productive years of her life," she said. "What really interests me is that I'm getting letters from women [who were students under Dean Isaacs]. They describe her as a role model, dignified, regal, and they really respected her a lot."

"Mrs. Elizabeth Isaacs Gilbert was an unusual woman," eulogized Dean Bacon. "She moved into her later years with the same vigor and dignity that defined her youth, and she passed away surrounded by a large and respected family who cherished her wisdom and her fortitude." Dean Isaacs lived to see four generations of descendants, from her two children, down to her seven grandchildren, 35 great-grandchildren, and 11 great-great grandchildren.

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FEATURES

YU Students Travel Across the Globe Over Winter Break

YU Undergraduates Volunteer in Guatemala

BY KAYLA ARONS

A group of 14 Yeshiva University (YU) students devoted one week of their winter break to a humanitarian mission in Rabinal, Guatemala. The trip took place from January 7-14 and was facilitated by YU's Center for the Jewish Future (CJF) in affiliation with the American Jewish World Service (AJWS). The mission was headed by CJF Director of Operations Alan Brava and Presidential Fellow Laya Pelzner. With a presence on both the Wilf and Beren Campuses, the CJF exists to combine and utilize YU's intellectual resources in an effort to enrich, enable, and empower the Jewish community. The CJF strives to cultivate an intense sense of pride and spirit among students, while offering communities the tools needed to perpetuate and strengthen their Jewish affiliation.

The 14 participants were chosen from a group of more than 60 applicants to the winter break

program. The concept of traveling to a third-world country in an effort to help indigent people was introduced to the YU student body last year by Rebecca Stone, a Presidential Fellow who sought the integration of YU students into the already existent AJWS Alternative Break humanitarian programs. After last year's initial trip to Honduras proved a success, YU was assigned this year to the small town of Rabinal, Guatemala for the concentration of their aid efforts. The students were required to attend four meetings prior to their trip to prepare them for the work expected, as well as possible halakhic issues that would arise in the foreign, secular environment.

The group was assigned to dig a trench, which served as a draining system in a school. The participants, who stayed on the upper level of a woman's house, worked with the New Hope Foundation, an organization that focuses on bettering community education. Since constant flooding of the school interfered with

its functioning, YU students worked alongside members of the community with shovels and hoes in an effort to improve the school's construction.

"Our day was completely



packed," explained participant Gabi Goodfriend (SCW '09). "We got up at six in the morning, worked on the trench until lunch, and then tried to integrate ourselves into the kids' daily activities; we played soccer with them, and they taught us some of their games as well."

The YU group also attended afternoon seminars and discussions centered on the issues of

poverty, social activism, and globalization. One afternoon the students visited a small, very impoverished section of the village. "We looked at the clothes on the laundry lines and saw holes in all of them," recounted Pelzner. "Then we saw the little children running around wearing clothes that had holes everywhere."

The next afternoon the group met with the founder of the New Hope Foundation, a man whose entire family, with the exception of his sister, was killed in a 1982 massacre that occurred in the village. The students also visited an artisan quarter in which they learned how to make pottery.

"We really gained great insight into something otherwise unknown to us," observed Pelzner. "These people have so much less than anything we are used to seeing, it just really made us appreciate what we have, and we realize our responsibility to give back to the community."

Participant Benjy Neren (YC '07) echoed this sentiment.

"These kids come to school and are so enthusiastic about learning, the whole time they are just sitting and waiting for their books to arrive," he said. "When they are at school, they are happy; there are no signs of poverty. We really forget how fortunate we are."

Pelzner explained that all of the participants made a commitment to get involved in social activism upon their return from their trip and to achieve that goal, the group will meet in the coming weeks to discuss plans for continued humanitarian aid efforts.

Lman Achai Israel Leadership Experience: Learning and Teaching for Israel

BY ABBY ATLAS

In November 2006, when students submitted their applications for the Lman Achai Israel Leadership Experience, a Yeshiva University (YU) Israel Club mission to the north of Israel to be held during winter break, many did not fully understand the goals of the trip. The application included a "social contract" that each applicant signed, promising his or her commitment to bringing back efforts on behalf of Israel to campus after the mission. Even after signing their names to this document, many students remained in the dark regarding the purpose of the mission and what exactly they were supposed to bring back to campus.

Each student, therefore, had his or her own motivation for participating. One student noted that her incentive for wanting to join was that her airfare would be subsidized by the Center for the Jewish Future (CJF). Another student noted that he wished to return to his alma mater yeshiva in Israel to learn for the two weeks but his parents did not think that was reason enough for him to make the trip. But, when

he mentioned the idea of a *chesed* mission, his parents had a change of heart.

During the three four-hour long leadership training sessions held prior to the mission, Shuki Taylor, who flew in from Israel specifically to conduct the training seminars, emphasized the unique goals of the mission. Taylor, an English speaking Israeli on staff at the YU Israel office in Jerusalem, worked from Israel to design the mission, together with the input of the YU Israel Club. He identified the goals of the mission as educational, to learn the effects of Israel's war with Lebanon in the summer of 2006. However, more than educational, the goal of the mission was to simply talk to Israelis who had suffered through the war, by providing them with a forum in which they could talk about the war, a topic which many Israelis have avoided discussing for the past few months, though emotionally, needs to be addressed. Taylor also stressed the importance of informing the Israelis about what was done in America in response to the war.

Reflecting the unique goals of the mission, the itinerary of the Lman Achai Israel

Leadership Experience was very different than most other missions to Israel. Instead of the usual activities like painting bomb shelters, volunteering at soup kitchens, and planting trees with the Jewish National Fund, the activities of the Lman Achai mission mostly involved meeting with people. Taylor emphasized in the training sessions that meet-



ing with people in Israel and talking to them would have a much more powerful effect than the typical *chesed* mission activities. Talking with people, such as the high school students in Karmiel and Tsfat, two cities in the North of Israel, could reshape their self images. Telling the Israelis about the respect the American students hold for them as settlers of the land of Israel could change the way these students see themselves, from "victims" to "heroes," said Taylor.

Furthermore, having each American student speak about his or her personal responses to the war would show that this respect and concern for Jews in Israel is manifested in actions. Creating presentations that focused on this relationship between the Jews of Israel and the Diaspora and performing them in Israeli high schools was therefore a major focus of the mission.

In these training seminars, the group was divided into four subunits which each prepared a forty-five minute presentation focusing on Israel-Diaspora relations. These programs used various media, such as PowerPoint presentations and skits, to demonstrate not only what was done in the Diaspora for the war effort but, more importantly, why it was done. After preparing these presentations, however, one junior commented that she "was not comfortable going into Israeli schools and telling them what was done in America. I was afraid they would respond 'so what, I sat in a bomb shelter, my brother was in the war.'"

The group met in Israel at the YU office in Jerusalem. From there, they traveled to the North

of Israel where the mission officially began. On the second day of the mission, when the time came to present these programs to the high school students of the Amit School in Karmiel, the group of YU students was skeptical as to how the program would turn out and whether or not the Israeli eleventh and twelfth graders would care at all about the message of the program.

During the programs, it became apparent that the feelings of guilt that the American students had and the indifference they anticipated from the Israelis were unfounded. The Israeli students were touched by the presentations. The students of YU were surprised to learn that the Israelis knew nothing of the multitude rallies, *tehillim* groups, and other initiatives that took place in the Diaspora during July and August of 2006. "It was shocking to learn that these high school students truly had no idea that the world cared about them," said Ezra Sutton (YC '09).

While the Israelis were impressed when they learned that they had what one woman called a "strong back" of support in the

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CJF Organizes Coast to Coast Program of Jewish Outreach

BY YAFFI SPODEK

This winter break, 20 men and women from Yeshiva University (YU) had the privilege of spending 12 days traveling down the East Coast to different Jewish communities, granting them the opportunity to spread their Jewish knowledge and their love and enthusiasm for learning, while simultaneously educating those around them. The trip was organized by the Center for the Jewish Future (CJF) as part of its new Jewish Life Coast to Coast Program.

The goal of the program was to expose the participants to Jewish communities outside of the tri-state area.

Each community that the group visited was at a different stage in their development, with some thriving and vibrant, full of Orthodox Jews of all ages, while others were made up of only a handful of people, some of them pluralistic and completely non-religious. "Through this trip, our students got a closer look at Jewish communal life and leadership," said Rabbi Ari Rockoff, director of the CJF's Department of Community Initiatives. "Many of them have already expressed interest in the communities they've visited, and we hope that interest will inspire them to pursue future roles as leaders in Jewish life."

Rabbi Rockoff accompanied the group on the trip, as did Aliza Abrams, who, in her role as coordinator, was involved in the plan-

ning and extensive programming. According to Abrams, the trip was geared towards giving students a closer look at different communities and what makes them successful. To achieve that, in each place that the group traveled to, they spoke with some leaders of the local community, rabbis and educators, and they also ran programming for the



Addlestone Hebrew Academy in Charleston, South Carolina

children in the synagogues and schools.

"By going into the schools, we were trying to show the kids that you can be normal and cool, and also religious," said Laura Shuman (SCW '08), one of the women on the trip. She explained that in some of the out-of-town communities, especially the smaller ones, the kids just did not feel a strong connection to Judaism. By the same token, the YU students discovered that there is Jewish life outside of New York and that there are communities who are struggling with the reality that they face in terms of dwindling numbers of people. But, Shuman observed, "there is a whole set of traditional Jewish values that we think have been lost, but the South has kept them alive, because it means some-

thing to them...they have been imbued with a deep, deep sense of Jewish identity."

The trip commenced on January 2, when the group traveled by bus from New York to Baltimore, Maryland, where they visited the JCC of Park Heights. Baltimore was one of the larger, more developed communities that the group visited. "It was a great model of a thriving out-of-town community," Shuman observed.

After Baltimore, the next stop was Richmond, Virginia, which had a much smaller population of Jews. In Richmond, the group had the opportunity to speak with the local Jewish leaders of Kneseth Beit Israel and they stayed overnight in community members' houses.

The next leg of the trip took the students farther down South, into Charleston, South Carolina, which is one of the oldest Jewish communities on the East coast. While dining on southern fried chicken, the group implemented family learning programs at Brith Sholom Beth Israel. On their second day, they conducted programs for third through eighth graders at the Addlestone Hebrew Academy, where they also met with and spoke to the school principal. Shuman described the *shul* there as "beautiful" and she enjoyed the lecture that they heard from the local rabbi, Rabbi Ari Sytner, whose words she considered "an inspiration, full of clarity and energy." President of the Student Organization of Yeshiva (SOY), Josh Vogel (YC '07) was particularly impressed by the dedication of the community. Many members are not religious yet, they go to *shul* every week because they believe that "it is important for the community," he said. "Their unity was par-

ticularly impressive. Together they discuss how to raise their kids and imbue them with Jewish values. They work very hard to sustain Jewish life in their small communities."

The group then headed to Atlanta, Georgia, where they visited the Young Israel of Toco Hills. Rabbi Michael J. Broyde spoke to the students about his experiences being a rabbi outside of the New York area. After that they flew to New Orleans, where they saw the areas of the city that were hit hardest by Hurricane Katrina. They saw a *shul* which had been completely destroyed by the water from the hurricane and were given a tour of the ninth ward. They also did some clean-



Congregation Beth Israel in New Orleans, Louisiana

ing and restoration work around the area, and volunteered with NECHAMA, a group that facilitates disaster response volunteer projects. One project that the group undertook was gutting a damaged house that had literally not been touched since Katrina. Wearing hard hats, masks, and gloves, they cleared out the entire house and took off all the paneling from the walls. The students also spent *Shabbat* there with

Congregation Beth Israel and enhanced the *Shabbat* atmosphere by giving *shuirim* to the community.

From there, they flew to Miami, where they spent the day at Hillel Academy and Maimonides Day School and ran several programs for the students. At the Highland Lakes Beit David Synagogue, the participants facilitated an adult learning program. After that, they traveled to Boca Raton, where they coordinated an educational program for adults at both the Boca Raton Synagogue and the Boca Kollel. The second and last *Shabbat* of the trip was spent in Boynton Beach and Highland Lakes with local families who hosted them

for the weekend. There they met with high school students and ate meals with members of the community. While the group was in Florida, Rabbi Kenneth Brander, dean of the CJF, came down and spoke to the students and the community. He

spoke about how he had built up the community of Boca over the last 10 years; making it the thriving community it is today complete with *shuls*, schools, and *mikvahs*.

The trip was deemed very successful and the YU students who participated gained a lot from their experiences. They really felt that they made an

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Student Volunteers Build Houses in Georgia

BY ALIZA VISHNIAVSKY

This past winter break, while some students were relaxing at home or enjoying a leisurely vacation, a group of 23 students were hard at work, using their bare hands to build a house in Georgia. The mission, organized by Bnei Akiva, a Zionist youth group, was coordinated by Rachel Weisel (SCW '08) and David Wermuth (YC '07). The group consisted of 20 Yeshiva University (YU) students, as well as one student from Yale, one from Columbia, and another from New York University. The students joined forces with Habitat for Humanity to build a house, which will eventually become home to a family that cannot afford a house at market price.

Habitat for Humanity is an international nonprofit organization that serves communities all over the world, from developed countries like the United States to

third world countries on almost every continent. According to the organization's website, Habitat for Humanity, founded in 1976, has built 200,000 houses which were then sold to families at a no-profit rate and with affordable loans. The organization prides itself on fighting the housing crisis that has developed around the world. Two billion people worldwide live in conditions of poverty, enduring overcrowding and lacking basic necessities, while affordable housing is becoming more and more limited.

To travel down to Georgia, the group rented vans and drove over twenty hours to their building site. On the way, they stopped in Atlanta for Shabbos and ran programming for the youth there. "It really made our group bond," commented Miriam Ausubel (SCW '08), one of the volunteers on the trip. "Listening to some people play geography for six hours straight was quite an expe-

rience." When they arrived at the building location in Eastman, GA, the participants were immediately put to work, rotating between the physical labors of



building the house and working in the thrift shop Habitat for Humanity operates to raise funds for its cause. Weisel enjoyed both parts of the experience. "Using

power tools was awesome, and I found some really fun stuff to buy at the thrift shop," she said.

Under the guidance of Habitat for Humanity, the group built the entire house, from nailing the shingles to lifting the entire roof onto the house. "Nothing was too small or too big for the people at Habitat to show us how to do," Weisel explained. "They taught us the small things like hammering nails and they taught us the more complicated things like using huge power tools."

Last year Bnei Akiva ran the program for the first time and due to its success, organized it for the second time this year. According to Ausubel, Habitat for Humanity said that the YU group from last year was the best they had encountered all year, and that this year's delegation was no different. "They said that they anticipated that it would be the same success, and they were very

impressed," she said. "It was a great *kiddush Hashem*."

The week also had a great impact on those who participated. Weisel observed that it made her view her own house differently since she now knows firsthand about the great amount of physical effort it takes to put a house together. "It makes me appreciate my own house more," she said. "It was a week of giving to a community through physical *tzedakah*." As for a highlight of the mission, Weisel could not pinpoint one specific moment, saying, "everything that week was amazing."

Beyond 34th Street

BY JACKIE FAST

The beginning of a new semester is the time of year when students visit the Barnes and Noble on 18th Street and 5th Avenue more than they'd care to, sometimes venturing half a dozen visits within a week in order to locate all of their required textbooks. Looking at the bookstore visits penciled over my to-do list, I think it's appropriate to dedicate this column of "Beyond 34th Street" to my favorite independent bookstores in Manhattan.

Since the borough is so densely populated and on the whole very educated, the city manages to support more bookstores than almost anywhere else in the world, including many that specialize in specific interests. As the "Big-Box" bookstores, Borders Books and Barnes and Noble, begin to take over the country, we should recognize the value of the small independent bookstores that remain. The following are my ten favorite small bookstores in Manhattan.

1. **The Strand Bookstore** - This East Village bookstore claims to have over 18 miles of used books and it is quite possible that this isn't an exaggeration. Lauded by many as the world's largest used-book store, The Strand has a small store feel while containing almost every title imaginable. Most of their paperbacks are priced extremely reasonably and the books displayed on their sidewalk sales are dirt-cheap. Make sure not to visit

The Strand with a large tote bag because the guards will make you check it in.

Getting there: Located on Broadway and 12th Street

Walk or take the 6 to 14th Street-Union Square and walk down two blocks.

2. **New York Public Library (NYPL) Gift Shop** - It's not a surprise that the largest public library in America also has an expansive gift shop. Since the Central Branch of the NYPL doesn't place its collections on publicly viewable shelves, the books in the gift shop are the only books in the library one can peruse at their leisure. Books in the gift shop primarily explore the history of New York and of the library.



The New York Public Library

Getting there: Located on 5th Avenue and 40th Street

Walk or take the 6 to 42nd Street and walk over to 5th Avenue.

3. **Shakespeare Bookstore** - Although the selection sometimes leans toward cutting-edge, recently published novels, there is also a broad variety of fascinating non-fiction titles about history and politics.

Getting there: Located on

Broadway between 4th and 5th Streets, two blocks away from Washington Square Park in Greenwich Village

Walk or take the 6 to Astor Place and walk around the corner.

4. **Complete Traveler** - Although this store has been mentioned previously in Beyond 34th Street, it is such a treasure, and so nearby, that it's worthy of another reference. This small bookstore contains an enviable collection of rare travel guides. Be sure to check out the 19th century manuals for visiting the Holy Land and the piles of beautiful antique maps.

Getting there: Located on Madison at 35th Street
You might as well walk over.

5. **Argosy** - Located on 59th Street, in one of the most prestigious streets in the city for high-end boutiques, Argosy fits into the neighborhood perfectly. Among its five stories of used and rare books is an outstanding selection with very high prices. Although you may not be interested in buying anything, the ambiance makes for a wonderful browsing experience so long as the employees don't stare at you suspiciously for "just looking."

Getting there: Located on 59th Street between Park and Lexington Avenues

Walk or take the 6 to 59th street and it's on the block when you exit.

6. **J. Levine and Sons Jewish Books and Judaica** - This shop claims to be one of the oldest

continually operated bookstores in New York. Many Stern College for Women (SCW) students shop at J. Levine to purchase required books and texts for their Judaic Studies courses. In addition, the store includes a fine selection of Jewish music and will happily order books that are out of stock upon request. Be sure to ask about their SCW student discount.



The Strand Bookstore

Getting there: Located on 30th Street between 5th and 6th avenues

J. Levine is a five-minute walk from the Beren Campus.

7. **The Old Print Shop** - For students living in Schottenstein Residence Hall, the Old Print Shop is right around the corner on Lexington Avenue. The shop contains an absolutely remarkable selection of prints, maps, and fine art from 18th and 19th century American history. It is certainly worth a visit but one can also peruse the collection on their website, www.oldprintshop.com.

Getting there: Located on Lexington Avenue between 29th and 30th Streets; it's a four minute walk from the school buildings.

8. **Crawford Doyle Booksellers** - Madison Avenue in the Upper East Side is one of the most pleasant shopping areas in Manhattan, combining high-end stores with the relatively quiet and relaxing air of the surrounding residential neighborhood. Located among expensive European clothing boutiques is Crawford Doyle Booksellers, a small old-fashioned bookstore with a remarkable selection packed into its minimal square-footage.

Getting there: Located on Madison Avenue between 81st and 82nd Streets

Walk or take the 6 to 77th Street and walk about five blocks.

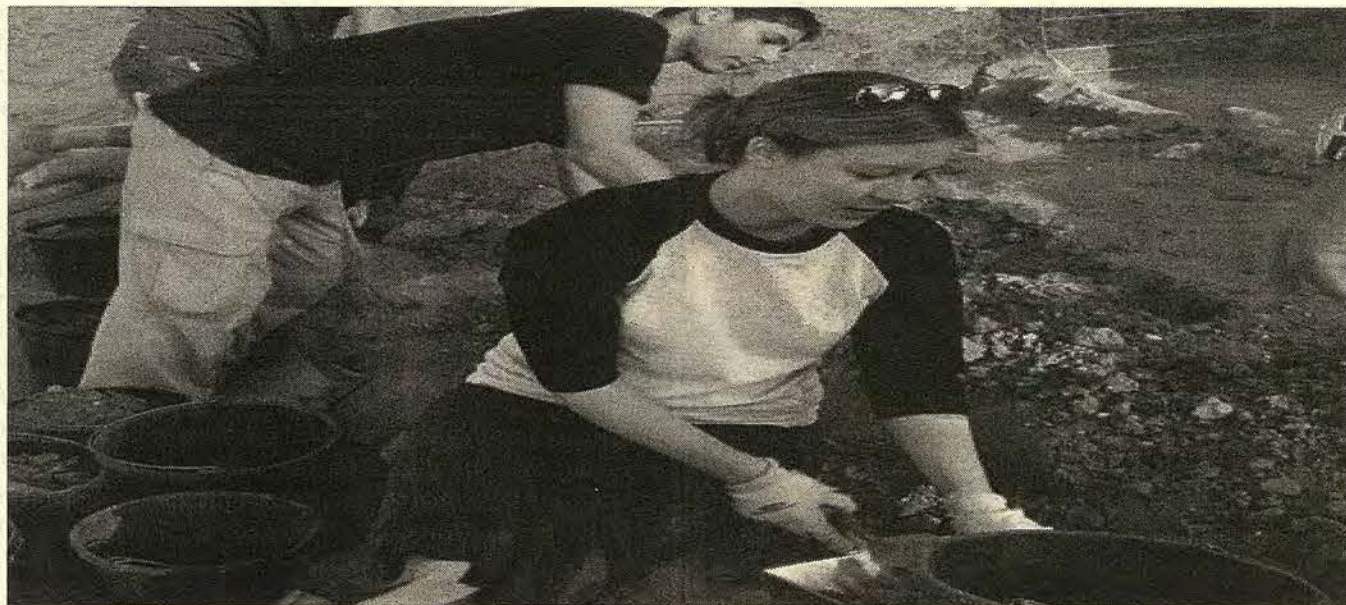
9. **Judaica Treasures and JT Café** - Located on the Upper West Side, Judaica Treasures is one of my favorite Judaica stores in New York. Although the Hebrew seforim selection is a little bit disappointing, there is a wide selection of English Jewish books of all types, as well as gifts and artwork in styles ranging from traditional to sleek and modern. The finest feature of this store, however, is the fact that it is also a dairy café, complete with cute wicker chairs among the bookshelves where patrons can enjoy their lunches.

Getting there: Located on 72nd Street between Broadway and West End Avenue
Take the 1 from 34th Street to 72nd Street and walk over one block.

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YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

Increase of Students on Beren Campus

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abroad, including countries like France, Canada, and South America.

The influx of students in recent years can be attributed to a number of factors. "Growth is the plan of the university," said Dr. Fisher. "This is a planned and expected phenomenon." He pointed to the popularity of what has been commonly referred to as the "Israel option." The S. Daniel Abraham Israel Program has expanded tremendously, and by awarding credit for study in Israel it has encouraged many students to stay abroad a semester longer, causing them to enroll in the spring instead of at the beginning of the academic year.

The dramatic increase in students can also be ascribed to the recruiting efforts that have been specifically geared towards SCW. "We've been hiring new admissions faculty for the Beren Campus to close the gap between the men's and women's enrollment," Dr. Fisher explained. A permanent admissions office, headed by Geri Mansdorf, is now located on the Beren Campus and has a full-time staff dealing exclusively with women's enrollment.

Moreover, the university has steadily increased and improved the events held on campus for parents and educators. Model

UN, orientation activities and the annual Sarachek Tournament have attracted prospective students in greater numbers and thus have encouraged greater enrollment.

However, the sudden influx of the last two years has placed serious space constraints on the already crowded facilities. "All of these changes are wonderful for the university and we're very excited, but we're also suffering from growing pains," said Dr. Fisher. These growing pains have resulted in the extensive construction of the lobby in the main college building and of the newly acquired 12th and 14th floors in 205 Lexington. This space includes President Joel's Presidential Suite with a state-of-the-art boardroom which will be used for classes as well as events. Housing has also been impacted by the rising numbers of incoming students, as approximately 80 women have required accommodations for the spring, a greater amount than usual, said Rachel Kraut, director of residence life on the Beren Campus.

New Women's Fellowship Marks Watershed in CJF-SCW Alliance

continued from front page

esty, budgeting, boards, and volunteer mobilization, and are usually followed by discussion amongst the students.

"The Women's Leadership Fellowship was born from the excitement about the potential contributions Stern graduates could make to the Jewish community," explained Jordana Schoor, director of special projects at the CJF and the program's coordinator. "Already passionate, learned, and experienced leaders, the selected fellows are upper-classwomen who have exhibited their skills and commitment to serving the Jewish people."

Interestingly, the fellowship was not openly advertised, as Schoor requested CJF staff members, SCW administrators, and student leaders nominate candidates of their own choosing. After interviewing approximately 40 undergraduates, Schoor assembled a small cadre of 11 participants, most of them seniors. Her decisions were based on the applicants' previous communal involvement and her desire to create a multifarious group, representing the varied religious, social, and geographic elements of the student body at SCW.

"They represent the diversity of Stern College and Orthodox women in general," said Schoor. "But they share a desire to contribute to the Jewish community in significant ways, to grow as individuals and professionals by meeting role models, learning skills, and thinking about how they can enhance the Jewish future using their talents and passion—now and in the future."

Freida Kahn (SCW '07), an accounting major at the Sy Syms School of Business, related her enthusiasm at being afforded the chance to speak with individuals who have demonstrated throughout their professional and private lives that Orthodox women can have it all, achieving success both as mothers and community leaders. "Being a Jewish woman, it's an important value in my life to raise a family," she remarked. "As in many jobs, [volunteer

work] is not 9 to 5. It's interesting to see what that means for these women practically as a daily experience."

Though planning to initially work at an accounting firm, Kahn described her hopes to advance into non-profit and administrative work in the future. "I am so appreciative of the opportunity to meet Orthodox women who are active in their communities and can serve as role models for me in terms of my career aspirations," she continued. "This will help me see what's out there and what's realistic and will give me insight into a world [which] I wouldn't normally have access to, in a very real way."

Nina Bursky-Tammam (SCW '08), another participant, viewed the new fellowship from an alternative lens. "It sounds like it could be a great opportunity to create a common sense of responsibility and leadership," she said. "Once you create a core of people who are equipped to do something, it has the potential to spread to the entire community. I hope this can act as that core that can spread the message of leadership to Stern or the entire Jewish community."

Bursky-Tammam, who is pursuing a degree in physics, acknowledged that many women refrain from taking more public leadership roles because they are hindered by feelings of self-consciousness. She pointed to the fellowship's "potential to prevent women from taking the back-seat."

By partnering with the Office of Alumni Affairs, Schoor hopes to better facilitate interactions between the undergraduates and their mentors. Moreover, as most of the participants are seniors, many of them will shortly become alumni themselves. The importance of networking with community leaders is therefore especially imperative and will enable students to remain actively involved, even after graduating.

Aside from encouraging women to attain greater leadership visibility in the general

Jewish community, the fellowship also seeks to redress prior deficiencies on the part of the CJF in engaging the students of the Beren Campus. "The CJF and Stern College see women as an essential part of strengthening the Jewish future and this is but one attempt to educate and expose them to opportunities, issues, and skills to guide them on their paths to success," concluded Schoor.

Rabbi Kenneth Brander, dean of the CJF, expounded on the shifting focus of the center. "For all the years I was a student at YU, the community services division was located on the Wilf Campus with almost no interaction with the Beren Campus. We are trying to change that paradigm," he said.

"While there are many women role models at Stern College for Women and women's leadership, there's not enough so we wanted to give them more of an opportunity to do that," Rabbi Brander continued. "The Wilf Campus has exposure to additional leadership models because they have the rabbinical school, so this is a program which we felt specifically applied to the Beren Campus."

Rabbi Brander placed the Women's Leadership Fellowship in context of the overriding mission embraced by the CJF, which is to "convene the energies of Yeshiva University to help shape the future leaders of the Jewish people and interact with communities around the world." Initiatives like the fellowship, he explained, help to infuse students with a sense of collective responsibility and empowerment, which he hopes continue far beyond the duration of the program itself.

"This is not a one-time experience," Rabbi Brander emphasized with respect to the Women's Leadership Fellowship. "It's our hope to make this a many-year experience and I think we're starting in a very robust way."

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What's New in the Library

New Online Database:

Encyclopedia Judaica, 2nd edition, 2007, is available for the first time via remote access. It is also accessible in the library, online and in print.

At Your Service:

Librarians are available to help in a variety of ways including one-on-one assistance for students, faculty and staff and assisting with subject presentations for individual classes.

Book Sale:

The library is selling a variety of books they no longer need. Some are new, others are in the field of Jewish studies, and superseded textbooks will also be on sale. Prices are very reasonable. The sale will take place on the second floor of the library. Please send suggestions or comments about this column or about the library to lubetski@yu.edu.

Construction Continues on the Beren Campus

continued from front page

ed facility on the sixth floor. Though construction on the seventh floor was originally set to commence during winter break, it has been delayed, as a result of difficulties in obtaining zoning permission for expansion onto the balconies. Yet students came back from winter break and were excited to see that some progress had been made on the seventh floor. Unlike the complete gutting and remodeling of the first floor, Unterman explained that the renovations on the seventh

floor will not entail "such major construction" and expects that the Beit Midrash will be completed by next year. Jeffrey Rosengarten, the university's associate vice president for administrative services who has overseen the construction project thus far, could not be reached for comment.

Providing space for 150 students, the new prospective Beit Midrash will raise the level of seriousness of Jewish studies at SCW. It will also serve as a venue for professors to present shiurim to the broader Jewish

female community, allowing an older, more diverse group of women to learn with undergraduates. "[This will be] a huge Beit Midrash for women that will hopefully only be the beginning of what the Beit Midrash can be," said Unterman. "This is a huge step for Modern Orthodox women to have a large, respectable place to learn."

THE ISRAEL SECTION

Israel and Iran: How much information is too much?

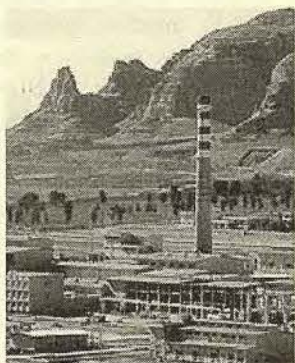
BY TALIA KAPLAN

The information age is upon us. We know basketball scores as they happen, which movie stars were dumped before their own friends even know, and at the first ring of a fire alarm we know where the fire is located and how many people are injured. Perhaps it is precisely for that reason that reading headlines about Israel possibly striking Iran should not be shocking. Maybe knowing news before it happens should not be surprising. Yet, it still is.

A British newspaper, The Sunday Times, announced that Israel is planning an attack on the Iranian uranium enrichment plants. These plants are the sites where the Iranian government is creating nuclear power. The Iranian government claims that it is producing nuclear power solely for the purpose of energy, but this claim has been long questioned and many believe that the Iranian government, under the leadership of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is creating a nuclear bomb.

The Sunday Times gave many details, including a March timetable for the attacks and specifying that the top Special Forces brigade, Unit 262, will be used for the attack. Furthermore, 100 U.S.-made BLU "bunker busters" were identified as key to an attack on the numerous underground strategically-protected sites where the enrichment is taking place. Contrasting the Israelis

with kamikaze fighters, Shlomo Brom, a former top Israeli military official who was an armed forces chief of strategic planning, discussed the different obstacles in the way of the Israeli attack. He said it will be difficult to get the airplanes used in the mission back after the attack takes place because Iran, with all its military capabilities, will notice a fleet of Israeli F-15's and F-16's and



Iran's uranium conversion facility, Isfahan

shoot the planes down.

In addition, Iran may already be on high alert because of UN Resolution 1737 which gave Iran until mid February to stop its increase of sensitive nuclear activities. They have not yet indicated any cessation of their nuclear activities or ambitions. Furthermore, Iran knows how Israel destroyed the site of the Iraqi Osirak nuclear reactor in 1981, which would also put them on high alert.

While Iran is undoubtedly aware of the threats against them, it seems somewhat absurd for

Israel to announce their detailed plans for attacking Iran. It seems as though the element of surprise has been removed from modern military warfare, something that can undoubtedly affect how effective modern military operations will be.

If Israel's goal in making these announcements is to scare the Iranians, it does not seem to be working. Iran has responded by saying that Israel would never dare to attack the country. President Ahmadinejad directed a similar statement towards the United States, the country it considers to be Israel's "master." Moreover, this seeming threat has not prevented Iran from calling for the destruction of the State of Israel.

This is not the only piece of information that has been leaked to the press in recent months. In December, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert included Israel in a group of countries that possess a nuclear arsenal. Israel has long held an ambiguous stance on its nuclear capabilities.

The question remains. Is the speed of information an aide to, or a deterrent for the State of Israel? Can Israel continue to protect itself when its military secrets are leaked to every layman before they are implemented? The one thing that is certain, is that Israel must take notice and great care as to what is being said in public and how to best protect itself from the growing threats it is facing.

A Message from the President

BY RACHEL GOLDSTEIN

First, I want to welcome everyone back from winter break. I hope you all had a chance to recharge your batteries for the upcoming semester.

In the next few paragraphs I want to share some thoughts and experiences that I have from the L'man Achai Northern Israel Leadership Experience that took place over the break. The trip was amazing; that may even be an understatement. The program was so unique because we actually got to talk to the people in Israel about their experiences from this past summer. We didn't want this to be an ego-boosting trip where we would come back bragging that 'we painted' or 'we built.' Rather, speaking and interacting with the people in Israel and learning first-hand what they went through brought what happened this past summer to a whole other level. Most people in the Diaspora just saw what happened on TV, not really getting a sense of what the Israeli people went through. But on the trip, we were able to hear about people's experiences first hand from a variety of different angles. We interacted with and heard the perspectives of college students, social workers, doctors, a journalist, high school students, a military expert, a psychologist, *midrasha* and *hesder* students, regular citizens living in the towns we visited, among others. The point is that we were privileged to come in contact with such different kinds of people throughout our weeklong trip, learning about their experiences and gaining insights from all of them.

One instance that stands out in my mind is when we gave informal sessions in two different high schools about the world's response to the war this summer and why people living in *chutz la'aretz* cared to help. We came into the schools thinking that the students would not care about what we had to say and would not pay attention. But, to our surprise, most of them were very interested and told us after our presentations how much they learned. They said they didn't know what people outside of Israel did to help this summer and they felt so good knowing that people from the outside care about them and about what happens to them.

Conducting these sessions made me realize that people in Israel actually care about and are thankful for what we are doing here. Sometimes when I would collect money for Israel or when

I would do Israel Club programs, I would think that what I was doing was not really productive since people in Israel don't really care about the efforts people in *chutz la'aretz* expend on their behalf. But now, knowing much more than I used to, I realize that people in Israel are thankful for the things we do from the outside and I feel a much greater sense of purpose in my work in America on behalf of the people of Israel.

The itinerary was incredible, but the trip would not have been as great as it was without the Yeshiva University (YU) undergraduates who participated. Despite being from varied backgrounds and having different views, everyone meshed together into one united group by the end of the trip. The individuals who comprised the group taught me how to be more open in two respects. The first thing I learned was the importance of being receptive to people with ideas and views different than mine. Even more than that, I learned the importance of really considering what others had to say and using their insights to change my way of thinking and seeing things. The other kind of openness is in being able to communicate in a more effective way. Because of our processing sessions and individual discussions I was able to open myself up more by the end of the trip.

Throughout the semester, The Israel Club hopes to channel its energy and passion from the trip back on campus. Some of the initiatives being undertaken include an Israel newsletter, an aliyah group, Israeli culture projects, a halachik symposium, an updated Israel Club website, Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut programs, and much more. We hope this semester will bring great Israel programming to campus!

Israel News

Ashkenazi Replaces Halutz

After Israeli Defense Force Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Dan Halutz resigned from his position after being found responsible for the mismanagement of the war with Lebanon this past summer, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Defense Minister Amir Peretz named Maj. -Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi as his replacement

Skiing on the Chermon

While in New York we are experiencing slim to no snow, the Chermon ski resort in Israel has been open to visitors with two to three feet of snow to enjoy.

Calls for Israel to Join NATO

Former Spanish Prime Minister Jos Mar a Aznar called on Israel to be accepted to North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Israel Builds Fake Muslim City

In an attempt to prepare for further war with Palestinians, Israel has built a fake Muslim city to train its soldiers in ground warfare.

Israeli Scientists Working with Stem Cells

Weizman Institute scientists have been working with stem cells to develop tissue that may eventually lead to the creation of a functioning heart.

TAC and SOY Conduct Programming in Israel over Winter Break

BY YAFFI SPODEK

Although the men and women of Yeshiva College (YC) and Stern College for Women (SCW) were on vacation from their official classes, the student leaders of the Torah Activities Council (TAC) and Student Organization of Yeshiva (SOY) were busy planning programs for the many undergraduates who chose to spend their winter breaks in Israel. The various events, organized by Shoshana Fruchter, president of TAC, and Josh Vogel, president of SOY, were held in Israel during vacation from January 4-10, 2007. The first event, held on Thursday night January 4, was a *mishmar* (learning session) program exclusively for men. Rabbi Kenneth Brander, dean of the Center for the Jewish Future (CJF), gave a *shiur* in the Kotel Tunnels and *chulent* was served to all the attendees.

A parallel program was held for women on Tuesday night January 9. The event, cleverly called "T Cubed in the Square," attracted a group of about 50 women from SCW and other uni-

versities as well. When asked about the surprising number of students from other universities that attended the event Fruchter says "it is appropriate and very exciting for the community at Stern College to be a Torah center for the greater community."

The evening started out with refreshments of pastries and hot drinks as everyone assembled in the Kotel Tunnels. After a short walk through the tunnels, the group sat down in a private room, secured by the CJF, to hear a *shiur* given by Ms. Hudi Elsant. Elsant spoke about *kedushat Yerushalayim* (the holiness of Jerusalem) and how Yerushalayim has a special power enabling it to connect all the different types of Jews that are there. Fruchter and Atara Lindenbaum, another organizer of the event and treasurer of TAC, capped off the evening with remarks. All those present received thermoses adorned with the logo of "T Cubed." "It was incredible to be able to learn Torah in one of the holiest places in the world, *mul kodesh kodashim* (opposite the Holy of Holies), and it's so nice that the

SCW 'T Cubed' tradition follows us wherever we go," said Chani Schonbrun (SCW '08), one of the program's participants.

On Friday January 5, from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m., a blood drive was held on Ben Yehuda Street. Those who donated blood and presented their Yeshiva University identification cards were given vouchers for a free lunch at the Big Apple Pizza store.

On Monday January 8, TAC and SOY organized a day trip, which cost \$10, which attracted enough men and women to fill three busses. The first stop of the day was Kever Rachel, where everyone had ample time to pray and say Psalms by the grave of Rachel. The next leg of the trip was to Kfar Etzion, located in the Gush Etzion area, where there was a sound and light show describing the rich history of the surrounding area. Next, the bus departed for Tekoa, another area in the Gush, where the group was given a tour by Shani Simkowitz and was privileged to hear inspiring words from Seth and Sherry Mandel. The Mandels spoke about their son Koby, who was

stoned to death by Arabs when playing in a cave near their home in Tekoa several years ago. They also spoke about Camp Koby, which was established in their son's memory, as a place where children and teenagers who have lost loved ones due to terrorism can go. The group was also served a hot lunch, and while eating, was addressed by the mayor of the Gush community. The last stop of the trip was Chevron. After a tour of the Avraham Avinu Shul, which contains a memorial to the victims of the Chevron Massacre of 1929, everyone recited afternoon prayers in Me'arat Hamachpeila.

The last event, held on Wednesday January 10, was coordinated by Yitz Novack, vice president of SOY. The program was in cooperation with One Family Fund, an organization that provides financial aid to families that have been affected by terrorism. The event took place at the One Family Fund Headquarters in Katamon. Students who participated had the opportunity to do arts and crafts projects with children. They also distributed 1,500 stuffed animals that had been col-

lected at SCW and YC before winter break. Dinner was served after the activities, and members of One Family Fund told inspiring stories.

Fruchter described the theme of the trip as "...keeping an open mind and welcoming new ideas while standing firm on our own opinions. I feel that the trip invoked thought and was a growing experience. We are all excited to build off those relationships and experiences to work with the team to help continue energizing the undergraduate campuses with love for Israel."

Vogel described the goal of the trip as a display of "support for people who put their lives on the line so that we can hold on to our precious land."

Nefesh B'Nefesh Reaches its Original Goal

BY TALIA KAPLAN

The snow was falling in Jerusalem, but the spirits couldn't be higher in Tel-Aviv. On December 27, 2006 the 10,000th *oleh* (immigrant) landed along with 219 other passengers on the Nefesh B'Nefesh flight from America. Nefesh B'Nefesh is a grassroots organization whose aim is to "revitalize *aliyah* and to substantially increase the number of future *olim* by removing the financial, professional and logistical obstacles that prevent many individuals from actualizing their dreams." Nefesh B'Nefesh has been successful in assisting families and single individuals, old and young, orthodox and others, in realizing their dream of returning to their homeland.

The process of making *aliyah* has never been an easy nor simple decision. Yet, Nefesh B'Nefesh has eased the process somewhat, as evidenced by its five years of success. The significance of this flight was that 10,000 was a goal that the founders Rabbi Yehoshua Fass, a Yeshiva College graduate, and Tony Gelbart had set up when they originally dreamt up the organization. The 10,000th *oleh*, Simcha Gluk, along with his wife Rachel, came from Queens, New York. The Gluks will be working as a life coach and realtor respec-

tively. They married five years ago with the dream of one day moving to Israel. On this day their dream became a reality.

The large number further represents the desire of the Jews in America willing to make *aliyah*. This type of *aliyah* is different than previous mass *aliyah* in which Jews fled their countries of origin to find a safe haven in the Land of Israel.



Simcha and Rachel Gluk
Olim 10,000 and 10,0001

Other new *olim* on this flight included Samuel Haber, an 87 year old who had worked on the Exodus ship before it had made its historic voyage to Israel many years ago. Following in the footsteps of that voyage, Haber would now be coming home as well.

Additionally, within the crowd of guests were students from seminaries in Israel to welcome their friends and peers, with an impressive 96 singles having

been part of this momentous journey.

There was a ceremony for the *olim*, their families, and friends when they arrived. On this flight former Israel Ambassador to the United Nations Dore Gold and Head of Strategic Studies at the Shalem Center Natan Sharansky gave welcoming remarks. Former Mosad Director Danny Yotam was on hand as well. Sharansky spoke of the threat of assimilation and the importance of *aliyah* in the fight against losing the Jews in a war with numbers. Hearing from Sharansky at such an event is truly momentous, not only for who he is now, but for what he has gone through in his life to get there. He is a former prisoner of Zion from the former Soviet Union. He is truly someone that appreciates the significance of being able to live in our land with freedom to practice our religion in the home of our ancestors.

Nefesh B'Nefesh flights have landed during the hot summer, the cold winter, and all weather in between. The faces on each flight may change, and each story is remarkable in its own right. What remains the same however, is the determination of the people and their family in leaving the lifestyle they know and coming to a new land and the tears in their eyes as they realize they have come home.

The
Observer
staff would
like to
congratulate
former Israel
Editor Sarah
Matarasso
for making
aaliyah.
1-21-07

SCIENCE AND HEALTH

Pushing the Limits: Civilian Space Flight

BY OLIVIA MATHIAS

Last month, space shuttle Discovery took off at Kennedy Space Center for a 12-day mission, returning just before the New Year. It was the first night take-off since the Columbia disaster in 2003. While in space, the group's mission included three space walks, a two-ton segment addition (a steel truss) and the rewiring of the international space station's orbiting laboratory, allowing for further research from space. This was the 117th space shuttle launch for America and was an overall success.

Many advances have been made in the astronomic world since the 1957 launch of Sputnik by the Russians and the 1969 American moonwalk; however, is it possible that someone who was never trained by National Aeronautics and Space Administration to experience space? Chances are looking up for civilian space travel in the near future. In the summer of 2004, Mike Melvill made history as the first commercial astronaut on board the SpaceShipOne which orbited the earth for only a few minutes and then landed safely back on the same runway used for take-off in the Mojave Desert of California.

The setback to these types of

missions is that they rely heavily on government funding. The public's enthusiasm is already there, but the costs are high. In order to progress in research and still maintain feasibility, incentives have been put forth in the past, like winning large sums of money (up to \$10 million) made available by certain organizations in hopes of triggering competi-



tion. For the most part, however, it is wealthy entrepreneurs who are bringing the world closer to this dream. Men like Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon.com and Elon Musk of PayPal have put down millions of dollars for the cause. Bezos has already founded his own aero-space company, Blue Origin, and is building a rocket-ship complex to be up and running by this year. He has recently purchased 165,000 acres in the vast plains of West Texas and hopes to eventually turn it into a space port where tourist flights carrying three passengers can take off twice a week.

Over a hundred wealthy civilians have already purchased their \$200,000 tickets and others are making large deposits. In the long-run, Bezos says that he hopes to someday set up permanent colonies in space. Richard Branson, owner of Virgin Music and Virgin Atlantic Airways has been working on his own spaceport in New Mexico. He promises to be taking passengers to space by 2009. Even though it seems that now only those with \$200,000 to spend on space tourism will be lucky enough to partake in this experience, it is predicted that the price will eventually drop to \$1,000 per person. A person could travel to space for the same amount that it costs to travel to Europe.

Although allowing for commercial space travel would be an exhilarating and eye-opening experience for all, it involves great risk and the potential for failure must be nonexistent. There are still too many risks that have to be eliminated before civilian space travel can really take off. The idea is not so far-fetched anymore. The 21st century has shown a substantial amount of promise as far as technological progress is concerned, and it will only be a matter of time before space travel becomes a tourist attraction.

Futuristic Cars Drive Themselves

BY RACHEL-ALI ELBAZ

Seeing that most cars on the road today are equipped with features that were once exclusively reserved for expensive luxury cars, many high-end car companies are developing new technology to set themselves apart from the mainstream. Unbelievable advances in safety, performance, and pure convenience, have been developed in just the past two years, which means that things that could only have been imagined ten years ago are now arriving in a showroom near you. Zalmy Silver, a well versed car enthusiast, shared the details of some of the most exciting technological advances, some of which will astound you.

At the forefront of the fusion of luxury, technology, and pure, good old fashioned decadence, is the new Lexus LS460L. This is by far the most advanced car ever assembled in history. Topping the list of an impressive array of features, including the world's first eight speed transmission, is a new, exclusive technology, called Advanced Parking Guidance System, which, as you can may have guessed, actually parallel

parks the car automatically. No, this is not a misprint. Simply pull next to the spot, and hit the magic button. Using many technological sensors, the car will first measure the spot to make sure the car can fit. This takes between 20 and 30 seconds. If the car fits into the space, the car will turn the steering wheel, shift into reverse, and glide straight into the spot.



Mercedes S Class

There is even a sensor to watch for the curb. It will then shift back into drive, straighten the wheel, and align the car precisely between the

other two cars with the exact same space on each side of the car. This guarantees perfect parking every time. Unfortunately, as you may have expected, technology like this comes at a high price. Fully loaded, this car has a price tag of about \$90,000.

Another car with enough technology to make a robot jealous is the new Mercedes S-Class. Aside from the usual slew of Mercedes luxury features, such as voice-activated navigation, Bluetooth phone, and air-conditioned seats (heated seats were becoming too common place, so

continued on page 23

New Advancements Made in Antiviral Medications

BY GRACE CHARLES

If one has a bacterial infection, then they have the ability to avail themselves of various medications to cure it. However, antibiotics do not cure viral infections; one is left to "wait it out." That may be about to change. Scientists have recently become very excited about a small little molecule that has the potential to fight viruses. In effect, this "little molecule" may save many lives and treat sick people around the world. There is much history behind this "little molecule."

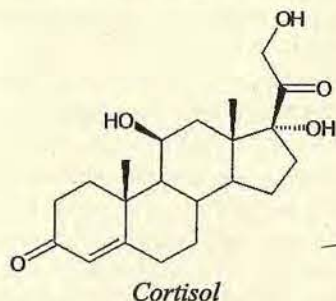
In 1957, Scottish virologist Alick Isaacs and Swiss researcher Jean Lindenmann published a paper on their finding that virus-infected cells produce a soluble factor that protects other cells from infection. They called this factor interferon (IFN). Much research into IFN's has been done since 1957. The IFN system is the body's first response against viral infection. This system functions to inhibit the spread of the viral infector in the body, even at the cost of accelerating the death of the infected cells. Studies done in cell culture, murine model systems, and clinical trials done in patients have shown that IFN treatment can help to inhibit the

replication and spread of viral infections. Although much more research remains to be done, IFN's are clearly capable of and effective in combating viral diseases.

There are actually three different types of IFN; each is produced by a different type of cell. The three major types of interferon all induce the same overall biochemical changes in a specific cell type and thus have largely the same range of antiviral activities. IFN's are not virus specific in that the IFN produced by one virus will also act against other viruses. However, IFN's tend to be species specific in that the IFN produced by one species has no effect on the cells of another species. This means that, if a scientist was to isolate IFN's produced by a chicken to treat a human with them, they would have no effect on helping the individual to fight his or her viral infection.

To defend against viruses, IFN's use an indirect mechanism to produce an antiviral state in cells neighboring the original infected cell. The IFN's take advantage of the fact that most viruses make a special type of nucleic acid called double-strand-

ed ribonucleic acid (dsRNA). This dsRNA is what turns on the gene for the infected cell to produce IFN. Although the infected cell is most likely doomed to death, the IFN is released to protect surrounding cells from the same fate. The IFN's accomplish



this through the use of three enzymes: ribonuclease (RNase), a protein kinase, and 2-5A synthetase. The IFN's attach to receptors on nearby cells and induce the formation of the three enzymes. Once the virus makes its way over to this cell, the cell is ready for it. The virus infects the pre-warned cell, but this time it will have a much harder time taking over and killing the cell. The enzymes produced by the IFN get to work. The 2-5A synthetase senses the dsRNA produced by the virus and activates the other two enzymes. It is letting them know that the virus has entered

the cell. The protein kinase then stops all protein production. Just in case that's not enough to foil the virus's plans, the RNase destroys the precursor to any proteins the virus may be trying to produce.

A recent study done in Turkey showed that IFN is one of only two drugs that have proven to be effective in fighting chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV). HBV is a common infectious disease in the world. Two percent of the patients infected with chronic HBV develop cirrhosis every year and die prematurely from the cirrhosis or hepatocellular carcinoma. The study found that IFN provided sustained response in one-third of the infected patients. Unfortunately, once treatment was stopped, the HBV reappeared in most patients. These results seem very typical of the many IFN studies done. The IFN can be very effective in fighting off the virus; once the IFN treatment is discontinued, the patient is no longer protected from the disease.

There is still much research to be done on IFN's. Availability of recombinant IFN's and the knowledge of toxicity, pharmacology, route of administration, and side effects of IFN's that we

have now will be useful in allowing us to advance our understanding of them. Associate Professor of Microbiology and Immunology at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Dr. Thomas Cate, cites one study done which showed effective prevention of the common cold due to IFN introduced to the system through nasal spray. The Food and Drug Administration has already approved IFN for treatment for certain forms of hepatitis. IFN is also clinically used for treating genital warts caused by papilloma virus infection. Although dosage, frequency, and other factors of IFN treatment must be further studied, IFN's are undoubtedly strong players in the body's fight against viral infections. As shown by multiple studies and clinical trials, IFN's can effectively fight viral diseases. Just as we are so dependent now on antibiotics to fight bacterial infections, IFN's may be our next big advance in fighting against viruses.

Next Hot Spot: Planet Earth

BY RENA KUKIN

It has become commonplace, even trendy, to discuss global warming. One has either felt the effects, read what is happening, or has seen it on television or the internet. Look around New York

City. No one is wearing winter coats in January. The ice caps are melting, and polar bears face extinction. When Al Gore's movie, "An Inconvenient Truth," earned \$24 million at the box office, everyone began asking: what is global warming, and how did it happen? What will the impact be for each of us?

In order to understand this rapid increase in the Earth's temperature, we must understand the greenhouse effect. Basic gases, referred to as greenhouse gases, are absorbed from the sun and make the earth warm enough to be habitable. Without these gases, our planet would be notably cooler and unlivable. It is similar to the process in which a greenhouse allows light to enter through the glass while trapping the heat. The absorption of too much of these gases prevents heat from escaping, ultimately forming a thick blanket around the earth and raising earth's temperature.

Scientific research has shown that the average global temperature has increased about one degree Fahrenheit over the last century. While one degree may seem trivial, scientists believe that this is significant,

even dangerous. An increase in global temperatures may boost the frequency and severity of weather occurrences such as heat waves, droughts, hurricanes and tornadoes. Other consequences include melting glaciers, coastal flooding and the extinction of certain species. While the Earth naturally goes through cycles and the climate has changed throughout history, the widespread scientific opinion on the rapid change in climate is that it is not a natural event. Rather, it is the adverse result of human activity.

Prior to the Industrial Revolution, human activity did not release large amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The gases released stayed within a range that could be tolerated by earth's atmosphere. As technology advanced and machinery made life easier, more factories and power plants were

built and new forms of transportation were invented. The world's continued industrialization has led to urbanization and deforestation, as more living and working space was needed. This vicious cycle required the usage of more fossil fuels, such as coal and oil, which in turn leads to the release of additional gases into the atmosphere.

Clearly, the current way the human race lives causes an increase in greenhouse gases. This clearly affects the environment. Of prime concern is how long the warming trend will continue and what effect it will have on Earth's environment. There are some critics to the outcry over global warming who theorize that global warming may actually improve aspects of life such as allowing better crop growth. However, most scientists have concluded that the consequences of global warming are probably harmful and irreversible.

Global warming impacts plants, wildlife and humans, and can potentially alter and possibly destroy Earth's ecosystems. After Hurricane Katrina there is a growing concern of more serious storms and hurricanes that will destroy the lives and homes of even more people. Our ability to breathe will likely be affected by the increase in air pollution and immunologists see an increased risk for a variety of diseases.

It is still possible to reverse the damage already done, but we must act soon. Some easy steps we can all take are to save electricity by turning off lights and computers when leaving a room, drive fuel efficient cars, and buy recyclable products. Recently the U.S. government established a climate policy to slow the rate of emissions. Many organizations are attempting to bring a greater awareness to the world as to how to protect our environment and prevent global warming. Although there is uncertainty to the exact impact of global warming, it certainly is a current and real issue. It is our responsibility to not merely be intellectually aware of global warming, but to take the necessary steps to prevent these detrimental effects.



BY YUDIT DAVIDOVITS

A drain cleaner, bleach, and acetone are all the ingredients necessary to make a bomb. In fact, the product of this recipe is almost undetectable by bomb detection systems, and has become the explosive of choice for terrorists today. The substance was included in Richard Reid's shoe bomb with which he attempted to down American Airlines Flight 63. These ingredients are also believed to have been used in the July 2005 London bombings. In addition, the participants in the 2006 transatlantic aircraft plot may have planned to use this substance as liquid bombs. The plan was to prepare bombs in airplane lavatories, destroying U.S. airliners flying from London to the United States.

What is this destructive chemical substance? Acetone peroxide is an organic peroxide that contains an oxygen-oxygen bond in its peroxide functional group. The oxygen-oxygen bond easily breaks to form free radicals. It is this reactive property that can initiate an explosion in materials. Acetone peroxide exists as two isomers; tricycloacetone and dicycloacetone, but most commonly refers to the cyclic trimer called triacetone triperoxide (TATP). The tricyclo form is both more stable and more powerful as an explosive, making it the preferred product. Acetone peroxide is formed by acid-catalyzed nucleophilic addi-

tion between hydrogen peroxide and acetone. In this reaction, an acid helps the peroxide, which is a nucleophile, react with the acetone which is a ketone. The nucleophile donates electrons to break the double bond present between carbon and oxygen in the ketone. Since the acid is only used as a catalyst to assist the reaction, it does not matter which acid is used so long as it is a strong acid. The trimer is the major product due to the instability of the cyclic dimer because of

Instructions to make acetone peroxide can be easily obtained from the internet. The simple steps consist of adding 30% hydrogen peroxide to acetone in an ice bath. After cooled, 75% sulfuric acid is added with a dropper and stirred continuously. After being kept in an ice bath for up to 24 hours the white precipitate product forms.

Acetone peroxide is hazardous in either form, so methods are used to reduce its production. These methods include shifting the pH to a more basic environment, adjusting the reaction temperature, and adding a soluble copper (II) compound. Besides for being used as an explosive, acetone peroxide is used as a flour bleaching agent.

Twenty four people were arrested in Britain for planning to smuggle the peroxide based liquid TATP aboard nine planes flying between Britain and the United States. The goal was to blow up the planes midair. It is estimated that 2,700 people would have been killed.

In response to this terrorist plot, all liquids were eliminated from passenger carry-on luggage. Some reports suggest that such bombs would not have been effective due to the suspicious smell created in its preparation. Also, if the explosive material had been created before boarding the plane, its instability may have resulted in its premature detonation.



Recipe for a bomb: drain cleaner, bleach, and acetone

the significant strain of its chemical bonds.

Decomposition of TATP forms acetone and ozone producing very little. It is the rapid creation of a gas from a solid that creates the explosion. The decomposition is an entropic explosion, favored by the increase of disorder from the one ozone and three acetone molecules formed from one molecule of solid TATP. Big crystals of TATP are more dangerous, since they shatter easier than smaller ones. When making acetone peroxide, the crystals must be formed under 10 degrees Celsius in order to be stable and safe to handle. Above this temperature the dimeric isomer, which is far more unstable, forms.

Weighty Issues in the Chicago Jewish Community

BY NILI SELESKI

Chicago is a semi-bustling city 712 miles away from New York. The streets of downtown Chicago are nowhere near as crowded as 34th Street, and the sun shines on the green of Lake Michigan, not the Atlantic Ocean. New York City itself has a population of over eight million residents, and each of the five boroughs has at least two million residents. Chicago only has a population of about 2,842,518, according to recent estimates. So what do the two cities have in common? Both cities are home to relatively large Jewish communities.

Between August 2003 and January 2004, Sinai Health Systems in Chicago and the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago conducted a public health study in the communities of West Rogers Park and Peterson Park of Chicago (WRP/PP). These areas are highly populated by Jewish residents,

and many of them are Orthodox. This survey was the first public health study ever conducted on a Jewish population. Therefore, the results of the study are relevant not only to the community that the survey examined, but to Jewish communities everywhere, including New York.

The inspiration for the study began after Sinai Health Systems formed the Sinai Urban Health Institute (SUHI) in 2000 to facilitate efforts to improve the health and well-being of different communities in Chicago. SUHI studied six Chicago area communities in their Sinai's Improving Community Health Survey. The Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago was inspired by the publication of this study, and expanded their already existing correlation with the Sinai Health System in order to conduct a similar study in the Jewish community. Hence, the Jewish Community Health Survey of West Rogers Park/Peterson Park was born.

Reports of the study's findings were published in October 2006 by Maureen Benjamins, Ph.D., the program director from SUHI, Dana Rhodes, M.S.W., of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, Joel Carp, A.C.S.W., of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, and Steve Whitman, Ph.D., of SUHI. The report discusses different health issues in the Jewish community in WRP/PP, but the findings may shed light on some of the issues plaguing Jewish communities everywhere.

The communities of WRP/PP showed strong religious observance: 81% reported being a member of a synagogue, 79% reported keeping a Kosher home, and 96% reported being married to a Jewish spouse. This is important because it means that the findings of the study could be reproduced in other religious Jewish communities.

A major problem in the

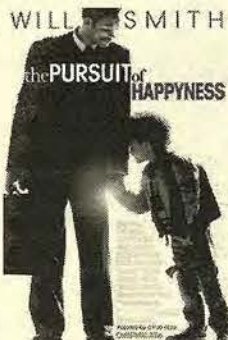
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Arts and Culture

Movie Review: "The Pursuit of Happyness"

BY SARAH GUIGUI

Who said the story of Chris Gardner was the absolute recipe for happiness? Who said that determination and a little common sense were enough to propel a Mr. Nobody to the position of stockbroker in a prestigious company? Who said that happiness equals money?



The trap one should not fall into after seeing Gabriele Muccino's "Pursuit of Happyness" is associating the movie with a contemporary rereading of the Rockefeller myth. Yet, this mistake is easy to make. After all, the film is not only based on a true story, but Will and Jaden Smith, who play Gardner and his son Christopher, are a real father-and-son team. It's hard to get more touching than that!

In "The Pursuit of Happyness," Will Smith plays Gardner, a salesman unable to earn a living from his medical scanners. After unsuccessfully going from doctor's office to doctor's office, machine in hand, trying to sell them the product, Gardner found himself struggling

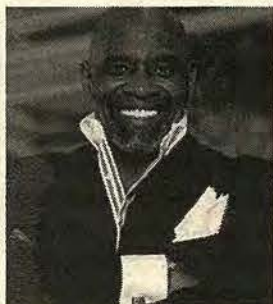
to make ends meet. Then, after seeing a man coming out of a superb sports car in front of a stock exchange, he decides that he has had enough of poverty and misfortune and that he is worthy of being as happy and as rich as the sports car owner.

He ends up taking an internship with a stock company, struggling to support his son while receiving zero income. Gardner never knew where he would be forced to spend the night, yet, tried to remain calm and brave for his young son's sake. Chris finally got the permanent job of stockbroker, beating out the 20 other interns, and finally achieved a steady salary and happiness.

Yet, though it definitely made his life easier, money is not what made Gardner happy. The happiness Gardner pursued, and eventually reached, is something personal and almost unattainable. What Gardner is really after is the well being of his child, and his own happiness (as written on the walls of his school).

The relationship between the father and the son, not the man and his money, is what the film is really about. Even if you don't know that they are father and son in real life, one can't help but notice that these two have a connection. Gardner made the well being of his child his first priority. One particularly moving moment is when, while homeless, they are reduced to sleeping in the subway's bathroom. Even when Gardner was at his lowest,

with five dollars in his wallet, he found the inner strength to make his son believe his scanner was a time machine, and, that at the press of the black button, he could go back in time. The kid pressed the button and Gardner suddenly began shouting that dinosaurs are everywhere and that they have to find a shelter, a



Chris Gardner

"cave." He dragged Christopher into the toilets and locked the door without the boy even realizing that he would be spending the night in a public restroom. The kid fell asleep, happy and relieved to have escaped the flying dinosaurs and only then did his father collapse in tears.

While it would have been easy for Gardner to look out for himself, leaving his kid with his ex-wife as he tried to make a better life for himself, he put his child's well-being before his own stability and happiness. Will Smith played a man constantly trying to preserve his child from an unbearable reality by creating a more beautiful, though virtual, one instead. That is where the beauty of the movie resides.

The Collision of Creativity and Scholarship

BY MICHELLE SCHIFFMAN

If you have ever wondered what it would be like to travel back to the time of the Bible, a visit to the Yeshiva University (YU) museum on 15 W. 16th Street is all that is required. In a special exhibit entitled "The Story of Joseph: Unveiling the Text," Chana Cromer, the mastermind behind the show, enables one to feel as if they have traveled thousands of years in one afternoon.

Cromer was born in Italy and was raised in Kansas City, Missouri. She made aliyah and settled in Israel in 1972. She spent many years studying surface design and printmaking and is therefore able to express herself fluently in fabric and paint. Her creative mastery of the text of the Torah raises the caliber of her work by serving as the inspiration for her textile designs.

Cromer uses symbolism in order to effectively tell the Bible

story of Joseph and his brothers. The story begins when Joseph was sold into slavery for 20 pieces of silver. "They pulled Joseph out of the pit. They sold Joseph for 20 pieces of silver to



Chana Cromer

the Ishmaelites." Cromer portrays this part of the story in her piece entitled "Joseph was Seventeen," which was crafted in Thai silk, taffeta, and numerous dyes. This piece is approximately 2x3 feet of beige silk. In the cen-

ter of the cloth is a piece of silk dyed in pastels of orange, red and pink, with a sketch of the figure of Joseph in the pit. The brightness and harshness of the colors used accurately portrays the anguish Joseph must have been feeling at the time of his sale. Stitched around the silk are 10 pieces of Israeli currency, which adds another more modern dimension to the artwork. The artist was tying in the current situation in Israel, a situation in which the Jewish people and their land are being bullied by their adversaries.

Another strong characteristic of Cromer's work is the parallel she makes between Jacob and Joseph. Both were dreamers and younger sons hated by their older brothers and they both lived through hardships and danger. She captured this idea in her piece called "Dreams," where she combines the elements of Jacob and his son's life. This piece is

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For One More Day

BY Yael Wolynetz

Readers should be ready with a tissue when they read Mitch Albom's newest bestseller, "For One More Day." Like his previous successes, "Tuesdays with Morrie," and "The Five People You Meet in Heaven," Albom has the ability through his storytelling to empower readers by illustrating the power of love. Furthermore, the novel is full of life lessons as Albom subliminally reminds readers to enjoy time with loved ones.

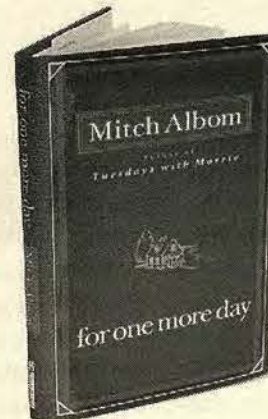
The title of the novel reflects the centrality of the plot. Albom tells the story of a man who is granted the opportunity to spend one more day with his mother's ghost. Similar to his style in "The Five People You Meet in Heaven," which bridges the gap between life and death by incorporating the character of a ghost, Albom brings the dead back to life.

The story revolves around Charles "Chick" Benneto, a has-been major league baseball player who attempts suicide due to his depression over his life failures, estrangement from his daughter, and the death of his mother. As Chick lies on the road, thrown out of his crashed car, he has an out of body experience as he reunites with his dead mother's spirit.

One of the reoccurring themes in the story is epitomized in a statement made to Chick in his early childhood by his later estranged father. "You can be a mamma's boy or a papa's boy but you can't be both," the man tells his son. As a result, Chick is forced to choose between his parents. One weekend, Chick leaves his mother's 80th birthday party to secretly join his father at a reunion baseball game. What he doesn't know is that his mother will die the next day and this is the last time he will ever see her. Chick is eaten up by the guilt of this betrayal, guilt which ultimately contributes to his depression and rapid decline.

Albom brilliantly integrates

excerpts from Chick's journal into his illustration of Chick's relationship with his mother. The excerpts are organized into two categories, "times when my mother stood up for me," and "times when I did not stand up for mother." It is clear that Chick is filled with remorse over the times he did not defend his mother, which include taking his father's side at times and not defending his mother to



women in the community who considered her to be loose because she was a divorcee. Yet, Chick continues to relish in the memories of occurrences when his mother stood up for him, including the time when she helped him shave for the first time and when she yelled at the librarian for not letting him take out a specific book.

The miraculous day that Chick spends with his mother's ghost teaches him a lot about his mother and he gains a newfound appreciation for her and the sacrifices she made to support their family. Chick was shocked to learn that his mother took on an additional job as a cleaning lady in order to help pay for his college tuition. By the end of the gifted day spent accompanying his mother, Chick is inspired to turn around his life and reconnect with his alienated daughter.

In a concise book, Albom takes the reader on an emotional roller coaster as they are able to both sympathize and empathize with the reality of Chick's life. Albom appeals to a wide spectrum of readers since

Chick is a retired baseball player, and the elements of baseball nostalgia will be entertaining for sports fans. However, at the core of the novel is the heart-wrenching depiction of the strong bond between mother and son which is appealing to most any emotional being regardless of their sex, age, and interest in sports.



Mitch Albom

Bon Appetite A Restaurant Review: Makor Cafe

BY LAURA SHUMAN

Kosher restaurants have, to say the least, become redundant. One may pass dozens of modern New York chic cafés only to settle for the regular kosher restaurant that, for a student's budget, may have edible food but largely lacks in aura and style. Alas there is a modern, industrial, yet chic restaurant for the New York savvy, and it just happens to be *chalav yisrael* as well.

Makor, an offshoot of the 92nd Street Y located in the Upper West Side, encompasses the concept of your grandmother's JCC while simultaneously modernizing into a full fledged Jewish cultural hub, complete with art shows, film festivals, classes, live music, and a café. The café, simply dubbed Makor Café, with its street level window is not necessarily the coziest place to sit and unwind, but it provides a real modern restaurant feel, a relaxed ambiance for the gathering of young students and professionals, and comes complete with a full dinner menu, desserts, and fine wines.

Amidst the soft buzz in the room of conversation, one may expect to hear a band playing in the adjacent room, be it reggae, jazz, or classic rock. On this particular night, a man could be seen dressed in a purple robe and a yellow sitar through the corridor that connects the café to the music lounge.

A wide variety of foods are offered on Makor's menu, with the average price of a main course ranging from \$9 to \$18. The Greek Salad (\$9), an ode to real Israeli restaurants, was large in portion and flavorful. While the lettuce was fresh iceberg, as opposed to mix green, the tender combination of fresh ingredients, dill, and oregano vinaigrette, added a real twist to the traditional Greek salad.

Makor's grilled vegetable platter (\$9) is recommended for someone who wants a delicate combination of seasoned vegetables each grilled with a distinct consistency and flavor. The caramelized onions were especially tasty, with a unique sweetness, different from the rest of the dish, which was topped off with fresh mozzarella and a light

dusting of pepper. It could be said that Makor aims for flavor in its food and shoots for good looks in the presentation of the food.

With classic dessert options such as cheese cake and the chocolate lover's cake (both \$5), Makor also offers less traditional dishes like poached pear a la mode (\$6). The pear is a delicious choice, poached to a perfect tenderness in a fume *blanc* sauce, which makes it both easy to eat and easy to handle.

Makor is successful in its aim to cultivate the "avant-garde" while simultaneously

helping people find their roots. They pride themselves as a place "where New Yorkers of all backgrounds can feel comfortable expressing themselves." In their café, this rings true to the very last detail. Overhead large piping is paired with fresh flowers on the tables, and cream colored old brick walls are paired with protruding silver sinks while the menu combines old American classics with Japanese, Mexican, Israeli, Italian, and Greek foods.

Just as telling is the fact that the customers of Makor Café are a tossed salad in their own right.

At a glance, one could see two Israelis conversing in Hebrew, two older women yapping about Boca Raton, and a family in the corner celebrating a special occasion.

Fresh edginess, wholesome food, varied company, and an original spirit make Makor Café a top choice on the kosher restaurant list. Anyone looking for something new yet strangely familiar should definitely make it a point to eat there in the near future.

Makor is located at 35 West 67th St between Central Park West and Columbus Circle. The Makor Café is open for brunch on Sunday from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. It is open for lunch on Monday thru Thursday from 12:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. and for Dinner from 5:30 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. on Sunday thru Thursday and from one hour after Shabbat until 12:00 a.m. on Saturday.

Explore
the 92nd Street Y



Makor Cafe

Dream Girls: The Triumphant Return of the Movie Musical

BY DEANNA FRAZIN

For the past few years a film genre has been reemerging in Hollywood. It is a genre that sparkles and shines and takes one back to the "good old days" of film. This is none other than the revival of the movie musical.

When this trend first began, amazing films, like "Chicago" and "Moulin Rouge," were produced. Unfortunately, the trend quickly soured as films like "Rent" and "The Producers," which are embarrassing to both the film and musical theatre industries, were brought on to the big screen. Yet, just when it was thought that this genre was officially a failure, a new film has emerged as a beacon of hope. The movie "Dream Girls" shines and reminds moviegoers that the movie musical can be extremely effective if done properly.

The movie is based on the hit Broadway musical "Dream Girls," which originally opened on Broadway in 1981. The show ran for four years and picked up six Tony Awards along the way. The muse of the movie/play, although not blatantly stated, is the story of the real musical group "Diana Ross and the Supremes." The movie follows three women: Deena, Effie, and Lorell of the fictional group "The Dreams" as they go from anonymity to stardom in the 1960s and 1970s. Along the way the group faces many trials and tribulations, including jealousy, failed romances, and the price of stardom.

The excellent songs in the movie help to highlight the story. Unlike some musicals, which seem to stick random songs in anywhere they please, all of the songs in "Dream Girls" heightened the plot and logically followed the flow of the movie. The blend of Motown, jazz, blues, soul, and disco showcased a well developed and executed musical score which invoked a sense of realism of the time period in

which the story took place. These musical styles are not usually found in Broadway musicals, and this variety definitely adds to the movie's appeal. The musical score was so well placed that at times the movie did not even seem like a musical since most the songs were sung while the group was actually performing on stage.

Another crowning achievement of the film was its excellent



Dream Girls Anika Noni Rose, Beyonce Knowles, and Jennifer Hudson

costumes. The wardrobe was so extensive that its many costume changes could never have been done live. There were many intricate costumes, each being an authentic salute to the fashion of the 1960s and 1970s. The outfits, winged eyeliner extravaganza, and the beautiful beehives of hair styles, combined to create a true sense of the 1960s era in the film.

The talent of the actors in the movie, however, was not as dazzling. Jamie Foxx plays the group's cocky manager Curtis Taylor. Although Foxx previously won a best actor Oscar for his portrayal of Ray Charles, one never would have guessed so from his performance in this movie. He was lacking believability in his role. Eddie Murphy, on the other hand, did a fine job in his portrayal of James Brown. His character was more authentic, granting comic relief to the audience.

When the movie was marketed it seemed as though Beyonce Knowles, who plays the group's star Deena Jones, an obvious parallel to Diana Ross, was the star of the movie. While

she may have been the most well known actress, she was not the true star of the movie. Although she does have a great voice, Beyonce's acting skills are not as wonderful. The true star of the film is former "American Idol" finalist Jennifer Hudson, who as Effie White gave the most memorable performance. Her rendition of the powerful ballad "And I Am Telling You I Am Not Going" was the best performance of the entire film and moved many to tears. Not only does Hudson have a stunning and powerful voice, but her acting ability is surprisingly outstanding. She really embodied the character of the persevering Effie. One could truly empathize with the character. At the end of the movie when Hudson's name flashed across the screen there was a roar of applause from the movie theater audience. Although this was quite unconventional, it was surely well deserved, and the performance won Hudson the Golden Globe Award for Best Actress in a Motion Picture Musical or Comedy.

The movie's only major weakness was its length. It took too long for the plot to develop and it would have been more effective if the date of when everything was taking place was revealed to the viewer. The historical allusions such as Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech and the Detroit Riots, intended to tell those watching the film what year it was, were sometimes lost on the audience.

The movie is being marketed with the tag line of "All you have to do is dream." Overall, the film does show how a person has the power to overcome obstacles and can thereby fulfill dreams. In another sense, the movie also shows that the dream of making a musical into a film is doable if done in the excellent way that "Dream Girls" is done.

The Chevra 3: New Faces With a Fresh New Sound

BY BATYA H. CARL

Eli Gerstner, famed singer, producer, and songwriter in the Jewish music industry, released his much anticipated album "The Chevra 3" this past November. Yet, this is not the same Chevra that fans remember from The Chevra 1 & 2. Three of the original members, David Pearlman, Avi Katz, and Donny Baitner have been replaced with Eli Daitchman, Mordechai Askenazi, and Chaim Frand. Only David Nachman of the original Chevra remains in the group.

Why replace the members? The Chevra 1&2 were both met

with great success, producing hits such as "Yehai" and "Lecha." However, Gerstner is well aware that his Chevra has an adolescent following and believes that his current move will appeal to young listeners and strengthen the group's popularity. "If it didn't happen this time it would have happened at another point," said Gerstner. "I needed young fresh faces to keep the Chevra going." Don't get too attached though, Gerstner warns, "It will probably happen again."

Chevra fans should not fret about the big change as everything about the new group and the new album is remarkably

similar to the original group and albums. In fact, the cover features the same image of wholesome young men in velvet kippot, button down shirts, and ties, and even the harmonies of the new members are reminiscent of the way the original group sounded. The album still features the same catchy beats and high harmonies, which has always distinguished the Chevra as the essential Jewish boy band. "People always tell me that the sound of the group sounds exactly the same as the old group," admitted Gerstner. "This is my sound. I write the exact harmonies and I tell each

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F A S H I O N

Better With Age: All You Need to Know About Vintage Shopping

By SARA LEVIT

When I recently witnessed a friend's attempt to leave for a first date wearing torn jeans, my friend and I were both tickled silly when her father reprimanded her on the matter. "You're going to wear those?" he demanded with an inflection of disappointment and apparent disgust. "You look homeless! What kind of impression are you trying to leave on the guy?" My friend and I smiled at each other, acknowledging her father's sheer misunderstanding of the *here and now*. We both knew exactly what kind of impression she was trying to leave on the guy. She wanted to look modern and trendy, and, if you wish to arrive at the look of *the moment*, you've got to hop on yesterday's train.

Stars are increasingly wearing vintage threads to events. At the 2006 Golden Globes, Natalie Portman wore a vintage Chanel cocktail dress to accompany her newly short Audrey Hepburnesque hairdo, while Jennifer Garner successfully donned a vintage Gucci gown from the 70s to the award ceremony. Popular brands desperately try to mimic the look of the past with pre-faded denim. The ever trendy Urban Outfitters carries an entire line titled "Urban Renewal," hoping to make the clothing appear as old and used as something brand spanking new can possibly look. With rising prices in New York vintage shops, it is clear that what is old is in.

There are many reasons why someone would shun new clothing for vintage apparel. With the cold weather finally coming upon us, the goose bumps resulting from a darling, yet paper thin, coat from H&M are unnecessary. The coats of yesteryear tend to be

made warmer and are quite lovely in their own right. For those conscious of *tzniut* (modesty), clothes from certain eras happen to more modestly cut. The Fifties, for instance, were overflowing with full skirts and three quarter length sleeves. On vintagevixen.com, scores of modest wedding gowns can be found at startlingly low prices. On the site hemlockvintage.com, a dazzling array of long sleeved cocktail dresses from the fifties can be found.

Another reason for choosing vintage is that less people will be wearing your outfit at any given moment. Many women who choose to express their individuality through their appearance feel that there is nothing worse than someone stealing their thunder. For the most part, vintage shopping is an exciting way to acquire a one-of-a-kind piece. Yet, there are exceptions to the rule. Sometimes stores carry multiples of a piece that have never been worn. This occurs when warehouses fail to sell their entire inventory. These pieces, referred to as dead stock, can be found at vintage shops with the tags still on. That is good news for those that wish to don vintage duds but dread the icky feeling of wearing someone else's clothes.

If you don't wish to limit yourself to dead stock, there is another remedy for the ick factor. Depending on the quality of the vendor, clothes which are screened for stains, dirt and damage are then washed and treated before being sold. If you still feel uncomfortable with the cleanliness of the garment, it is possible to treat it yourself. Odors can be eliminated by soaking the article of clothing for a long time in baking soda. Check for holes, weak seams and the like before

machine washing anything.

If you choose to bring a garment to a dry cleaner, be sure to tell them not to steam or heat dry; this will set a bad smell. Also, be sure to ask if clothes are sent off site to be cleaned. If they are, then the garments will probably be sent to a large plant and will not be given the attention that, given their fragile state, they deserve. In addition, it helps to find out if the store has worked on vintage apparel before. If they have, then they will likely give your garment extra care. For spots on the clothing, request that the dry cleaners have a Spotter treat and remove the stains.

Aside from stain management, the exciting history behind vintage apparel might give way to a more delicate item. This doesn't have to be a problem as long as the clothes are taken good care of. Allow clothes to breathe and avoid storing them in plastic bags, since doing so may produce mildew and odors. Also, keep the garments out of direct light which can fade the fabrics.

While New York boasts an array of hip vintage shops, oftentimes the very best vintage shop is your own mother or grandmother's closet. Keep your eyes opened for that psychedelic shag coat your mom wore in the 60s and for your grandmother's amazing fox fur stole from the 40s. You may just find a gem even if it has a little bit of grime. So brush off the dust and rock that torn denim on your first date, because one thing is for sure; if you want to appear fresh today, you've got to roll around in the dirt a little.

Great Places to Shop Vintage

Shopping for vintage in New York can be a real experience. While the prices are a bit high, the funky aura and exquisitely chosen pieces are well worth it.

Screaming Mimi's

Known for their great selection of designer vintage including Pucci and Valentino, clothes hail from the Fifties to the Eighties. Located At: 382 Lafayette St. (212)677-6464



Edith and Daha

Although a little pricy, the extensive shoe and bag collections are fabulous.

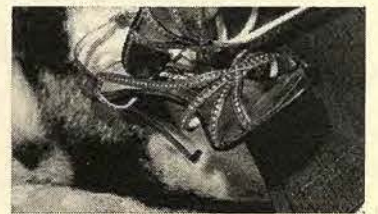
Located At: 104 Rivington St., near Ludlow St. (212) 979-9992



Amarcord

The owners travel the world in search of clothes worthy of their shop, which was voted "best vintage store" by New York Magazine and the Village Voice. Upscale European vintage clothing and accessories vary from the Forties to the Eighties with lots of unworn items. Brands range from the more upscale including Fendi and Dior to the funkier, including Pooh.

Located At: 84 East 7th St. between 1st and 2nd Ave. (212)614-7133 (In the East Village)



223 Bedford Ave. between N 4th and N 5th. (718)963-4001 (In Williamsburg)

Chelsea Girl Couture

The chic, flawlessly chosen, pieces include lots of designer labels but prices are a bit high. Located At: 186 Spring St. (212)434-7090



Clutch! Vintage Purses

As the name suggests, the handbag selection is huge. There are many designer handbags and most of them go for under \$200. Located At: 219 Mott St. between Prince and Spring St. (212)343-1011



Suzette Sundae

With a belt collection to die for, the owner takes old vintage pieces and refashions them into even funkier frocks. Located At: 182 Ave. B at 11th St. (212)777-7870



Online vintage shops harbor an amazing variety and even greater prices so be sure to check them out!

www.vintagevixen.com

www.hemlockvintage.com

www.americanvintageblues.com

Clothes are listed by measurements or modern size, rarity and condition. There is lots of dead stock, so some items come in multiples and there is a big range of sizes. This sight has amazing finds and steals; coats can be found for \$48 and up. They list a lot of helpful hints regarding how to care for your vintage. I cannot sing the praises of this website enough.

There are gorgeous buys here and lots of wonderful, one of a kind pieces which are in excellent condition. There are flapper hats from the 20s and cocktail dresses from the 50s. Consider shopping here for your next wedding! Buy quickly because items go on reserve. Clothes are listed by measurements.

This site has amazing prices. Bags range from \$8 to \$52 and coats are from \$52.



Online vintage shops harbor an amazing variety and even greater prices, so be sure to check them out!

Fashion Week Producer Addresses SCW and SSSB Student Body

By JULIE AST

Twice a year in Bryant Park, New York Fashion Week showcases designers' newest collections. A Fashion Marketing Club event brought in special guest Marli McCleary, who works for IMG, a sports, entertainment and media company which produces Fashion Week. She explained the responsibilities of her job and gave Stern College for Women (SCW) and Sy Syms School of Business (SSSB) students an inside look into Fashion Week.

McCleary works on selling "Exclusivity and VIPness" to companies that sponsor a fashion show in hopes of increasing their own brand awareness and benefiting from the designer's upscale image. Previous sponsors include M.A.C, Redkin, and Olympus. This February, Mercedes Benz is the marquee sponsor for fall Fashion Week.

The companies that invest in Fashion Week also provide practical benefits for IMG. For example, McCleary tries to include an airline sponsor in her slew of

investors, hoping they will finance flights for their employees from Los Angeles and abroad.

As a young woman in her mid twenties, McCleary was able to secure a job at the epicenter of the fashion world through hard work and internships. A graduate

of the University of Florida with a degree in Marketing, McCleary started working locally at what she calls the "Village Voice of Gainesville," a local town in Florida. Her experience there

led to another internship at Armani which in turn prepared her for working at IMG. "You need to proactively seek opportunity," she advised the SCW and SSSB women. "It's not always about who you know."

Students who attended the event have already made headway in attaining internships, and some have even attended previous New York Fashion Weeks. Lauren Elefant (SSSB '07) interned for IMG during the 2006 spring semester and has worked

McCleary's visit.

"Working at Fashion Week was one of the best experiences that I have ever had in fashion," said Elefant. "I got to see what goes on behind the scenes. I was there the day before the shows started when everything was crazy and chaotic and I eventually saw everything come together."

Kirschenbaum, who went to Fashion Week for one of her employers as an intern, is currently interning for Ralph Lauren in their corporate philanthropy department. She stressed the important role internships play in furthering a student's career. "They really help you strengthen and develop your skills," she said. "Sometimes you do a lot of tasks that you don't really want to do and it can be very frustrating at times. At the same time, you have a lot of

resources within your company. You have so many people that have had years of experience who want to relate to you and really want to help you."

Both Kirschenbaum and Elefant hope to work in the fashion industry next year when they graduate. As a junior, Filler is interning at Kenneth Cole in their international licensing and merchandising department.

Attending Fashion Week and finding a job in the fashion industry may seem tough to current college students. In reality, McCleary and the Fashion Marketing Club prove that motivation and a few well placed internships can help a student break into the fashion world.



The tents of Fashion Week take over Bryant Park.

No Matter What Direction You're Heading In...

*Rivvy is considering a career in psychology and social work...
Wurzweiler School of Social Work
Presidential Fellow 2006 - 2007*



*David is thinking about business and real estate...
Office of Purchasing & Materials Management
Presidential Fellow 2006 - 2007*

*Yaakov is in Dental School, but first wanted to apply a full year towards Jewish communal work...
Center for the Jewish Future
Presidential Fellow 2004 - 2005*



*Anat learned about development, management and marketing before being awarded her Wexner Fellowship...
Institutional Advancement
Presidential Fellow 2004 - 2005*

Together, the Presidential Fellows strengthened themselves and Yeshiva University by learning about and experiencing leadership first-hand

Presidential Fellowship in University and Community Leadership

Info Sessions:

Beren Campus
Wednesday, January 31st
215 Lexington Avenue
The Commons at Levy Lobby
2:40 - 3:35pm

Wilf Campus
Thursday, February 1st
Belfer Hall
Sky Café
2:45 - 3:45pm

Applications due February 9, 2007

For more information or an application please contact:
Elysia Stein
presidentialfellows@yu.edu
212.960.5217



CJF Organizes Coast to Coast Program

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impact on those communities which they visited. "For many of the communities, just seeing people from YU was completely new, and just that the fact that we were there, acting as young, enthusiastic, and dynamic role models was enough to make a difference," said Adina Borg (SCW '07), one of the participants. Borg was not a newcomer to the South; she participated in the Atlanta Summer Kollel in 2006. Through that program she gave several classes to the community, which enjoyed her visit so much that they requested that she come again to give more *shurim*. "We thought that running the different programs would be our major educational tool," noted Borg. "But it was really just our presence there that made a difference." Shuman agreed, saying that she felt helpful just by being there and running the programs.

Shuman also thought that the group of students who came worked very well together, despite most of them having been unacquainted with each other

prior to the trip. "We stayed up until 2 a.m. almost every night planning the programs," she explained, saying that much of the programming was done on the trip itself. "We were really a very interesting group of people, who had the minds, dynamics, and energy to create what was needed." Shuman also observed that going on this trip made many people, herself included, realize that there is a real need for Jewish educators in certain communities and that there are certain individuals whose job and responsibility it is to go into education. "At every community we went to, the rabbis would ask which of us planned to go into *chinuch* (education), and as the trip went on, more and more hands went up each subsequent time the question was posed," Shuman said. "Some of the communities and *shuls* were really beautiful, but they just need people to move in and fill them up."

The CJF is planning to continue this trip in future years, and their goal is to target a different coast of the country. Next year, they hope to organize a similar trip to the West coast. "They just

want to let people know about the communities that are out there," explained Shuman. Overall, Shuman described the trip as amazing. "It was a completely different experience than anything I had ever done before," she explained. "I was honored to be a part of it. We were part of history."

Vogel described it as "the best winter break experience in my time at YU. It is quite a reflection of YU students that they chose to travel to places to help Jewish communities over their winter break rather than just traveling to Florida for vacation. YU students chose to be active Jews, participating in the world around them. We experienced Jewish communities outside of New York and found them to be very open." He also noted that "the scheduling was well balanced between relaxation and active time. It was a great opportunity to meet numerous communities, make connections with kids and have fun."

Alana's Editorial

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received an inadequate science education. Or how about the fact that women with near perfect grade point averages feel the need to *shlep* to a tutor because they are not learning from their instructor and feel ill prepared for their MCATs? I understand that professors are given tenure and are thus entitled to job security until they wish to retire, but what about the wishes of the students? The many students who are premed in this college deserve more than one option of time slot and more than one option of teacher in the sciences weighed most heavily by medical school admissions personnel. In addition, seniors should not have to worry about getting closed out of labs. More courses should be offered and, at the very least, more than one time slot and instructor should be offered in those classes

required for majors and for graduate schools.

The Humanities departments need to be revamped as well. It is not enough when a department only offers two electives a semester and has the same two instructors teaching every single course. Part of the college experience is to learn from a wide variety of knowledgeable professors and to get many different perspectives on a given subject matter. Being forced to take the same teacher over and over again does not fulfill the aforementioned criteria. Students should not have to take summer school to graduate in three years because there are not enough courses offered in their chosen area of study.

While comfort is nice, so is a challenge. Yes we have couches but what about more classes? Yes we have paintings

but what about more professors? Yes we have sushi but what about stimulation? Perhaps the next thing restructured at SCW and on the Beren Campus should be the academic requirements and course offerings, and anything else will just be an added bonus.

As a child I was always taught "don't judge a book by its cover." While a nice outside is nothing to scoff at, it is not enough. While it is great to keep renovating and expanding, it is important that we do not let the external improvements being made on a daily basis distract us from the internal faults of SCW. The curriculum and academic offerings at SCW need to be restructured just as much as any lobby, office or exercise room.

Adinah's Editorial

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very much out of order. When inquiring about what the time frame is for the completion of the *beit midrash*, the responses refer students to look at the front lobby of 245 Lexington Avenue and be happy with that. Why is it that the women have niceties and comforts such as lounges and an aesthetic campus and the men have more challenging courses, numerous *batei midrash*, and a state-of-the-art gym?

While the institutions

that I attended in my youth may have a more obviously close-minded view of what women's role in society should be, Yeshiva University (YU) is at times culpable of the same thing. Here at YU, women are provided with opportunity; we are given so much, yet we are then told okay, that is enough. How can we be empowered to feel like the sky is the limit and then, when we are on our way there, we are stopped because we wish to transcend boundaries that have not previ-

ously been pushed? I ask the women here to continue pushing with me. Let us not sit and allow ourselves to morph to conforms of society, but rather to proceed with our questioning, striving, and reaching because that is the only way we can continue to grow.

Lman Achai Israel Leadership

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Diaspora, the Americans were just as impressed to see the incredible resilience of the Israelis. One Israeli junior described that she ran a day camp for young children in the bomb shelter that she was in. Another student, a junior named Or said that being with friends and family in the bomb shelter in her home town was surprisingly "fun."

In addition to meeting and presenting to the high school students, the Lman Achai mission also met with members of vari-

ous organizations. One highlight of the trip was a discussion with the administrators of the Sephardic Home for the Elderly in Haifa. In this discussion, the group was faced with the question of whether the home's employees should be expected to stay with their patients during an alarm signaling that a rocket was going to fall in the area, or leave their patients and flee to a bomb shelter (bringing the elderly to a bomb shelter in this 45 second warning was not feasible). This discussion was extremely thought provoking because, as Deborah Anstandig (SCW '07) noted: "As a 22 year old American, I have never experienced war on the home front, never encountered questions of to what extent the individual must sacrifice or risk his or her life for the whole of society."

The importance of this discussion was that it gave the American students a small glimpse into which issues the Israeli population of the North dealt with during the war. Meeting with other people, such as an executive in the Rambam Hospital in Haifa, and Shula Menachem, director of social services in Karmiel, gave the students the opportunity to see how organizations had to make choices of how to respond to public need during wartime, even at the personal risk of individuals within the organization. For example, Menachem described that the leaders of Karmiel decided to distribute food packages and other supplies to bomb shelters throughout the city, even at great personal risk to those who were out on the roads to accomplish this initiative.

Following a week of learning and speaking to Israelis about the war, the mission spent Shabbat in a beautiful youth hostel in Hispin, a small town in the North, with Rabbi Kenneth Brander,

dean of the CJF and Dr. and Mrs. David and Rachel Berger. Dr. Berger is part of the faculty of YU Israel and Mrs. Berger works for Nefesh B' Nefesh. At this point in time, the goals of the mission and Taylor's unique ideas for how to implement them were understood. Now the challenge of designing initiatives to bring back to America remained. Over Shabbat, the group brainstormed various ideas of how to take what was learned on the trip



and translate it into action. Rabbi Brander and Dr. Mrs. Berger helped the students develop formulas for

realistic implementation of these ideas. Students suggested many different ideas ranging from the creation of a halakhic symposium on the mitzvah of settling the Land of Israel, to an Israel newsletter, and an *aliyah* group. One Yeshiva College (YC) student even suggested creating a *kollel* program for next year's winter vacation in which YC students would travel to an Israeli yeshiva to learn. During this time, they would have programming with the Israeli students of the yeshiva, allowing the cultivation of positive relationships between Israelis and Americans.

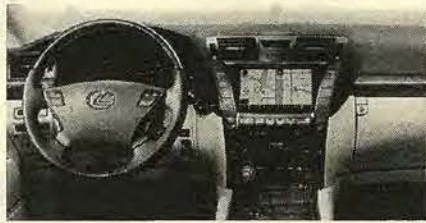
Over the course of the week-long mission, the 23 students from YU gained a more informed perspective about the war in the summer and the effects of the war that are still felt. The students learned what efforts are needed in the area of Israel-Diaspora relations and collected ideas of how to fill in those gaps. "The trip was an incredible and truly eye-opening experience," observed Ed Abramovitz (SSSB '09). "I am glad to have been able to be involved in it."

Futuristic Cars Drive Themselves

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Mercedes upped the ante). Silver described the amazing technology called DisTronic Laser Cruise Control. Think of it as a regular cruise control with a few extra tweaks. On a normal car, when you enter a cruising speed, the car will automatically hold the speed until you apply the brakes, at which point it automatically turns off. What makes the DisTronic unique is the fact that it uses lasers similar to police laser guns to automatically measure if a car ahead of you is going slower than your preset speed. If this is the case, the DisTronic system will activate the brakes automatically and recalculate the speed so that you will follow at a safe distance. If needed, it can even come to a full stop. In addition, this system can also automatically re-accelerate to any speed up to the original pre-set rate. The result of this system is found in the fact that once the speed is set and activated, the vehicle can automatically accelerate and brake, essentially driving itself. Steering is all the driver needs to do. The only real problem with this system is that the pre-set dis-

tance is far enough away to allow other cars to slip in, and, makes the car move further away from



Lexus interior

the new one. The cost of an S-class car with this technology will set your wallet back a whopping \$120,000.

Although these new features are incredible, most people find it very difficult to cede control to a



Lexus luxury seats

computer, and naturally tend to hover over the brakes until confidence in the computer braking system is gained. It is comforting

to know that the computer systems that facilitate this technology are very reliable.

Another new technology is seen in the automatic lane departure system, offered by Infinity. This works to sense the area of the lane in which you are driving. It does this by tracking lane-stripes, and alerting you with a warning bell if the lane is left accidentally. Also, if you are intentionally changing lanes, this system can sense if there is another vehicle in your intended path, and the warning is sounded. The upgraded version, due out by the end of the year, will actually turn the wheel and correct the direction of the car as well, which will significantly reduce accidents at a measurable percentage.

With cars that can park, accelerate, brake, and check lane change safety, one may wonder how far away is the day when human input is eliminated and a car will drive itself? Technically, if all these features were combined, such a future is not far away. We better start saving our money!

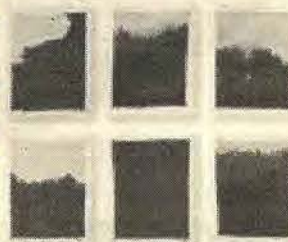
YU Museum Exhibit

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constructed from silk dyed and painted in fiber reactive dyes, and multiple silk screens using metallic pigments. The silk is dyed a deep blue and is about 2x6 feet. It is a picture of a sky where golden triangles, representing the stars in Joseph's first dream, and double triangles representing the sheaves in Joseph's second dream, are scattered around it. Also scattered around the cloth are numerous dots symbolizing Jacob's dream in which the children of Israel were equated to the sand of the earth since both are innumerable. There are also horizontal lines on the fabric representing the ladder in Jacob's famous dream on Mount Moriah. This piece incorporates the symbolism of the ladder in Jacob's dream and the stars and sheaves in Joseph's dreams in order to emphasize the similarities between their lives.

Cromer's work is indicative of the Torah's depth, with its multiple layers of meaning from the most simple to the more complex. Giving her textiles a multi-layer design in which she is able to impart her own commentary on the biblical text provides for multiple understandings of her artwork. For example, her piece called "Recognize This" represents the time Joseph's brothers deceived their father and showed him a torn robe with blood on it. "They had the ornamented tunic taken to their father and they said 'we found this, please examine it,

is it your son's tunic or not? He recognized it and said 'my son's tunic! A savage beast devoured him! Joseph was torn by a beast!' (Gen 37:32). This work was made of 10 pieces of stained Thai silk, representing the 10 brothers that sold Joseph. The pieces are mounted on plexiglass frames, resembling slide specimens meant to be examined. The artist intended to add an additional dimension to this piece in which the bloodstains also correspond to the State of Israel and the tragic situation there today. Just like Joseph was fighting for the truth of his dreams and his future, Israel also has to fight for the truth of her existence.



One piece of Cromer's on display at the museum

Cromer, through her creativity, mastery over fabrics, and her love of Torah, fashioned a most stunning and vivid exhibit in which one is able to take a step into the story of Joseph and appreciate it in a most profound way.

Chana Cromer's "The Story of Joseph: Unveiling the Text" runs through March 25, 2007. The museum, located at the Center for Jewish History at 15 W. 16th Street is open on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Museum Admission costs \$8.00 for adults, \$6.00 for seniors and students and is free for YU museum members, children under the age of five and YU faculty, administrators and students who present a valid identification card.

Weighty Issues in the Chicago Jewish Community

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Chicago community is obesity. According to the study's calculation of adult Body Mass Indexes (BMI), 31% of the population is overweight and another 25% is clinically obese. The BMI is calculated with the following formula: 703 multiplied by weight in pounds, divided by height in inches squared. These numbers are high enough to pose a problem and merit a widespread effort to curb it. The report says, that "a problem as widespread as obesity needs to be addressed at both the individual and community levels and must take a multi-pronged approach. The endless number of ways through which obesity could be addressed may seem daunting, but it also gives each community great flexibility. Communities can use this flexibility to best use their strengths to deal with weight problems in their neighborhoods."

Scariest than obese adults is the percentage of obese children that researchers found during the study. Using a slightly modified system of BMI's, researchers found that boys were more likely to be normal/underweight than overweight, while girls had a higher chance of being obese. Over 33% of girls in the WRP/PP communities were calculated as obese. In addition, older children, between the ages of six and 12, were more likely than two to five year olds to be overweight, which is consistent with national surveys.

Another health issue found plaguing the WRP/PP area is depression. One fifth of the population tested reported a diagnosis of depression. However, these numbers may not be an accurate reflection of the current people suffering from mental illness due to the social stigmas against mental illness, which could have caused hesitancy in the test subjects to admit to the problem. The study reported that 17% of depressed persons had a college education or some higher form of education, while 19% were not college graduates. Low-income persons and people with financial worries were more likely to be depressed. This illustrates how important it is for college graduates to be aware of the signs of depression. Having a college degree does not mean no financial worries; it is something all graduates deal with when they leave college and head out into the real world.

The report illuminates the goals in the area of depression. "In particular, three messages need to be delivered. First, individuals in these communities need to know how to recognize when they (or a loved one) might have a problem. Second, individuals need to be aware that depression can be effectively treated with a variety of methods. Finally, they need to know where to go for help."

Moreover, students at Stern College for Women (SCW) have different career goals, but there

are many seeking to be educators or part of the health field. These positions now come with an added responsibility. As the report says, "these educational and awareness campaigns should also target at least three groups: rabbis and rabbis' wives, school personnel, and physicians. Individuals in these positions have an opportunity to affect hundreds of individuals if they are more thoroughly trained in detecting, referring, and possibly treating (for physicians) depression."

The Jewish Community Health Survey of West Rogers Park/Peterson Park was conducted geographically far from the Jewish communities of New York. Yet, the results of the study hit close to home. Adult and childhood obesity are prevalent everywhere, but because Jews are a cohesive group, self-educate, and coordinate various programs, it has a responsibility to help stop the epidemic. Depression is an issue that can be masked with a smile in synagogue, but as future educators and members of the Jewish community, SCW students have the responsibility to be educated about the issue to make sure that their own problems, and those of their loved ones, are not ignored.

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guy to sing the harmonies how I would sing them."

Gerstner is the producer, director, and composer of all of the songs on the album. He derives his lyrics from his everyday experiences with Jewish texts and incorporates his own life events into the songs. "It is very hard to find original words. [When] davening, saying Tehillim (psalms), or learning Gemara, you come across a *pasuk* (verse) that is beautiful and just works," said Gerstner. The first track, "Chizku," has a particularly special meaning to him. "Chizku," means anyone [who strives] to get closer to Hashem, Hashem will [help you] and give you Chizuk. I hope that people will take Chizuk from [this song]."

Gerstner has brought EG productions to life, with the

The Chevra 3

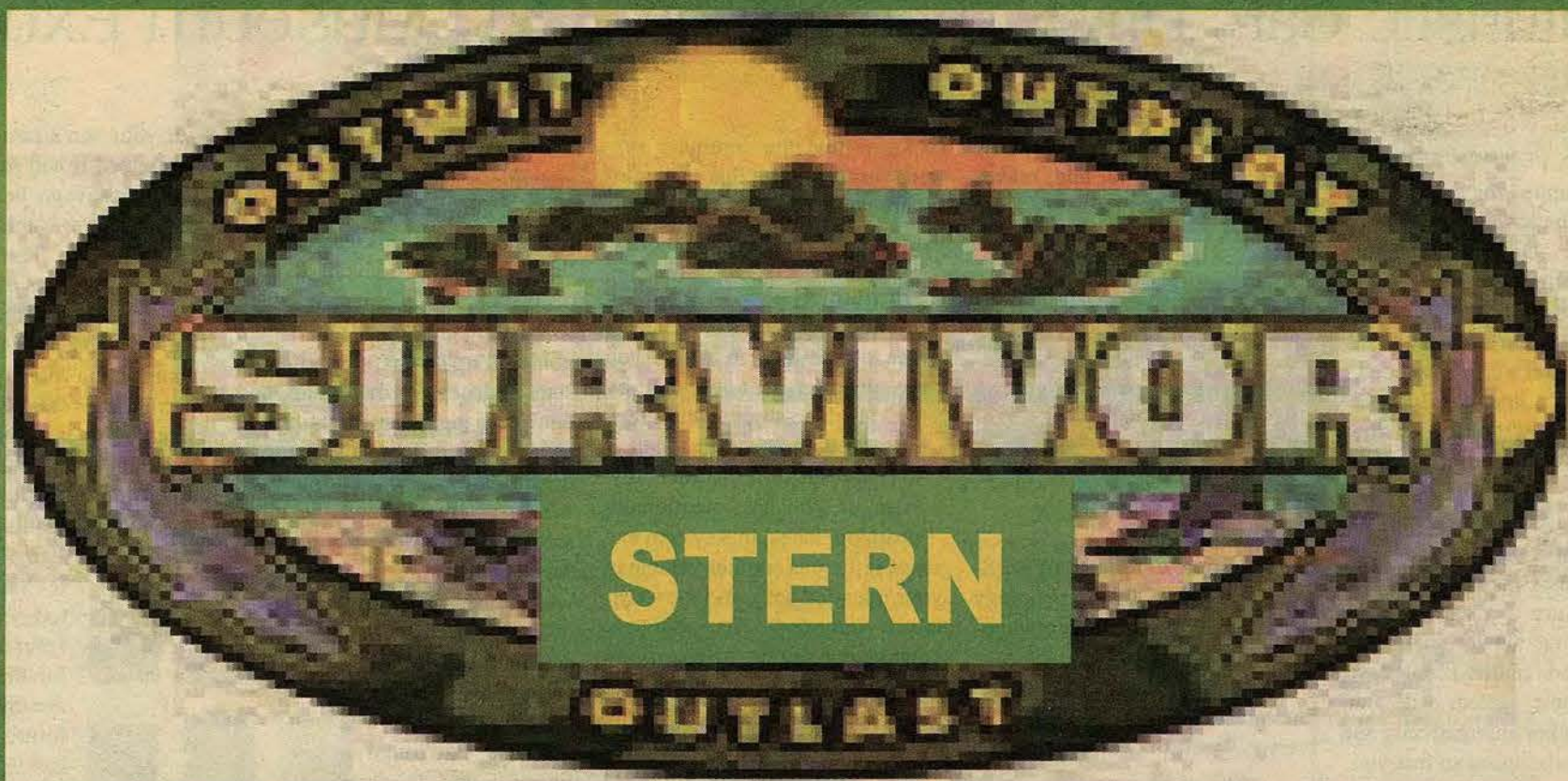
vision of bringing Torah into the lives of young people through his music. He acknowledges that Jews in a modern society are more likely to listen to Torah music with a modern sound. "When I first started the Chevra, I thought it would sell only a couple of thousand and that's it," Gerstner remarked with a laugh.

"I wouldn't have thought it would go past that, but then I realized it was something that people really wanted to hear." He uses

modern enhancers, such as voice synchronizers, club beats, and electric guitar, to make his music trendy and to give his music a rock/pop edge.

So far, sales for "The Chevra 3" have already surpassed that of the Chevra 2. "Baruch Hashem," he exclaimed. "I have to keep saying Baruch Hashem because it is an unbelievable response."





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