



# The OBSERVER

Volume 52 Number 6

February 2007 / Shvat 5766

## Student Leaders Create New Programming to Increase Student Involvement on Campus

### SCWSC Promotes Student Participation With AIS Council

BY CHANIE DINERMAN

The Stern College for Women Student Council (SCWSC) has instituted a new measure that will generate greater opportunities for student involvement, especially for underclasswomen. The development is concurrent with recent attempts made by other undergraduate organizations on the Beren Campus to increase student participation at all levels of university life.

The initiative, titled Activists in Stern (AIS), was first introduced by SCWSC President Liz Shelton in an editorial she wrote for the January issue of *The Observer*, and will provide

for a selected group of women to directly participate in student council meetings. The students will be engaged in the planning and decision-making processes, but will not be required to shoulder all of the accompanying responsibilities borne by traditional board members, explained Shelton.

By adding a "sub-student council," Shelton hopes to create a more diverse council that more accurately and effectively communicates the interests of the students. All four positions on the council are currently occupied by juniors and seniors, leaving underclasswomen without any representation. Consequently, the new sub-council will reserve

spaces for freshmen and sophomores, encouraging them to offer their own input with regard to the improvement of campus and student life.

Referring to the sub-council as a "training camp," Shelton anticipates that AIS will familiarize participating students with the inner workings of SCWSC, thereby helping to prepare them for future leadership roles. Many women have expressed interest in planning events but do not have a sense of how to approach the tasks at hand. The sub-council would presumably provide students with the basic skills required for coordinating activities and the myriad of other

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### Student Life Committee Expands With Creation of Subcommittees

BY DEBORAH ANSTANDIG

The Student Life Committee (SLC) at Stern College for Women (SCW) has created a host of subcommittees to address some of the more specific issues pertaining to the Beren Campus. The move to expand was prompted by Tiffy Unterman's (SCW '07), the president of SLC, desire to engage a greater number of undergraduates in campus life and increase the venues for student expression and participation.

The SLC, which meets on a weekly basis, works together with the university's administration to address a plethora of student concerns, ranging from cafeteria hours to computer usage. The current committee includes the presidents of the Stern College for Women Student Council, the Sy Syms School of Business Student Council, and the Torah Activities Council (TAC), as well as the editors-in-chief of *The Observer* and other selected students. The administration's delegation to the committee is comprised of SCW Associate Dean Ethel Orlian, Associate Dean of Students Zelda Braun, Assistant Dean of Students Beth Hait, in addition to a handful of staff members from the communications and computing departments.

Unterman attributed her idea of expanding the committee to a conversation she shared with TAC President Shoshana Fruchter (SCW '07), during which the two discussed the importance of including more student voices in the various campus organizations.

"With the creation of subcommittees, select students will be responsible for targeted issues

on campus," explained Unterman. "This makes it much more practical for change to take place." The new subcommittees will cover areas such as food, computers, library, athletic facilities, and general facilities and security. Unterman noted that more committees would be added, should the need arise. Over 20 students applied to head these committees and the positions were recently announced.

These structural changes coincide with the committee's attempts to redress other student grievances that have surfaced with the construction and renovation of the 14<sup>th</sup> floor of 205 Lexington Avenue, which was completed last fall. One of the concerns raised pertained to the open nature of the Office of Finance, whose premises are located on the 14<sup>th</sup> floor.

"Students complained that due to the open nature of the office space, financial conversations, which often should be conducted privately and with sensitivity, are instead exposed, due to the layout of the office," Unterman explained. She noted that The Monique C. Katz Dean Karen Bacon was particularly sensitive to the problem and assured Unterman that the university will either construct walls to allow for greater privacy or relocate the office altogether.

Other issues currently under discussion include the acceleration of Internet connectivity in Brookdale Residence Hall, the extension of Thursday hours at Le Bistro cafeteria, and the improvement of lighting in the 11<sup>th</sup>-floor gym at 245 Lexington.

*The Student Life Committee can be contacted at scwstudentlife@gmail.com.*

## New Chesed Program Unites Undergraduate Women

BY SHAYNA HOENIG

The Torah Activities Council (TAC) and Stern College for Women Student Council (SCWSC) have introduced a new and innovative *chesed* (acts of kindness) program to the roster of volunteer opportunities available on the Beren Campus. As its name indicates, "Chesed Unites," or "CU," as it is colloquially referred to, is a weekly initiative intending to bring the students of Stern College for Women (SCW) together while they contribute their energies to various projects across New York City.

The new program kicked off on Thursday, January 24, with an orientation attended by over 30 women. Participants were

addressed by representatives from Dorot, a program for elderly assisted living, City Harvest, a non-profit "food rescue program," and Meir Panim, a soup kitchen located in Israel. The spokesmen and women emphasized the specific importance of their respective organizations, as well as the importance of doing acts of *chesed* in general.

Following the presentations, the undergraduates in attendance divided themselves between three volunteer activities, electing to either write letters to Israeli soldiers, design birthday cards for the elderly, or volunteer at City Harvest. CU plans to regularly work with local hospitals, soup kitchens, old-age homes, food packaging plants, and Chai

Lifeline, a non-profit organization for children with serious illnesses. The members of the CU committee have also been researching other possible *chesed* projects in the New York area, attempting to even further expand the opportunities for involvement.

"The program basically started because women requested it," explained Rena Wiesen (SCW '08), secretary of SCWSC and co-organizer of CU. "Women came to SCWSC and TAC saying that they wanted to do *chesed*. One of the goals of Student Council is to facilitate programs that women want. We want to provide for them to the best of our ability."

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PURIM IS RIGHT AROUND  
THE CORNER!

IF YOU THINK YOU'RE  
FUNNY, OR EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT,  
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ADINAH WIEDER  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

There are numerous things that are very unique about my youngest sister. She does little quirky things to remind herself that G-d is always present and she is always cautious to never speak ill of another individual. Her laughter is most infectious and her sense of humor puts Jerry Seinfeld to shame. Most recently, I noticed another very strong characteristic that she possesses: the ability to respect every person and make everyone feel important. Her peers seek out her counsel and adults love to listen to her speak. Everywhere she goes she makes an indelible impression. I wanted to know exactly what it is about her demeanor that enables her to create harmony wherever she goes. Recently, I noticed that it is her respect for every individual that enables her to create harmony and foster growth wherever she goes. It is this respect that can help break barriers and enable growth to take place.

Last week, I attended one of her volleyball games. I took my seat in the bleachers and the game began. Every time someone on the opposing team messed up on a serve, I cheered; my sister did not. Every time someone on her team missed a play I screamed, "Are you kidding me? Why is she still on the court?" My sister, captain of the team did not. She turned to her teammate and said, "Don't worry. Next time it will be better." While she takes volleyball very seriously, never once did she say anything disrespectful to her teammates or members of the other team. At the conclusion of the game, both teams formed lines and then, shook hands. I noticed that my sister paid compliments to the players on the other team that did not play particularly well. She found something positive in their skills and she commented on that. To one player she said, "Awesome serve" and to the other she said, "Great volley." She continued commenting until she reached the end of the line. I left the game feeling guilty at some of my own reactions.

Suddenly, I found myself reflecting upon a conversation that we had just weeks ago. She described her feelings about students in her school and the lack of respect exhibited towards each other. The reasons she cited ranged from some students perceptions that others aren't as intelligent, to differences in religious ideals. She said that it pained her to see the disharmony that having a lack of respect for classmates caused. She said she felt it was juvenile and futile because groups of people have the ability to influence change and move worlds when they work together. However, respect must precede working together. There cannot be harmony and cooperation without respect.

The recollection of that conversation made me think about the diversity amongst our student body and the fact that it could potentially be a breeding ground for miscommunication and a general lack of respect. I recalled my recent responses to some issues on campus and thought about my egregious comments regarding issues that I feel passionately about. "What do you mean you can't understand why women would want to learn *gemara*? Are you telling me that you can honestly say you don't care about *tikun olam*? You have no interest in helping anyone who isn't Jewish? You can't understand why having an all women's *megillah* reading on the Beren Campus will serve to unify the women's community here. I can't believe that people are not embarrassed to express such views." Not only am I ashamed by my responses, but I also think that may discourage open communication. Neglecting to respect each other, in pursuit of our own agenda can only serve to undermine the very objectives we seek to achieve.

Due to the diversity on the Beren Campus there are many diverging religious, political, and even social views. We students spend much time trying to dissuade others that their views are incorrect rather than sitting down and discussing them. We fear making innovations on campus because it may offend certain groups despite the fact that the changes may be necessary to foster the growth of other students. However, if we continue to shy away from discussing issues not usually discussed because it is not the commonly accepted thing to do, then we are encouraging a disservice to ourselves and promulgating ignorance instead of discourse. If we continue to sit with the same people every day and talk to the same people that we always talk to then we are building barriers instead of breaking them. How can we learn to respect other people if we don't understand what our neighbor represents and what moves them?

I ask students, faculty, and administration to join together and partake in a dialogue. Pledge to work together so that instead of glossing over differences we can discuss each other's differences and learn to respect them. Respect is the cornerstone of any relationship and its preponderance will generate greater opportunities for honest and meaningful discussion. With this newfound respect, Stern College for Women will grow into a place that all types of Jewish woman can coexist and can come to develop themselves spiritually and intellectually.



BY ALANA RUBENSTEIN  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

February is Black History Month, a month when America remembers the plight of African Americans and honors and recognizes the achievements of this minority. These people were, and in certain ways still are, unfairly persecuted and treated inhumanely simply because of their skin color, something given to them by G-d which they have no control over.

As Jews, we are all too familiar with this story. Most of the Jewish people, minus those who have converted, did not choose to be Jewish. While we may love our religion and be proud to be a part of a nation that was chosen by G-d, it was not something we picked to be. While every individual has the right to decide how traditional they want to be, and how much they want to associate themselves with the Jewish people, *halachically*, if you have a Jewish mother you are Jewish; end of story.

And based on this, and based on this alone, our people have been persecuted. This is the story of *Purim*, the story of *Chanukah* and the story of *Pesach*. This is the story of the Holocaust, where people who weren't even Jewish but had some Jewish blood in their lineage, were tortured, gassed and killed. This is the story of the Jewish people, and a story that is unfortunately not over.

Like African Americans who were victims to the racist slurs of Michael Richards, the actor who played Cosmo Kramer on "Seinfeld," only a few weeks ago, Jews felt the wrath of Mel Gibson, who in a drunken tirade proclaimed "The Jews are responsible for all the wars in the world," this past summer. Though in America in the year 2007, all ethnic, racial and religious groups are technically equal in the eyes of the law, the African Americans suffering injustices based on the color of their skin know that's not true; the Jews of New York who don't want to wear *kippot* (skullcaps) in public know that's not true.

Our religious affiliations make us victims. I don't think anyone would deny this, and even more so, I don't think anyone can think of a justification for this. We are being ridiculed and discriminated against for something we have no control over, and at the end of the day, it is hard to think of any situation in which this should be considered correct.

But race and religion transmitted by birth are not the only two characteristics of ourselves we have no control over. Gender, until additional scientific advancements are made, is another one of those things we cannot choose for ourselves. We are born male or female. Our gametes can either be "XX" or "XY." We can choose to or choose not to embrace our gender, but either way we must accept how G-d made us and realize there is nothing we can do to change it.

If this is the case, why is it any

better to treat women unequally than it is to treat African Americans or Jews in such a way? How can people justify treating women as inferiors simply because of their gender if it is something they have no control over? Why is the label "feminist," in reference to people who believe women should be equal (not superior) to men, denigrated, while people wouldn't dare insult those who dedicated their lives to civil rights?

And while it is unacceptable for outsiders like Michael Richards, Mel Gibson, or the fictional character Borat to insult and discriminate against people because of factors they can't control, it is at least somewhat understandable. While their behavior is rooted in ignorance and is incorrect, it is easy to insult people who are different than you. What I don't understand though, is how women fail to see the similarities mentioned above and accept the inequalities forced upon them because they are women.

I have heard numerous women say that they don't care if they are treated in a certain way because of their gender. They are all too willing to take a backseat to men, all too quick to justify being excluded because they were born a certain way. And yet, none of them would sit as quietly and be so amenable if they were told that the reason they are being persecuted, discriminated against or singled out was because they were Jewish. They would agree that African American slavery is wrong, but cannot understand how the situation of the slaves is similar to the experience of women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. If slavery still existed today I am sure these women would think it was wrong. Yet, they have nothing to say about their sisters who feel enslaved in their everyday lives.

While every individual has the ability to make his or her own destiny, there are some things we cannot decide for ourselves. These are not traits we can be faulted for possessing, and not traits we should be discriminated against because of. It is both unfair and unreasonable to condemn people for things they have no control over. Yet, even worse than outsider attacks, is when we internalize these inequalities and accept them as truths. If we do not stand up for ourselves who else will?

As Jewish women we have a double bulls-eye on our backs. We are distinct because of our religious views and because of our gender. And just like none of us would condone the anti-Semitic remarks of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, we should not giggle when we here sexist jokes or see women being treated in an inferior manner in the world around us. We must embrace our gender identity like we embrace our religious identity. Only then, once we acknowledge ourselves and the problems we face in society, can we hope to bridge the gaps.

# OPINIONS

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The Observer is published monthly during the academic year by the Stern College for Women Student Council. The staff of The Observer retains the right to choose newspaper content and to determine the priority of stories. While unsigned editorials represent the views of The Observer's editorial board, all opinions expressed in signed editorials, columns, letters and cartoons are the opinions of the writers or artists and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Observer, Stern College for Women, its student body, faculty or administration.



## Is Sexual Harassment a Cultural Phenomenon?

BY GILAH KLETENIK

"Take a picture with these beautiful girls?"

I can still hear his deep voice and thick Israeli accent. I can still feel his arms slyly pulling my friend and me closer towards him. I can still smell his heavy, instant-coffee breath as we managed awkward smiles for the photo-op, despite the discomfort of the situation. We wriggled free the second we heard the liberating click.

Though it is a seemingly small infraction, I walked away infuriated and disappointed. Disappointed with myself—though I am no shy wallflower, I had frozen; I offered no sharp reproach to this decidedly uninvited crossing of my boundaries. I reassured myself that if he were anyone but Israel's Minister of Transportation he wouldn't have gotten off so easy.

I've been thinking about that morning in Washington D.C.'s Convention Center a lot lately. It's the headlines, no doubt. "Ex-Justice Minister Haim Ramon found guilty for indecent behavior." He is accused of forcibly kissing an Israeli soldier after posing for a picture with her.

Sounds familiar... and then there is this: "President Katsav resigns under charges of rape and sexual harassment." What is it about Israeli politicians and women?

In a country with an army notorious for sexual inequality in all of its ranks and divorce laws that most would agree challenge a woman's democratic rights, these behaviors come as no surprise. The celebrated American feminist and legal advocate Catharine MacKinnon suggests that the root of rape lies in a society's social fabric. It reflects an attitude. The society's deep beliefs and values regarding women are reflected by the way women are treated in that society, or perhaps even by the roles it allows to women. Is the female voice heard? Are women a part of public decision making?

Germane to this discussion is the fact that Israel ranks 74 in the world for female representation in parliament, with only 17 out of 120 possible Knesset seats held by women. That is a low 14.2% of the representative leadership. For a country that boasts about being one of the first countries to embrace a female head of state, this is a disgraceful reality

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## The Moment She Grew Up

BY JAIMIE FOGEL

It has officially started. I've reached that stage in a "frum girl's" life where the weekends are no longer consumed by schoolwork and studies, but by engagement parties, *l'chaims*, *vorts* (all of which I still do not understand the difference between) and weddings. As successful as I have been in avoiding topics such as gowns, wedding halls, apartments and in-laws, it seems inescapable at this point. Don't get me wrong; I am elated for all my friends and can't wait to share in their joyous occasion. But to be honest, this is all kind of strange. I always imagined that when I arrived at this point in my life, it would feel "normal." I thought I would be able to relate to my friends and the exciting stage of life they were about to enter. But as I wildly danced with my newly engaged friend in the middle of her lively circle I kept thinking, "Someone's going to realize that I'm just faking. I mean, I'm only a kid. I don't even own a pair of heels." Less than two years ago we were all sitting on our beds discussing the seminary choir competition, the latest school trip and our hopes for the future. Now

it seems that we've actually begun to live it.

In the past few years I've become fascinated with the concept of growing older. I always wonder how we develop from young girls into women, both physically and emotionally. How do childish, carefree girls who spend hours playing with impossibly slim dolls turn into mothers of children who do the same? I often try to pinpoint it to moments and trends such as the gradual maturation of features, changes in dress, an engagement, and the covering of the hair, all of which seem to age us overnight. I wonder when we begin to exhibit that "overtired, overcar-pooled, I-can-run-the-world mother look"—as if there is a moment in time that I can catch in a box and label as "the moment she grew up." I watch my friends in the days before and after life-changing events occur to them. They look and act the same; there are no obvious, detectable changes so I am left curiously watching on the sidelines to catch the moment when everything will change.

As I attempt to get my first real job for the upcoming sum-

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## The Fight Against the Tyranny of Holocaust Denial

BY OLIVIA RACHEL MATHIAS

Good men stay silent for evil men to prosper. In light of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's recent allegation that the Holocaust is merely a "myth," we are morally bound to defend the memory of those brutally murdered in Nazi Germany. As the generation of Holocaust survivors dies out, it is increasingly more important that we attest to the validity of their story and acknowledge what we already know about the atrocities that European Jewry endured in Nazi Germany. We have all heard survivors speak, taken classes on the topic in our Jewish day schools, and some have even listened to their own grandparents' testimony.

It is crucial that we not take their first-hand proof that the Holocaust happened for granted. The calamity of the Holocaust is more real to the Jews than to any one else in the world, and the fact

that some question it is shocking. But, we don't realize the vastness of the ignorant public. If we do not take advantage of this opportunity to shut down all of the arguments of the Holocaust deniers, then when will we do it? There will soon be no more survivors to share their real life stories. This is why the future of this issue lies in the hands of America's educators. In order to ensure that such acts of barbarism are forever put to rest throughout the world, it is essential that this generation be well aware of the factual history and the detrimental effects of this genocide.

Last year, Representative Caroline Maloney (D-Manhattan, Queens) proposed the Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust Education Assistance Act. The act is named after Simon Wiesenthal, a Holocaust survivor who dedicated his life to avenging the murders of the six million Jewish victims of Nazi Germany. The bill calls for \$2 million of federal

funding and seeks to provide the resources necessary to assist schools in encouraging Holocaust education programs. The passing of the bill will educate Americans "so that they (a) can explore the lessons that the Holocaust provides for all people; and (b) be less susceptible to the falsehood of Holocaust denial and to the destructive messages of hate that arise from Holocaust denial."

In order for the bill to pass we need the Stern College for Women community to get involved. We need the help of the Jewish population to push this bill through Congress. Educating young people about the Holocaust is vital so that they understand the powerful, destructive effects of hatred and racism. Sadly, not enough states require public schools to teach students about this catastrophic period in human history and so many, due to insufficient funding, do not. By passing the Holocaust

Education Assistance Act, Congress can give schools the means to actually spread awareness about the Holocaust, genocide, and hatred. In order for Congress to pass this bill they need support from the people that they represent in their districts. This bill is not asking for anything unfeasible; it is simply a matter of Congress doing what is morally right.

To get involved go to <http://www.house.gov/writerep/> or email Chaya Citrin at [chayamc89@hotmail.com](mailto:chayamc89@hotmail.com).

# The Struggle to Define the Self: What Does Torah u-Madda Mean To You?

BY CHAVA ZAKHAREVICH

There is no statement more closely associated with Yeshiva University (YU) than the famed mission statement of "*Torah u-Madda*." For those readers who have now begun to turn the page in fear of tainting their brains with either heresy or triteness, I assure you my intentions in writing are neither to define nor condemn, but simply to explore my feelings regarding the term. Those interested in the aforementioned categories of readings will find no shortage of articles, confessions, and diatribes from concerned YU citizens in the blogosphere, google-sphere and beyond. Rather, my humble standpoint is that of one aspiring to be a simple Jew in a complex world, carrying within me a soul which shrugs hashkafatization, to use this made up in term in its cultural sense. To some this may sound like hubris, as the classic Yiddish punch line to some long forgotten joke goes: "Look who thinks she's a nothing!" To others, this may sound like "wishy-washiness," a refusal to commit oneself wholeheartedly to one ideal. In my defense, it is not that I don't have a particu-

lar way of viewing the world; I do, but almost through an "anti-hashkafa" lens, emerging from the fact that I stand emotionally at the fault lines of interaction between the various groups, not quite "MO," not quite "yeshivish," dabbling in *chassidus* until the inner *Litvak* steps forth. Rationalist vs. Mystic, Open vs. Sheltering, Zionist vs. Neo-Zionist vs. anti-Zionist, the ideological battles of the Jewish world are constantly being re-enacted in my mind, always the mantra of "*eilu veilu*" (each opinion is valid) resonating closely in my consciousness.

I never forgot the goals I established for myself as a naïve *baalat tshuvah* (returning to the faith) embarking upon a path to simply "follow the Torah." In essence, that goal still remains at the core of my life-path. Acclimatization to the realities of the Jewish world, however, brought a deflowering of my prior unbridled optimism, now burdened with the realization that my future family's sanity is dependent on my finding a place in a particular community. When I came to Stern College for Women (SCW), I was again

forced to confront the inner "*pilpul*," (toil) beholden to an astounding range of Jewish diversity, both culturally and ideologically. This diversity translates itself into the many different interpretations of the "*Torah u-Madda*" framework that, at the very least, forms the structure of our education. In general, the SCW students I have encountered fall into either the "necessary" or "ideal" camp. To the "necessary" folks, the study of both secular and Judaic in a singular academic setting is a means of learning the skills "necessary" to make a living whilst remaining in a kosher environment. For others, "*Torah u-Madda*" is a principle enabling them to synthesize these seemingly opposing ways of life into a singular path of worship. As usual, my *hashkafic* schizophrenia has caused me to vacillate between the two poles, or reject both outright.

On one hand, it's very easy to feel that the materials I am studying (English Literature major) are disparate from the objective truth of the Torah, or perhaps entirely tangential to my true focus in life. When I am in this mode, the words "*shtuyot*" (stupidity) and

even "*kefira*" (heresy) lurk and threaten to attack my sensibilities. On the other hand, despite the uncomfortable extremist within, there is another force that compels: the fact that I like it. I like knowing the chain of intellectual history that forms the *esprit d'temp* in which I find myself. I like prose and poetry and words which say as much as they leave unspoken. I like feeling grounded in the world around me.

Perhaps within this emotion I can pinpoint what I see as the essential flaw in both these models. They both pre-suppose that I am—that any Jew is—an essentially reasonable person, that the intellect is that which guides one in their *avodat Hashem* (service of G-d). As much as it is true that intellect is the crown of man, the source of free will, and a primary component of worship, it is not the only one. As much as I can know that the Torah is truth, the blueprint of the universe, in which I can "delve and delve and find everything," I cannot help but feel constrained in a myopic lifestyle that rejects the wisdom that can and does emanate from other sources as well. As much as

I enjoy the pursuit of secular wisdom, it is easy to become disheartened in various disciplines (especially these days) that lack moral clarity, wherein depression is infinitely more artistic and deep than happiness, confusion is glorified, and the spiritual is classified as a mental delusion of the past. As much as I would like to think my brain is a sufficient filter, I imbibe much of this unwanted subtext along with the wanted information, feeling at times obstructed rather than enriched.

So what is a person like me to do? For now, I will continue to dabble in both modes, glean inspiration from those shining individuals who are complete with their worldview, truthful to themselves and to G-d. I pray that with their guidance I will find my way.

## POINT-COUNTERPOINT

### Genetic Screening: Dor Yesharim vs. Standard Testing

BY SHOSHANA FRUCHTER

AND

ESTHER GENUTH

Genetic screening is supremely important. A short visit to a testing site and simply being aware of one's genetic composition easily opens doors to ways of coping with genetic diseases and often even allows for disease prevention. Also very important is that the facts of genetic diseases are clear and the myths dispelled.

Standard genetic testing, which informs testers of their specific results, including exactly which chromosomes carry recessive disease genes, dispels one of the most detrimental myths of genetic diseases. Especially in our community, where the spouse search is so sensitive and over-dramatized by many, the truth about Jewish genetic diseases is even more important. It is important that everyone know that carrying a recessive gene for Tay Sachs, for example, is *completely harmless* in the event that one's spouse is not a carrier for the same disease. In such a case none of this couple's children would ever have Tay Sachs—never *could* any of these children have Tay Sachs. It is a genetic impossibility.

The stigma attached to carrying such a gene is baseless and hurtful in so many ways. The psychological bur-

den carriers face in communities that do not understand the facts of genetic diseases is terrible for the carrier in a very personal way. To add to that injury, in some circles, the already personal and sometimes difficult spouse search is made only more complicated and difficult when compounded by this false stigma.

Standard testing is very effective at screening couples for incompatible Jewish genetic disease mutations and, at the same time, keeps the testers aware. Standard testing informs testers of their exact test results and removes the stigma attached to being a carrier. Empowered by the awareness and the truth about genetic diseases our community will no longer see being a carrier for Jewish genetic diseases as a fault in a person. With the stigma gone our community will have a much healthier understanding of this important issue.

The Medical Ethics Society recently sponsored a lecture and information session fostering awareness about the need for genetic screening to prevent the recessive genetic diseases that are common among the *Ashkenazi* Jewish population. In addition, they organized two forms of genetic screening: Dor Yesharim, which does not reveal screening results, and NYU Medical Center, which does provide results of the screening.

While both genetic screening services have similar goals regarding the prevention of recessively inherited diseases, Dor Yesharim's policy is more appealing for many people specifically because of the anonymity of its service. Instead of informing people if they are carriers for any of the diseases, participants are given an identification number. People can then call Dor Yesharim's confidential hotline with their identification number and that of their dating partners and they will be told if they are genetically compatible. As long as both people are not carriers for the same disease, neither has to know if the other is a carrier. If both people are carriers for the same disease, they will be told that the match is not genetically compatible and they may request to know what disease they are carriers for. Many credit the near-total disappearance of Tay-Sachs disease in the Jewish community to Dor Yesharim's successful screening program.

There are many benefits to using an anonymous genetic testing service such as Dor Yesharim. Dor Yesharim's system solves two problems commonly associated with carrier screening: the psychological burden of know-

ing one's carrier status, and the potential stigma suffered when others learn that one is a carrier. These two negative consequences of carrier screening have been clearly acknowledged by the medical community.

While being a carrier for a disease such as Tay-Sachs presents no health issues for the individual or their offspring unless he or she marries an individual who also is a carrier, individuals may be stigmatized for being carriers by those who lack a thorough understanding of genetics. Furthermore, individuals may also feel negatively about being carriers themselves even though they know logically that there is nothing wrong with them. If individuals have Dor Yesharim numbers instead of knowing their carrier status, they avoid these problems. Additionally, they do not have the unneeded stress of worrying when to reveal their carrier status to a dating partner. Dating is hard enough without this complication. With Dor Yesharim, both people can easily exchange numbers instead of having to reveal potentially sensitive information about carrier status.

Aside from safeguarding the privacy of people's genetic status, Dor Yesharim admirably fills the need of the Jewish community regarding screening. As long as marriage between carriers is prevented, there is no need to be informed of test results. The anonymity of screening through Dor Yesharim prevents genetically incompatible marriages while simultaneously protecting the emotional well-being of those involved.

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# The Self-Hating Jew, The Self-Hating State

BY PEREL SKIER

"Essay Linking Liberal Jews and Anti-Semitism Sparks A Furor."

I glanced at this New York Times article during breakfast, puzzled over it briefly, and tried to push the headline back to the recesses of my mind. Mental engagement of the self-hating Jew phenomenon always leaves me with that feeling of queasy uncertainty. The lines are all so grey, and yet there are so many tight-fitting labels: 'apologists' and 'apostates,' bad terms with bad connotations, blur and overlap with descriptors that are supposed to be colorless. Right? The neutral, we-all-love-each-other-anyway names: 'reconstructionist', 'traditionalist', 'reform' and, heaven help us, 'Modern Orthodox.'

It's all a game of political correctness to me. Case in point—suppose a certain sect of Judaism decides against yarmulkes, deeming them an unseemly display of personal belief that people of other religions may find confrontational (and if you think that's far-fetched, you haven't been paying enough attention to British Prime Minister Tony Blair). Contrast this sect with an individual who, born Jewish, grows so disgusted by the Jewish community that he starts calling himself an atheist and publishing scathing critiques of the Jewish religion and society.

Got it? Now here's the tricky part.

Which is the self-hating Jew?

Are they both self-hating

Jews?

As you've probably realized by now, there is a special kind of contempt reserved by the Jewish community for its expatriates. No one is quite so spineless or depraved as the Jew who turns his back on his people. I'm not talking about the kids who stray from the straight-and-narrow—the kids are alright, and in fact we find them strangely appealing. Hey, it's an open secret: a mother's favorite is never the perfect son, it's the ne'er-do-well wild-child with the inquisitive soul. Of course, the key caveat is that we really know, in our heart-of-hearts, that the whole inverse flip is just a phase, and as long as we continue to gently and lovingly prod them back to the true path, one day they'll return to the fold of their own volition. Ditto for the *tinok she'nishba* (the non-religious Jew who doesn't know any better). We take the long view with them: they'll come around. Yes, they may soul-search, but if we keep waving from the light-tower, they'll find us.

The Noam Chomskys of this world, however, turn our hearts to stone.

Back in the day, I would have been the first to glare. It all seemed so simple: in the century that witnessed the Holocaust, picking at the Jewish community was considered tactless, so people raved on about Israeli occupation and Zionism to sidestep censure. In my mind, one was not different than the other; in fact, I don't think it even occurred to me that these virulent protestors, some of whom were Jews them-

selves, could claim to criticize Israel solely as a political entity, a dissertation completely divorced from their feelings towards the Jewish people.

And if they had tried to make such a claim, I would have immediately dismissed it as ludicrous. The New York Times quoted a few lines from the controversial essay, penned by Alvin H. Rosenfeld, which paints the "liberal Jewish movement" with the same brush as your average anti-Semites. He takes on many Jewish public figures, particularly in the news and entertainment industries, who have castigated Israel or Zionism, arguing that by directing these verbal attacks at their own people they are furthering the cause of anti-Semitism. It seems only logical to agree with Mrs. Shulamit Reinharz, a sociologist who just happens to be married to the president of Brandeis University, when she writes in a column for *The Jewish Advocate*: "In a world where there is only one Jewish state, to oppose it vehemently is to endanger Jews."

The statement rings true; people like my father are out there, reading that quote, bobbing their heads. The fires of righteous indignation are already burning in their chests. It's true! How could they, these Jews, successful and celebrated—how could they turn on their own?

Yet another quote from that New York Times article has stayed with me, lingering in my head from class to class.

This one comes from Pulitzer-winning playwright Tony Kushner, also known for a collection of essays he co-edited

in 2003, "Wrestling With Zion: Progressive Jewish-American Responses to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." You can say what you like about the book; not having read it, I'll reserve judgment. But when the New York Times interviewed him about being name-dropped in Rosenfeld's essay, he had this to say in his defense: "It's morally incumbent upon us to articulate questions and reservations."

Normally the line wouldn't strike me. It's just the kind of thing smug pseudo-intellectuals use to justify a wide range of idiotic behavior. Hey, you can validate neo-Nazism under that banner. But for some reason—maybe because of all the bad press the current Israeli administration has been getting lately—this time the words struck a different chord in me.

They reminded me of a debate I'd witnessed in high school between my class and the lonely figure of my history teacher. The day's lecture revolved around checks and balances in different branches of the government, and my teacher sensed that he hadn't managed to sell my class on the necessity of the idea. Many of my friends didn't particularly feel their vote mattered, either. My teacher shook his head, adamantly insisting: "It's more than a privilege to express approval or disapprobation of your leaders' behavior—it's your duty as a citizen, as a member of the group. Think about it," he would say. "If you don't participate in your government, you leave the future of your nation in the hands of a select

few. Only by speaking up can you change the course of the country; only by asking questions and finding the answers others refuse you can you respond to the challenges of your age appropriately."

I wasn't sure what to make of this correlation between history class and Kushner. After all, the Jewish nation isn't a form of government...or is it? Is political action taken by the State of Israel representative of Jews all over the world? Just Jews living in Israel? Perhaps not even them. You read in the papers these days many accounts of the mid-life crisis facing Israel. What is Israel? How does it relate to *Bnei Yisrael*?

In a year that has single-handedly witnessed the catastrophes for Israelis on three or four fronts, both domestic and international, where do we draw the line? Do we have Kushner's 'moral obligation' to condemn Olmert or Katsav? Or do we, on the contrary, stick together and defend Israel's reputation in the name of loyalty and self-preservation? Do we deplore bad policy while touting the good? Is our protective silence inhibiting the ability of our people to meet today's challenges? How much of our feelings hinge upon Israel's sense of self? How much of our feelings hinge upon our sense of ourselves?

And how much will we let this issue drive us apart?

"Essay Linking Liberal Jews and Anti-Semitism Sparks A Furor."

Enough questions. Let's have some answers.

## Growing Up

continued from page 4

mer and enter the competitive world of resumes, interviews and paychecks, I doubt if these offices will really take me seriously with only 20 years of life experience. Growing up is a surreal process, and I wonder if one ever feels quite "old enough" and whether defining moments exist, moments when we not only know we've reached the next stage but feel prepared for it as well. I recently asked a teacher of mine, who also happens to be a young mother of five active children, if she ever felt "old enough" to take on the role of responsible parent. She immediately responded with a resounding "nope" and an innocent chuckle, a response that confirmed my suspicions. Just as a young mother feels baffled at her sudden downpour of responsibilities, so too, a 50 year old woman with fresh wrinkles around her experienced eyes doesn't see herself as such. In her mind's eye she is still a hip, vibrant 25 year old.

Time passes us by so quickly. We get very few chances to label

it and thoughtfully place it into nice, neat boxes. Yet, I think we all still try. I often find that we Stern College for Women students believe time is something to be rushed; it is one more obstacle in the way of reality, an attitude I can sympathize with although with whose principles I wholeheartedly disagree. We are so young and I think we often try to become women too quickly. Developing into a mature, thoughtful person is wonderful and vital, but rushing ourselves into what we think is "reality" might not be as glamorous as we have imagined.

I'm fine with feeling like a kid for now. When the time comes to act like an adult, I'm sure I'll rise to the occasion. But, I still won't be wearing heels!

## Cross-Cultural Examination of Sexual Harassment

continued from page 4

at best. But is it fair to suggest that Israel stands alone in its treatment of women?

Ostensibly, things seem rather different here in America, with our female speaker of the house—Nancy Pelosi—and women composing more than a quarter of the president's cabinet. In fact, for the first time, a woman has established herself as a comfortable frontrunner in a presidential election. Many polls indicate that nine out of 10 voters would vote for a female candidate.

However, a recent study by Matthew Streb of Northern Illinois University uncovers a different story. Most poll questions are formulated as 'yes' or 'no' questions. These formats enable the respondents to select a response that they think is socially desirable or accepted. But Streb and his cohorts polled respondents using a list format, wherein the respondent is asked to rate the level of his anger about the given items on the list. This system is far more accurate in its

assessment of citizen bias. In rating how people felt about the prospect of a female president, 26% of respondents expressed anger.

Ramon and Katsav do not stand alone in their scandalous behaviors. An Italian newspaper recently published a front-page letter-to-the-editor addressed to former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, written by his wife, demanding an apology for flirtatious remarks and overly friendly behavior with two young attractive women at an awards ceremony. The 70-year-old Berlusconi is quoted as telling one of the women: "If I wasn't already married I would marry you straight away." Can you imagine Hillary Clinton writing an open letter to Bill, demanding an apology for his relationship with Monica Lewinsky? She's done nothing of the sort. As a politician only ascending in power, Hillary had too much to lose.

This does, however, beg the question: don't politicians like Katsav and Berlusconi really have the most to lose? If the way

that women are treated directly reflects the role they play in society, then the high incidence of sexual harassment and mistreatment of women in the Western world is not a surprise. But how can this explain the seeming abundance of sex scandals at the highest echelons of power?

Perhaps politicians perceive their power as a potent shield against all reproach. Maybe they feel that they can get away with anything. And while it might seem that every day another allegation is thrown at a politician for inappropriate behavior, we can only imagine all of the behaviors that go unreported. We can imagine all the women—like me—who just could not bring themselves to open their mouths. Furthermore, as MacKinnon suggests, these behaviors do not stand in a vacuum; they reflect a society's beliefs, beliefs which aren't unique to Israel, that are rather embraced by much of the Western world.

And the only way to change the fabric of a society is from the bottom up.

## NEWS

## Beren Campus Welcomes Debbie Solomon as Pre-Nursing Advisor

BY CHAYA CITRIN

Stern College for Women (SCW) has expanded the ranks of its pre-health department with the hiring of a new pre-nursing advisor. Debbie Solomon, a registered nurse and guidance counselor, will fill the void left by the head of the department, Dr. Brenda Loewy, who recently relinquished her jurisdiction over pre-nursing advisement.

The creation of a specific pre-nursing advisement position is the latest in a string of changes that have occurred within the overall pre-health department since the fall, when Dr. Loewy relegated physical and occupational therapy career advisement to Dr. Gail Gumora, a general academic advisor at SCW. Department modifications have continued in the spring with Solomon's arrival, as she will provide advisement to pre-nursing students and to students who are considering careers as physician assistants. The new position is intended to improve pre-nursing advisement as well as to streamline the general pre-health advisement system, allowing Dr. Loewy to focus her attention on pre-medicine and pre-dental undergraduates.

Solomon has been a registered nurse for the past 19 years in New York State and currently serves as a nurse supervisor in a nursing home. She has previously worked as a teacher for the Board of Cooperative Educational Services in Nassau County, as well as a supervisor for home care personnel. Solomon also earned a Masters of Science in

Education in guidance counseling from St. Johns University, which she has utilized as director of college guidance at Yeshiva University High School for Girls.

Solomon posited that her experience as a college guidance counselor would assist her in her new advising capacity at SCW. "This position necessitates working closely with admissions offices in a large number of universities, and in turn, will facilitate my relationship with them, while advocating for Stern students," she explained.

Pre-nursing students have different options open to them, but choosing the right path of study requires familiarity with the system and advanced preparation. Solomon hopes to improve the department's proceedings by reaching out to undergraduates during the earlier stages of the planning and admissions process.

"Most accelerated programs require similar, but not always identical pre-requisite courses in the sciences prior to being considered for admission," she said. "Surely, no senior wants to be faced with this reality check months before graduating. Like most professional programs of study, this requires planning."

Solomon elaborated on the additional responsibilities subsumed within her new position. "Pre-nursing advisement needs to consider the plethora of accelerated programs in our tri-state area to arrive at a good match," she explained. "Similarly, students seeking a more advanced degree as a nurse practitioner will need to examine the specialties, similar to medical students, and the

schools which offer them."

Undergraduates reacted positively to the announcement of Solomon's hiring, citing their anticipation of a more efficient and accessible advisement office. "The advisement staff is really overloaded and busy," remarked Devorah Thaler (SCW '08), a pre-nursing student majoring in biology. "It will be really helpful when pre-nursing students get their own advisor whose sole focus is helping us gather information and informing us. Pre-nursing isn't simple and right now we have to figure out a lot of things by ourselves."

Shira Weissbrod (SCW '08), another pre-nursing student majoring in biology, was also hopeful. "It's been tough, because only Dr. Loewy has been available," she said. "Dr. Loewy is great, the best that SCW has. It's just hard to get to her, because of the tight meeting times. I feel like the pre-med students are considered more important. It will be really helpful to have more advisement help."

*Solomon's office hours on the Beren Campus officially began on February 2, 2007. She will be available by appointment only on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. and Friday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., though she is willing to extend her availability if there is increased demand. Students may schedule appointments by contacting Solomon at dsolomon@yuhsg.org or by calling the Pre-Health Advisement Office at 212-340-772.*

## YUPAC Delegation Lobbies Congress on Israel and Iran

BY ESTHER BARUH

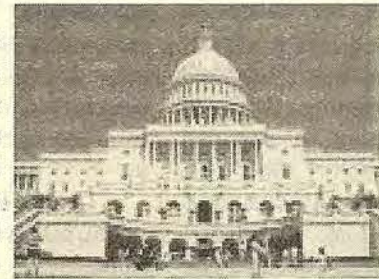
On Monday evening, February 5, 2007, a delegation of 28 men and women from Yeshiva University (YU) traveled to Washington, D.C. as members of the Yeshiva University Public Action Committee's (YUPAC) second lobby mission to Capitol Hill. The objective of this year's one-day mission was to obtain congressional support for allocating foreign aid to Israel and for continued cooperation in urging Iran to dismantle its nuclear reactors.

"The purpose of the mission is for students to make a difference for the US-Israel relationship through political activism, to establish and build a relationship with their members of Congress, as well as to learn about political activism and the political process," explained Avi Posnick (YC '07), president of YUPAC and organizer of the trip.

Upon their arrival in Washington, the participants geared up for an intense day of congressional lobbying, meeting with representatives of AIPAC, and visiting the Israeli Embassy. Early Tuesday morning, the YU delegation joined with students from other universities for a quick briefing with David Gillette, senior AIPAC lobbyist. He thanked the lobbying students for coming to Washington, reminding them that "there have been times when no one was will-

ing to petition their government." Gillette emphasized the importance of student activism. "You are going to have an impact," he said. "You are going to carry a very specific message... that the United States and Israel need to stand shoulder to shoulder."

The mission's participants then divided into groups and spread out over Capitol Hill to meet with their respective congressional representatives. After navigating the warren of underground tunnels connecting the three House buildings, the YU



Capitol Hill

delegation urged various members of Congress to vote to allocate foreign aid to Israel, recognize Iran as a serious threat, and work with Israel on counter-balancing Hamas' power.

After concluding the lobby meetings, the participants stopped by the Israeli Embassy, where they heard from Counselor for Political Affairs Oren Anolik, along with a student delegation from New York University (NYU). Anolik described the demands of his job, in which he focuses on U.S. foreign policy vis-à-vis Europe, Asia, and Latin America, and acts as liaison on multilateral issues.

The mission was organized in conjunction with the university's Joseph Dunner Political Science Society, Israel Club, and

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## Tomorrow's Business Leaders Start Here

BY JORDANA MAINZER

All successes start as a dream, and that is exactly what Business Leaders in Training (BLIT) was before this year. Meyer Laniado (SSSB '08) envisioned a dynamic student lead club to train tomorrow's business leaders on the Wilf and Beren Campuses of Yeshiva University (YU). With the help, guidance, and support of Laniado's close friend, Scott Shulman (SSSB '08), BLIT has become a reality and, as Laniado frequently acknowledges, is "off to a great start." Starting at the Sy Syms School of Business (SSSB) "Back to School Barbecue" in September, the word was out about the only on campus organi-

zation that offers workshops and hands-on experiences to train the business leaders of tomorrow.

The men and women participating in BLIT range from seniors to sophomores majoring in various different business fields. Similarly, the students joined BLIT for a variety of reasons as well. One member, Daniel Talkins (SSSB '07), values the 'in-house' internship opportunity while another member, David Ohana (SSSB '08), seeks to improve his communication, teamwork, and leadership skills.

Laniado recognized the need for such a program during his first semester on campus. "[I] realized that there was a need to connect business theory with practice," he said. "Business

Leaders in Training now offers hands on projects bridging the gap between theory and practice. In addition, we run workshops in soft skills such as emotional IQ and negotiations, which are essential to success."

The group convenes bi-weekly for seminars on topics such as negotiations, conflict resolution, advertising, and making a comeback. While being educational, the motive behind the seminars is to provide the fellows with the soft skills necessary to be successful both in life and in a professional environment. Past presenters include Avi Shatzkes and Ellis Malovany, Yeshiva University (YU) alumni and for-

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## CJF Coordinates Chesed Tour Across the City

BY HILLY KRIEGER

On Sunday, January 28, 2007, a host of undergraduates partook in an ambitious volunteer initiative organized by the Center for the Jewish Future (CJF) of Yeshiva University (YU). 83 men and women were dispatched to various locations across New York City as part of The Five Borough Chesed Tour.

The majority of participating students are involved in other CJF programs, including Quest, Eimatai, Achshav, Eima-Beta, Torah Learning Network, Torah Tours, and Jewish Life Coast to Coast. Others traced their CJF affiliations to winter break missions to Israel and Guatemala, which the center had helped to

coordinate and sponsor.

Students submitted their assignment preferences prior to the event, as each borough site featured a different volunteer opportunity. Rabbi Elchanan Adler, rosh yeshiva at YU, delivered the event's opening remarks on the Wilf Campus, after which the undergraduates boarded vans heading to their respective destinations.

In the Bronx, participants painted kitchens and studio apartments in a low income housing development run by the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty. Others chose to travel to Queens where they steam-cleaned walls at a women's and

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# LOOK WHO'S TALKING

Contributors:  
-Alana Rubenstein  
-Michal Golan  
-Sara Lefkowitz  
-Tiffy Unterman

## Genetic Screening: The Most Important Test You'll Ever Take



Rabbi Mordechai Willig

On Monday, January 29, 2007 the Yeshiva University (YU) Student Medical Ethics Society, the Center for the Jewish Future (CJF), and the Torah Activities Council (TAC) co-sponsored "Genetic Screening: The Most Important Test You'll Ever Take" in the Levy Lobby of 215 Lexington Avenue. YU Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mordechai Willig and Mrs. Deniera Goldenberg (SCW '97), a genetic counselor, were the featured speakers of the evening.

The event commenced with a discussion of the benefits of genetic screening particularly from a *halakhic* standpoint. Rav Willig stressed the importance of ascertaining genetic compatibility before entering into serious relationships, suggesting students utilize the testing services of Jewish organizations like Dor Yeshorim, or those of general medical facilities. Goldenberg provided the scientific background for the lecture, explaining how different genetic traits are transferred over generations and whether those traits are dominant or recessive. Goldenberg also detailed the advantages and disadvantages of being screened through Dor Yeshorim as opposed to a generic medical center.

## When Ordinary People Do Extraordinary Things: How We Ensure Dignity Beyond Death



Rochel Berman

A lecture entitled "When Ordinary People Do Extraordinary Things: How we Ensure Dignity Beyond Death" was given by Rochel Berman, author of "Dignity Beyond Death: The Preparation for Burial," on January 24, 2007 at Stern College for Women (SCW), in memory of Elizabeth Isaacs Gilbert, the first dean of students at SCW. The two women served on The Rosh Pinah Chevra Kadisha of

Westchester County.

In the lecture, which was co-sponsored by the Office of Student Affairs, Office of the Academic Dean, the Stern College for Women Student Council, the Torah Activities Council and the Sy Syms School of Business Student Council, Berman spoke about what is done to purify a dead body and the importance and magnificence of the process. Abby Klein, Dean Isaacs' granddaughter, spoke as well, recalling how important *tahara* (purifying the dead bodies) was to her grandmother. Isaacs' daughter, Nancy Klein was in attendance as well.

Each woman who attended the program received a copy of Berman's book.

## Economics Club Hosts Debate on Bush's Economic Policy



On Tuesday evening, February 5, 2007, the Economics Club at Stern College for Women (SCW) hosted a debate in the Levy Lobby of 215 Lexington Avenue. In light of President George W. Bush's recent disclosure of the proposed 2007 budget, two teams of economics majors presented arguments either supporting or opposing the administration's economic policies.

Both sides addressed a range of economic and political issues, including taxation, minimum wage, gross domestic product, the war in Iraq, social security, and healthcare, among others.

The affirmative asserted that Bush's tax cuts have actually improved overall economic growth, causing wealth to "trickle down" to all socioeconomic levels. Conversely, the negative stated that Bush's growing deficit, largely due to military spending in Iraq, has jeopardized the economic stability of the nation and has forfeited billions of dollars that could otherwise have been allocated for domestic programs.

Though the cases presented by both teams were compelling, the ultimate verdict as rendered by the audience was cast in favor of the negative side, finding that Bush's policies were largely detrimental to the U.S. economy. Economics Professors Dennis Hoover and David Friedman, who were also in attendance, provided guidance to the two teams, assisting them in their preparations for the debate.

## Discipline vs. Dissent: A Dilemma in Times of Moral Crisis



Ambassador Richard Holbrooke

The Rabbi Arthur Schneier Center for International Affairs of Yeshiva University hosted Ambassador Richard Holbrooke at the Park East Synagogue on Wednesday, January 24, 2007 at 8:00 p.m. for a lecture titled "Discipline vs. Dissent: A Dilemma in Times of Moral Crisis." The address was given to celebrate the publication of the Schneier Center's first book, "Diplomat Heroes of the Holocaust" by Mordechai Paldiel, the director of the Righteous Among the Nations Department at the Yad Vashem

Holocaust Memorial Institute in Israel. The event was also timed to coincide with the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, which is traditionally observed on January 27, the day of Auschwitz's liberation in 1945.

The book records the stories of diplomats from China, Spain, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland, Brazil, Holland, Turkey, Italy, Yugoslavia, Japan, Germany, and the Vatican who performed righteous acts, such as saving tens of thousands of Jews during the Holocaust, oftentimes at the risk and cost of their own lives. To highlight these courageous acts, Ambassador Holbrooke focused on the moral conflicts facing these diplomats during this time of extreme crisis.

## SCW Athletics Scores Big With Appointment of Assistant Director

BY SARA LEFKOVITZ

In keeping with its "five-year plan" to upgrade athletics at Stern College for Women (SCW), the university's Department of Physical Education and Athletics has hired an assistant director to oversee its program on the Beren Campus. The new appointee, Mrs. Esther Goldfeder, was promoted from her previous position as assistant coach for the Lady Maccabees, the undergraduate women's basketball team.

Goldfeder, who serves as the athletics director at an all-girls yeshiva high school in Long Island, will be available at SCW on a part-time basis by the first week in March. She is currently

working on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor of 245 Lexington Avenue on Wednesdays, spending the remaining time on the Wilf Campus, where she is "learning the ropes," from Director of Athletics and Physical Education Joe Bednarsh. By the fall, Goldfeder will be situated at the Beren Campus five days a week, affording students full accessibility to her guidance and assistance.

With a permanent and continual presence on the Beren Campus, Goldfeder will be better equipped to both expand and improve the current offerings of the women's program, which have long paled in comparison to

those provided at Yeshiva College. With nearly half of the female student body collectively partaking in athletic teams, intramurals, and physical education each semester, there is certainly no shortage of interest or demand.

"[The hiring is] part of doing justice for the women downtown," explained Bednarsh. "The athletics program on the Beren Campus has been stagnant for far too long."

Though acknowledging that the incongruities between the campus programs stemmed largely from SCW's scant athletic facilities, Bednarsh felt that the opportunities for women's involvement could be augmented

with the introduction of new teams and physical education courses. Three new teams, soccer, volleyball, and cross-country, will likely be added as of the fall season and will all compete as full varsity sports. The prospect of additional offerings, by way of intramurals and physical education classes, is being investigated as well.

"We're trying to broaden the program to give more students the opportunity to become athletes," said Goldfeder. "I came into a position to what I can to make this a bigger and better place."

Aside from handling scheduling and other administrative tasks, Goldfeder will act as a rep-

resentative of the department, addressing the concerns and suggestions of students who were heretofore compelled to travel uptown to speak with Bednarsh himself.

"The students have never had had anyone on campus to make them feel like they have someone they can talk to," said Goldfeder. "Joe does an amazing job running the program, but it will be helpful for me to be downtown as a representative of the athletics office. I'm here to be a support for the women, being available to deal with whatever needs [arise]."

The creation of the new position was especially impressive

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# FEATURES

## February: A Celebration of Black History for the 60th Year

BY JUDITH LUGER

About a month ago, on January 15, 2007, the United States commemorated the birth and significance of the revered Martin Luther King, Jr. It was a day to remember King and his indelible impact on the country, on civil rights, and on the African American Community. Martin Luther King Day, however, is also a day to remind us of a time when there was segregation, violence, and pain caused by the tremendous prejudice against the black community in America. The month of February, which is designated as Black History Month in both the United States and Canada, is not a month to solely commemorate these tragic events. Part of the aim of Black History Month is to expose the harms of racial prejudice, but it is also an opportunity to recognize significant contributions to society made by people with African heritage.

Black History Month was established in 1976 by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. The month-long celebration was originally an expansion of Negro History Week, which was established in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson. Woodson was the director of what was then known as the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Woodson selected the week in February that embraced the birthdays of both Frederick Douglass

and former President Abraham Lincoln. History books barely covered any black history when the tradition of Black History Month was started. At that point, most representation of blacks in history books was only in reference to the low social position they held. After the establishment of Black History Month, history books began to elaborate on the history of African Americans. This year, February



2007 is Black History Month's 60th anniversary.

Across the country, events, speakers, music, movies and other forms of entertainment and education about African American heritage are being administered this month. New York University (NYU) for example, along with many other private and public universities has big events happening on campus, such as panel discussions, workshops and carnivals. The carnival that NYU is hosting is to raise money for the hurricane victims in Haiti and Grenada. In New York City alone there are many events happening in Central Park and in museums of all genres.

It is very important for the students of Yeshiva University to recognize this month and its cul-

tural and historical significance. The Jewish community is itself classified as a minority group, and definitely can relate to racial or ethnic prejudice and violence. Martin Luther King Jr. in his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," explains his feelings towards the Jews: "We should never forget that everything Adolf Hitler did in Germany was 'legal,' and everything the Hungarian freedom fighters did in Hungary was 'illegal.' It was 'illegal' to aid and comfort a Jew in Hitler's Germany. Even so, I am sure that, had I lived in Germany at the time, I would have aided and comforted my Jewish brothers. If today I lived in a Communist country where certain principles dear to the Christian faith are suppressed, I would openly advocate disobeying that country's anti religious laws."

As Jews we feel a moral calling to never be silent in times of injustice and cruelty. Not only that, but we must always learn to look and be aware of the world we live in. King also said that "nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity." It is easy to get wrapped up in our personal lives and routines, and to stay within our few blocks of Midtown Manhattan. Yet, we must take advantage of the city and get educated about the racial injustices occurring around us, and experience Black History Month.

## Some Things Worth Checking Out:

Monday, February 12, 5:00 p.m. at Juilliard (Upper West Side)  
Panel Discussion  
African American Composers Forum:  
Perspectives on African Americans in Music: Spotlight on Composer Alvin Singleton

Wednesday, February 14, 7:00 p.m. at Barnes & Noble - 82nd & Broadway (Upper West Side)  
Discussion with Edward W. Brooke, author of *Bridging the Divide: My Life*

Thursday, February 15, 6:30 p.m. at The Great Hall at Cooper Union (Greenwich Village)  
Lecture by James Oakes, author of *The Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, and the Triumph of Antislavery*

Sunday, February 18, from 1:00 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. at Dana Discovery Center (Central Park)  
Walking Tour Outdoors: Central Park and Harlem's Gateway  
An introductory presentation of slides and artifacts followed by a tour to explore the rich and shared histories of Central Park and Harlem

Tuesday, February 20, 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at Dana Discovery Center (Central Park)  
Walking Tour Outdoors: Seneca Village Printing Workshop  
Learn about the history of Seneca Village through a visit to the site and an exploration of artifacts; afterward, the teaching artists of Harlem. Textile Works will help you create and print your own original stencil patterns

Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum, 234 W. 42nd St presents a special month long exhibit focusing on 16 African-Americans who have made a difference in America, including Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson, Malcolm X, James Brown and Oprah Winfrey. A guide will be on hand to impart facts on each honoree. The exhibit will run through Feb. 28. Admission: \$29, \$26 seniors, \$23 ages 4-12; younger than 4 free.

## OU Offers Myriad of Summer Internships

BY RENA WIESEN

Interested in getting the Jewish voice heard on Capitol Hill? Want to make a difference from the inside? Uncle Sam, along with the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA), the public policy branch of the Orthodox Union (OU), wants you! The IPA, whose members include 900 congregations and over 1,000 rabbis across America, works to "protect Jewish interests and freedoms by providing government officials with informative policy briefings, advocating legislative and regulatory initiatives, and coordinating our constituency's grass-roots political activities." The organization uses the unique outlook and ideas of Jewish law and tradition to influence both American and world policies, and thus forward its mission of *tikkun olam* (the betterment of humankind in the world). To help its cause, the IPA has developed several fellowships and programs for col-

lege students in Washington, D.C.

The IPA Summer Internship program was designed to attract bright and enthusiastic college students entering their junior or senior year of college, giving them the chance to participate in the democratic political process. Interns are selected by a professional and lay committee, and are placed in congressional offices in Washington, D.C. In past summers, students have worked in the offices of such personalities as Senators Hillary Clinton (D-NY), Charles Schumer (D-NY), and Joseph Lieberman (I-CT). They have also served in major Jewish political organizations such as AIPAC, the Anti-Defamation League, and the National Jewish Democratic Council.

Interns spend eight weeks in June and July doing research, servicing constituents, writing speeches, and attending hearings of interest. To enhance the experience, speakers are brought in to

address the interns on current events, as well as life on Capitol Hill. Students are housed in facilities equipped with kitchenettes on the George Washington University campus.

"I loved it," declared senior Esther Genuth. "The program does a great job placing people in offices. I was in the office of Senator Joseph Crowley, a Democrat from New York. They required a lot from their interns; I worked long hours but by the end of the summer I was promoted to staff assistant, a very high position in the office. I made appointments, worked with the press secretary to write press releases on behalf of the congressman. I was a tour guide for constituents, wrote statements for the congressional record, and helped draft resolutions that Congressman Rowley was working on. Almost every day, I went to hearings and briefings, and

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## YU Students Will Once Again Spend Pesach in Russia

BY ABBY ATLAS

The influence of communism on Eastern European Jewry did not end with the fall of the former Soviet Union. Yeshiva and University Students for the Spiritual Revival of Soviet Jewry (YUSSR) is an organization with one mission: to help bring life to the dying Jewish communities of what are now Russia and Belarus. One of YUSSR's most far-reaching initiatives is "Project Pesach," which sends college students to 15 European cities to lead Pesach *sedarim* and run educational programs for over 3,000 people.

Interested students are encouraged to apply and interview for the program. "Students are chosen based on experience, maturity, adaptability and flexibility," explained YUSSR's Financial Director Chaviva Fischer. Upon selection, the student volunteers are responsible to

raise funds for their trip. In the weeks before the holiday, students are guided by experienced directors in creating educational programming to be used over Pesach.

Once each group of university men and women arrives at its destination, preparations begin for the upcoming holiday. Gabby Soep (SCW '08), who traveled to Belarus with YUSSR last year, commented that "the days before Pesach were extremely overwhelming. We had to adjust to a new and different environment while simultaneously accomplishing everything that needed to be done for the holiday." Within two days, the students are responsible to make the kitchen of the community center kosher for Passover and purchase and cook the food for two community-wide *sedarim*. As if these duties are not taxing enough, the

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# Racing Towards Success

BY SHANI CHESIR

Most people think of Miami, Florida as a vacation spot to relax and unwind, especially during the Yeshiva intersession break. For 19 students from Yeshiva University (YU), however, Miami was the site of much energy and excitement. These students flew down to Florida to run in a half marathon to raise money for the OneFamily Fund, an organization which helps victims of terror in Israel.

Jay Schreiber (YC '07) decided to organize a YU team to run the race after hearing about the half marathon from a friend who had previously run with Chai Lifeline. His goal was to make an everyday activity such as running into something *kadosh* (holy). He sent out an email to the university community which said "Free trip to Miami, raising money for One Family Fund," and the 30 to 40 people who came to the initial meeting were evidence of the incredibly enthusiastic reaction of the student body. Although some individuals said that they couldn't run that far, everyone expressed the sentiment that they wanted to help out in any way they could.

With many of YU's *tzedakah* (charity) initiatives, such as Lmaan Achai, geared towards Israel's summer war with Lebanon, the group decided to contribute to a different cause, OneFamily Fund. Team OneFamily runs in a lot of different events; they have a website, make apparel, and work out all of the details of each marathon. The director, Sammy Zack, looks out for event coordinators, and works with them to develop each program; the goal is to have as many as 50 to 60 runners.

Since the program was geared toward YU students, there was no time for professional coaching. Although the training varied for each person, the average runner ran three to four miles a day, four to five times a week, and an eight to ten mile run on either Friday or Sunday, starting about three months beforehand. "Without each person on the team coming through on training and fundraising, the event never would have ended up happening," said Schreiber. "You can plan from today until tomorrow but without each individual doing their part, we never would have succeeded".

An especially inspiring story is that of Eliana Balk (SCW '07). For a few years she had wanted to run. "Although I always worked out, I never had the will power to pursue this on a large scale, and had concerns regarding whether other women would be doing it or if I would be able to train in time," Balk reflected. At first there were a couple of other women that expressed interest in running the race; however, they subsequently dropped out. But the fact that she was the only female among the 18 men on the team did not crush her determination.

This was also the first big run for Amitai Dagan (YC '07), and he was so inspired by the event that he joined the New York Road Runners and plans on running more marathons in the

future. Dagan was particularly impressed with the response of others, which was measured by the donations he received for the cause. "I raised over \$2,000 in two days!" he exclaimed. "It's all a credit to people's generosity for such a good cause."

Another member of the team, Elyasaf Schwartz (YC '07) commented on the physical and emotional energy needed for the race. "I wanted to come back and tell friends that it was hard, but fun," he remarked. "But I'd be lying. There was no fun

themselves, but were an inspiration for the families whose lives were shattered by terrorism. "At one point in the race, I wanted to slow to a walk for a few minutes because it had rained before the race so my socks and shoes were drenched and I had horrible blisters forming," said Aryeh Rosenbaum (YC '08). "But I then thought about how these families are torn apart. The mental and physical anguish they go through is unbearable, and they don't get to just stop and rest whenever they want, so at least I could keep

trudging along for two hours and deal with the physical pain."

The team members greatly appreciated the welcoming attitude of their host families in Miami. Schreiber observed that "the

community was as warm as the weather," a feeling which was shared by the whole group over the weekend. The hosts were so thrilled to support the runners that they even woke up at 4 a.m. on Sunday morning to make them breakfast before the race. Over the weekend, many individuals joined together to help the event run smoothly. Rabbi Neal Turk of Beth Yoseph Chaim Congregation in Miami Beach welcomed the team into the community and his wife put the housing together, a difficult task since

most people were out of town on winter break.

Although each runner had an individual goal, they all expressed the same feelings as they approached the finish line. "The crowd at the end was so energetic that I found myself sprinting toward the finish line, passing hundreds of people along the way," recounted Rosenbaum. "I couldn't feel my calves anymore by the time I stopped, but I was smiling anyway." For the runners, it was like a dream come true to approach the end of the race as the sun started to rise. "It was very emotional crossing the finish line and getting the medal put around your neck," said Ikey Kassin (YC '07). "I didn't care how long it would take me to finish, as long as I finished."

After the runners got over their original exhaustion of the half marathon, they began to envision their future involvement with similar activities. Although Balk is graduating in May, she realizes that this is "just the beginning" and wants to run again. Schreiber's goal is to build a running culture on campus, and to use that energy for positive deeds. He is already formulating the next event, which will involve the participation of Jewish college students from the tri-state area. As Kassin said, "If you want something more than anything, there's nothing that could stop you. You can get it."

Each runner raised around \$3,000, and all together the group collected close to \$30,000. They are still accepting contributions; one can log on to [www.active.com/donate/TOF\\_Y](http://www.active.com/donate/TOF_Y) URC, and can either choose a specific runner to sponsor, or just give a general donation to the cause.



The YU Running Crew

involved. If you're not a serious runner, it can be a pretty grueling experience. It takes a lot of mental energy."

As the runners were in the midst of the race, many of them derived inspiration from their natural surroundings. Aharon Arazi, (YC '07), president of the YU Israel Club, described it as "exhilarating...splashing through puddles in the darkness before dawn." He, along with other runners, marveled at the idea that the amazing aspects of their weekend were not merely uplifting for

## Beyond 34<sup>th</sup> Street

BY JACKIE FAST

Since Manhattan Island was settled from bottom up, Lower Manhattan is the site of colonial New Amsterdam and New York. Although very little in terms of actual buildings remains from long ago, the area still has an aura of history that you don't find elsewhere in the city. There are dozens of things to see and do in Lower Manhattan, but this list contains my absolute favorites.

1. Rockefeller Park—It doesn't matter how many times I visit Rockefeller Park along the Hudson River in TriBeCa; I can never get over how remarkably peaceful it is, especially considering its proximity to the Financial District. The Park stands in the shadow of the World Financial Center, and a block away from ground zero. Yet, the park feels perfectly residential. The views of the Hudson River

and the Statue of Liberty are wonderful. Walk the esplanade and enjoy one of the city's finest parks and best-kept secrets!

Getting there: Make a left on Chambers Street when you get off the 6. Then, walk all the way until you cross over West Street, and keep going straight until you're riverside.

2

TriBeCa—New condominium towers have been built in the blocks surrounding Rockefeller Park in the past three

years. Their towers, the first truly "green" condos in the city, were designed to seem as though they're a feature of the park themselves. They're surrounded by randomly placed lawns and



The Tribeca Area

park benches which are new, clean, and really beautiful. The most interesting feature of the local landscaping is a gigantic memorial to New York's Irish, an unusual monument representing the greenery of Ireland that visitors can actually walk on top of.

Getting there: From the last stop on the 6, turn right from Broadway onto Vesey Street and walk straight until passing West Street.

3. Century 21—This is a site which considers itself to be "New York's Best Kept Secret," and I can assure you that its reputation is very well-deserved. Located across the street from ground zero, Century 21 is the city's most attractive (and gigantic) discount-priced department store. Here, you'll find racks and racks of fine department store clothing at a 75% markdown. The store is

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## Survivor: SCW Style

BY YAFFI SPODEK

The game of Survivor, also known as Assassin, made a comeback in Stern College for Women (SCW) for the second year in a row, due to popular demand from the student body and based on last year's successful run. Organized by the Stern College for Women Student Council (SCWSC), Survivor infused the SCW community with a playful air of competition as students struggled to stay alive and evade their "killers" for the duration of the week-long game. A record number of 253 women took part in the game, a significant increase over last year's number of participants.

"Since it's the beginning of second semester, and there are new students on campus, this was a great opportunity for those participating to meet people and get involved in student activities,"

said Liz Shelton (SCW '07), president of SCWSC. "It's a fun way for people to get acquainted with each other in a fun and relaxed setting, and the dynamics of the game allow students to interact in situations where they otherwise might not have."

The purpose of the game is to "kill" as many people as possible. Killing is accomplished by cornering your assigned victim in a secluded space of five feet and proclaiming, "Bang bang you're dead," while affixing onto them a bright green sticker provided to all players by the SCWSC. The victim then has to relinquish to their killer the name of their next target, and the killer proceeds to murder them as well. The student who has killed the most people by the end of the game is declared the winner.

This year, some of the rules

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## BLIT

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mer roommates, from Bank of America. Jack Doueck presented an informative session on the topic of "Making a Comeback."

Shulman sees the need to amalgamate BLIT with the classroom education. "We saw the BLIT initiative as something that could revolutionize the extra-curricular activities at Sy Syms," he explained. "We knew that in order to be considered among the top tier business schools, the SSSB needed a highly interactive training program that could enhance both the experience and familiarity of essential business components that are not covered in the classroom walls."

With the training seminars well under way, the students are now implementing their skills in hands-on experiences in conjunction with YU and the Center for Jewish Future (CJF). With YU, a small group of students take part in a gift planning outreach program, "YU Gold," in which the students are paired up with YU

alumni mentors. The objective for this distinct group of students is to not only develop a strong, professional relationship with one of YU's distinct alumni and to promote networking, but to also prime SSSB students in becoming financial and gift planning ambassadors. In addition to "YU Gold," students are exposed to other opportunities such as a CJF coordinated focus group to conduct surveys and a marketing internship with Yad Sarah, Israel's largest volunteer organization.

Starting with the addition of three new members, BLIT is expanding even more this semester by planning events in hopes of incorporating the entire student body. The BLIT members gain experience by promoting and planning the events while the student body simultaneously benefits from their hard work. The first of such upcoming events will take place Wednesday, February 21 in the Levy Lobby of the Beren Campus at 8:45 p.m.

Malovany, a veteran BLIT presenter, will be presenting on the topic of "Funding Your Future Small Business." A school-wide panel discussion is currently in the works for the end of the year.

The future of BLIT looks promising. The visionary behind the program, Laniado, will remain on campus one more year as he graduates next May and as for Shulman, the vice president, he plans to return to Israel next year as a counselor at Lev HaTorah in Jerusalem. If BLIT can attract motivated and dynamic students next year, then the program will be well on its way to becoming a prominent component of the SSSB education.

Laniado and Shulman, as well as all the members of BLIT exemplify the YU motto of "Bringing Wisdom to Life." Through their hard work and commitment, they have not only actualized their dreams, but have also allowed others to benefit from their endeavors.

## YU Students Participate in YUSSR Project Pesach

*continued from page 10*

group must also conduct educational seminars on relevant holiday topics and lead the youth in searching for *chametz* (bread).

After much anticipation, when the holiday finally begins, three students in the group conduct the holiday *sedarim*. The students heading the *sedarim* train specially for this position through various seminars and lectures. Last year, each *seder* included around 60 people. "The group," Soep recalled, "was mostly grandparents; there were only one or two young people in the group of 60." Despite this, however, Soep said that the *seder* was "exciting and vibrant. The participants sang and danced together." In addition to these community-wide meals, there are programs throughout the holiday

just for children and teens with the ultimate goal of encouraging them to attend YUSSR summer and winter camps.

Arye Sufirin, the director of Project Pesach, described the main purpose of the Pesach program as a means "to encourage the Jewish youth to attend our winter and summer programs so we can stay involved with the children as they become young adults." Some of these teens eventually go on to attend *yeshivot* (Jewish schools) in Israel, America and other places.

Rewarding as it is, the Pesach experience is also very challenging. The language barrier, which separates the English speaking students from their mostly Russian-speaking counterparts, is difficult to overcome. Even with the help of translators, communication is hard. The liv-

ing conditions also leave something to be desired. Yet something about the experience is captivating. "[I'm] addicted to the program," Sufirin said.

Project Pesach is one of YUSSR's most successful programs. "[The Jews of the former Soviet Union] know the feeling of being released from a controlling and dictatorial government," said Soep. "They know firsthand what it means to 'leave Egypt.'" Therefore, their contagious passion and inspiration strikes a cord with the American students in a way that no other experience can.

Applications can be downloaded directly from the YUSSR website at <http://www.yussr.org>. For more information please call (212) 923 7650 or email [yussrinfo@gmail.com](mailto:yussrinfo@gmail.com)

## OU Summer Internships

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because staff members were too busy to go themselves, I went instead and debriefed the chief of staff about what was going on in congress. It was one of the best summers of my life."

Another opportunity for college seniors to investigate is the Legislative Fellowship. The fellowship is an intense one-year course for students in their first year out of college. Fellows will "advocate in Washington, D.C. for Jewish values and interests in the public policy arena on behalf of the Orthodox Jewish community." This includes responsibilities such as monitoring legisla-

tive activity, developing synagogue social action programming, coordinating special events, creating educational materials, and mobilizing the grassroots of American Orthodox Jewry. Specifically, fellows will monitor legislation, ensuring that the voice of Orthodox Jewry is heard on Capitol Hill. They will help coordinate and execute events sponsored by the OU, which include lectures on public policy and *halakha*, and missions to Washington to meet legislators. In order to propagate the OU/OPA information, fellows will have responsibilities in communications, like putting new infor-

mation on the OU/OPA web site, issuing press releases, making advocacy network phone calls, and e-mailing thousands of people. There is an annual stipend of \$25,000.

By participating in the OU/OPA programs students can make a difference to Jews worldwide by being at the very core of policy making. Students can help change the world for the better through the OU, the nation's largest representative Orthodox Jewish organization. For more information about OU/OPA programs, visit their website at [www.ou.org/public\\_affairs](http://www.ou.org/public_affairs).

## CJF Coordinates Chesed Tour

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children's shelter, also managed by the council. Alternatively, students remaining in Manhattan visited with senior citizens at a home hospital center of the United Jewish Appeal Federation (UJA) and organized an art project relating to the recent holiday of *Tu B'Shvat*. Another option, located in Brooklyn, involved communal action on behalf of *agunot*, Jewish women denied a divorce by their husbands and are thus unable to remarry. In conjunction with the Organization for the Resolution of Agunot (ORA), students rallied outside the homes of two men refusing to grant their wives a divorce, and plastered posters to raise awareness about the issue. Finally, the remaining participants arranged a *Tu B'Shvat* art project for developmentally disabled adults and children at the Jewish Community Center of Staten Island.

"The purpose of this magnanimous event was to bring together all the leadership programs that have occurred recently," said Laura Freiman, clinical director of the social and organizational leadership training department of the CJF. "With the students having just returned from trips to Guatemala and Israel as well as the ongoing programming of the other leadership programs of the CJF, we felt there should be a day to unite all of them." However, the event was not limited to the aforementioned groups and was instead opened to the entire undergraduate student body. The response was overwhelming, Freiman noted.

Nava Billet (SCW '09),

shared her experiences from the women's and children's center in Queens. "People felt very positive, they felt they had really given to disadvantaged others," she recalled. "By scrubbing the walls and the floors we gave them something that they wouldn't otherwise have. We were giving them a clean place to live at a troubling time [in] their lives and the superintendent couldn't thank us enough."

According to Freiman, the event was extremely successful and will likely be repeated in the future. However, the real purpose of the Chesed Tour and other CJF programs, she explained, is to provide students with the impetus to develop similar initiatives of their own.

At the conclusion of the program, the participants gathered at Jerusalem 2 Pizza in Manhattan for discussion and debriefing. Some participants voiced their desire to become more regularly involved in a number of volunteer opportunities. "This really measures the success of the program, if it serves as a springboard for other programs," concluded Freiman. She also pointed to recent efforts made by the Torah Activities Council (TAC) to arrange for a greater variety of *chesed* (communal contributions) programming on the Beren Campus.

"Participants requested days like this on a regular basis, like once a month on a smaller scale and many students expressed their interest," said Billet. "Some also suggested a cultivation of the relationships with the seniors and disabled children and adults. The program really gave people a sense of caring for others."

## Appointment of Assistant Athletics Director

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following the induction of SCW into the third division of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) last August. Formerly, the teams of the college were not recognized by the NCAA because SCW was treated as a separate institution from the men's school uptown. When he was first named athletics director last year, Bednarsh attempted to redress this discrepancy by instituting his "five-year plan," aiming to improve the performance of the women's teams and thereby enable them to be considered within the umbrella of Yeshiva. As SCW successfully earned recognition two years ahead of schedule, the agenda's timetable has been reduced to three years.

In addition to possessing its fair share of prestige, NCAA designation carries with it a host of additional rules and responsibili-

ties that must be duly honored and considered. Nonetheless, Bednarsh maintained that the benefits accompanying recognition far outweigh the costs. "There is so much that goes on and it's doubled now that we fall under the NCAA category," he said. "It's added work for [Esther]. But the beauty is that it can give the students more opportunity for recognition; it gives the students something to play for."

However, Bednarsh was quick to note that the teams' success, in his view, did not hinge on victory alone. "With Division III philosophy, athletics is about the participant, not about the spectator," he asserted. "[Ultimately] I want the women to have a good experience; to look back and laugh and smile and think about how much fun they had. That's the importance of athletics."

## New Chesed Program

*continued from front page*

CU is headed by Wiesen, TAC Treasurer Rebecca Barnett, TAC President Shoshana Fruchter, and a committee of undergraduates comprised of Sarah Danzig (SCW '07), Rachel Glaser (SCW '09), Rochel Chana Moss (SCW '07), Chani Kovacs (SCW '08), Talia Reiner (SCW '09), Jessica Spier (SCW '09), Anais Torendo (SCW '?), Elianna Sable (SCW '08), Laura Shuman (SCW '08), and Hayley Van Der Veen (SCW '09).

In addition to providing weekly venues for *chesed*, CU hopes to foster a more unified community at SCW. "People have to realize that *chesed* is not just for one particular group," Wiesen said. "*Chesed* is a Jewish ideal that everyone should have the chance to do. We're hoping that this will be an opportunity for everyone to come together; there's something about coming together to do *chesed* that is very special."

Zelda Braun, dean of student affairs, echoed Wiesen's sentiments. "I think that CU is a marvelous program because it gives people an opportunity to be involved consistently doing the *chesed* of their choice and it does it in a way that builds community," commented Dean Braun. "*Kol hakavod* (kudos) to Shoshana Fruchter and company."

The response to the new initiative has been overwhelming. CU has actually added two more shifts to accommodate increased student demand. The group is now offering Thursday afternoon meeting times at 3:15 p.m., 3:45 p.m., and 4:30 p.m. in the Levy Lobby.

"I'm looking forward to building a relationship with a senior-citizen who Dorot is going to set me up with," said Aliza Vishniavsky (SCW '08). "I'm really happy that CU made this opportunity possible for me."

## SCWSC Expands to Include AIS

*continued from front page*

responsibilities such leadership posts entail.

According to SCWSC Secretary Rena Wiesen (SCW '08), there have always been women who have offered their assistance, but this is the first time the council will be taking the initiative to reach out to students in an organized fashion. "Many women approached me and the other student council members and said that they would like to be more active and involved in school," she said. "We of course wanted to include those women and we can always benefit from a extra few hands. So we created AIS [so they can] attend several SCWSC meetings and brainstorm with us, help coordinate and organize activities, and see what it's like to be on student council. We're looking forward to working with these

women and getting great ideas from them."

More specifically, SCWSC is utilizing the sub-council as a means of involving a greater number of underclasswomen, who may still be acclimating to their new surroundings and are unsure of where to direct their efforts at contributing.

"I spent two years in Israel, but when I arrived on campus I had friends who already had positions of leadership who reached out to me, getting me involved in campus life," remarked Nava Billet (SCW '09). "But for people who do come in as first years and all their friends are first-year students, it's highly probable that they will have more difficulty in getting involved, especially if they are not outgoing."

Thus, by systemizing the process by which women can contribute, SCWSC is attempting

to better facilitate interactions between undergraduates and board members and engage a greater percentage of the student body. This way, says Shelton, SCWSC can "ferret out those students who want to be more active on campus."

The idea of a sub-council has been met with much positive feedback, from undergraduates and administrative officials alike. Since the initiative was first mentioned in *The Observer*, SCWSC has received a multitude of emails from students expressing an interest in becoming more involved. The council hopes to implement the new initiative shortly, convening the first joint AIS-SCWSC meeting within a few weeks.

## YUPAC Delegation Lobbies Congress

*continued from page 8*

Middle East Forum and was funded by most of the undergraduate student councils, including the Stern College for Women Student Council, Yeshiva Student Union, Student Organization of Yeshiva, Torah Activities Council, and Yeshiva College Student Association.

"This is totally a student-run mission," Posnick pointed out. "It's important for this to be student-run so that the members of Congress see what we can do and for the YU community to see as well."

Students from Cornell University, University of Pennsylvania, and NYU accompanied the YU delegation.

The added volume of students helped to strengthen the mission. "We [were] part of one giant day of student lobbying that [reached] 20% of the Congress," said Posnick.

Mission participants were chosen on the basis of applications they submitted last fall. "It was a very difficult selection process with so many great applicants," Posnick admitted. "But in the end we had to narrow it down to a certain number. There were over 60 people who applied."

Posnick stated that his envisioned goal for the mission was to influence students to increase their political activism and extend this involvement to other members of their communities. "My hopes for the mission are

that the students will really take advantage of this opportunity and want to be more involved in the political process," he said. "I hope that they will stay in contact with their various offices and continue to be in touch with them about strengthening the US-Israel relationship. I hope that the students will also give back all that they have learned to those who could not come on the mission."

For Shira Lankin (SCW '09), the lobby mission was a way for her to make her voice heard. "I felt that the issues were very important, and we as students have the power to act," she asserted. "I felt it was my responsibility to make a difference." Although

Lankin was not able to speak directly with her congressional representative, who was in a committee hearing at the time, she was confident about meeting with his staffer. "I felt like I was making a difference, and the message will get passed on. Just my presence there is meaningful."

Joseph Dunner Political Science Society President Sarah Willig (SCW '08), who also attended the mission, concurred. "I'm a political science major, and I'm very interested in politics," she explained. "I think that we as young educated Jews have a responsibility to make our voices heard and try to help Israel any way we can."

## Beyond 34<sup>th</sup> Street

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Century 21

positively huge; it's worth a visit even if you should opt not to buy anything.

Getting there: Corner of Cortland and Church Streets.

4. Battery Park—Manhattan Island is anchored by 13 acres of green located at its very tip. The views are tremendous and the people watching is fascinating, particularly at lunch break on a workday. Castle Clinton, located in the park, has previously been a fort, an immigration office, a garden, and a zoo. The large globe sculpture located near the entrance to the park, which is now a national monument, previously stood in the plaza of the World Trade Center, and after it was salvaged from the wreckage it was reinstalled in Battery Park.

Getting there: Walk down Broadway, all the way to the end.

5. Staten Island Ferry—Long considered the greatest bargain in New York, the Staten Island Ferry has been completely free for riders since 1997. The ride takes about 25 minutes in each direction, and if you manage to get yourself a spot in the front of the ferry, you can enjoy a stunning view of the skyline and harbor.

Getting there: The ferry terminal is located in Peter Minuit Plaza. Walk all the way down

Broadway to its end, and then walk down to the end of State Street.

6. Museum of Jewish Heritage—Housed in a hexagonal beehive, the Museum of Jewish Heritage has been open since 1997. The six-sided shape of the building is symbolic of the six-pointed Jewish star and of the six million Jews who were murdered in the Holocaust. The permanent exhibit features one floor of artifacts highlighting the features of Jewish life a century ago (both in America and in Europe), one floor dedicated to the Holocaust, and one floor demonstrating the renewal of Jewish communities in Israel and in the Diaspora in the past 60 years. The rotating temporary exhibits are usually fascinating, and the kosher food court has some great sandwiches at reasonable prices. Admission is \$5 for students.

Getting there: From Battery Park, make a left onto Battery Street while facing Little West Street. The museum is on the left.



Brooklyn Bridge

7. Brooklyn Bridge—Still one of the city's most beloved landmarks after nearly 125 years, the Brooklyn Bridge is a signifi-

cant piece of New York's history and also one of its most recognizable symbols. But the finest feature of the bridge is its accessibility to pedestrians. The walking path is clean, wide, and separated enough from the six lanes of car traffic to prevent it from getting too noisy. During the walk, which is just under a mile in each direction, you can appreciate some of the best views of downtown Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan. Stop under each of the massive towers to learn about the dramatic construction of the bridge, touch the wires from which the road is suspended, and, if you need to, take a break and sit down on one of the benches located on the side of the walkway.

Getting there: The bridge is located directly off the final stop on the 6 line.

Other sites to admire from the outside:

1. Woolworth Building—Located at Broadway and Barclay Streets, this neo-gothic tower was the tallest building in the world from 1913 to 1930.

2. City Hall—Located immediately outside the last subway stop on the 6 line, there is usually some political activity going on in the park that surrounds the building. The park also has a gorgeous fountain that turns into a bright flowerbed in the winter.

3. The Original Duane Reade—Located on Broadway between Duane Street and Reade Street, this pharmacy and convenience store is hardly any different from the myriad of other Duane Reade's located across the city.

# THE ISRAEL SECTION

## Apartheid Week Comes to New York

BY TALIA KAPLAN

What are you doing from February 12 till the 18? Planning on doing school work, or maybe getting together with friends? College students just like you will be participating in what is being termed "Israeli Apartheid Week" (IAW). The weeklong program, which has been running since 2005, consists of panels and lectures given by North American and European students and academics. This year, for the first time, New York City will add itself to the ranks of cities participating in these forums.

The goal of this week is "to show the commonalities shared by indigenous populations ravaged by the settler-colonial strategy of apartheid," according to its mission statement. The organizers believe that Israel's policies toward the Palestinian's living in Gaza and the West Bank are those of an apartheid state. They specify, but do not limit their list to, the actions of the settlers living in the West Bank as apartheid actions. By running this week of activities, the organizers hope to persuade people to look at the situation from their point of view and decide to take action against Israel by doing things like boycotting Israeli goods, divestment towards Israel, and putting pressure on Israel to stop what they

view as apartheid actions. The organizers view America and Canada as Israel's global backers that encourage Israel to, in their own words, "strangle the Palestinians."

The plans for such a week originated in the University of Toronto, and were thought up by students in the Arab Students'



An advertisement for Israeli Apartheid Week

Collective. The plan seems to be spreading in popularity; this year it will run simultaneously in Toronto, Montreal, New York, Oxford, Cambridge, and London. The organizers of IAW in New York include, New York University (NYU) Students for Justice in Palestine, Falasteen and the Arab Students Association at Columbia University, Action Wednesdays Against the War, Adalah-NY: The Coalition for Justice in the Middle East, the Palestine Education Project and WESPAC. The activities of IAW

include panels and speeches in Hunter College, Judson Memorial Church, WESPAC foundation, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, NYU, and more. Presenters include Josef Massad, an assistant professor at Columbia University, Tanya Reinhart, a professor emeritus at Tel Aviv University, and Basheer Abu-Manneh, assistant professor of English at Barnard College. In addition, a movie directed by Ayelet Bechar will be shown.

The IAW website includes difficulties with the premise upon which the week is built. They are claiming to be a humanitarian effort in order to hide their true anti-Semitic face. Israel's army has taken great extent to ensure the humanity of its soldiers and its actions, and is always second guessing itself to make sure it does not hurt civilians for unwarranted reasons. This does not mean that Israel can stand up to utopian standards, but to claim that Israel is an apartheid state does not make any real sense.

*If during the week of February 12-18 you would, unlike your colleagues at other universities, like to oppose this blatant defamation of Israel, then join the Yeshiva University Israel Action Committee in protesting IAW. Contact yuisraelclub@gmail.com for more information.*

## A Message from the President

BY RACHEL GOLDSTEIN

As the spring semester moves forward, The Israel Club has been busy lining up amazing programs. This includes new and exciting initiatives and events, as well as follow-up programs from the Lman Achai Northern Israel Leadership Experience mission that took place over winter break. One of the most active projects the Israel Club hopes to undertake this semester is to set up a weekly Israel Information table in the lobby of the 245 Lexington Avenue school building EVERY Wednesday during Club Hour (2:45-3:30) for the rest of the semester. The table will include headline news from Israel and Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) postcards to be signed and sent to the United Nations Secretary General and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross demanding the speedy release of Israeli kidnapped soldiers. The life stories of the kidnapped soldiers will be available as well so that people will feel more connected to these men and be inspired to send postcards each and every week. The table will also include other ZOA information and NCSY bookmarks with the *tefillah* (prayer) for the captured soldiers on it. If you go to <http://www.freethesoldiers.org> you can get more information and sign more petitions asking that the soldiers be freed as soon as possible.

This month, the Israel Club hopes to bring Yehuda Hakohen, who works for Arutz Sheva radio in Israel, to speak. He will speak about ways to make Zionism a politically correct cause on American college campuses and about how Yeshiva University (YU) students can assist the pro-Israel efforts on other campuses. Also this month is our annual Israel Club Shabbaton, which will be taking place on February 23-24, *Shabbat Parshat Terumah*. Please come and bring all your friends! This will be both an uplifting and an informative *Shabbat*.

On Friday February 2, the Lman Achai group presented their follow-up programming ideas to Rabbi Kenneth Brander and Dr. Hillel Davis, both of whom were great sources of help and staunch supporters of our trip. Nine initiatives, some of which will be for YU students and some which will be geared towards the larger community, were proposed and developed. The on-campus initiatives include a newsletter, an Israeli culture club, an *aliyah* group, and

an Israel/Halachik Symposium. The first initiative is a weekly newsletter to be distributed on the Wilf Campus and at the Israel information table on the Beren campus. The newsletter will include updates on news from Israel, a fun fact about Israel which portrays the country in a positive light, and a fact/myth section which would combat well know false myths about Israel.

Another initiative on campus is the culture club, which includes a *shulchan ivrit* (Hebrew table), an Israeli literature book club, and an Israeli film festival. The *shulchan ivrit* will take place a few times throughout the semester with the goal being to get students more comfortable conversing in Hebrew. The goal of the book club would be to expose its members to Israeli literature and society (the books will be written in English), and then have discussions about what was read. The film festival would be another great way to learn more about Israeli culture through watching various Israeli films on a number of topics. We have also created an *aliyah* group on campus; a forum we hope will spark a lot of discussion about making *aliyah*, living in Israel, and other related topics. The last on-campus initiative is the Israel/Halachik Symposium, which will include speakers and discussions on topics like Religious Zionism and American Orthodoxy. Keep your eyes opened for the dates and times of all these events.

As I always stress, ANYONE who wants to become an active member of the Israel Club can do so by emailing me at [Rose018@aol.com](mailto:Rose018@aol.com). We are always looking for, and welcome new members! In addition, our website is being revamped for the upcoming semester, so check out [www.yuic.org](http://www.yuic.org) for updated Israel Club information.

## Israel News

### Kineret on the Rise

The winter rains in the Land of Israel have helped raise the Kineret an additional five centimeters in one day. This is critical since the Kineret is a main water source for Israel.

### Excavations Prove Controversial

The Antiquities Authority has been doing excavations on the Temple Mount entrance by the Western Wall. Though Muslims have been upset by this, the reaction has not been as extreme as was anticipated

### New Phones

A new Israeli phone provider has been created in Israel. It is called Zahav 012. This is in addition to the others providers, including Bezek and Hot.

### Bloomberg in Israel

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg visited Israel this past week on a trip that included the city of Sderot, which has been under a barrage of attacks from Gaza.

### Shemita Approaching

In preparation for the upcoming *shemita* year, decisions are being pondered as to whether or not the selling of land should continue to be permitted.

### Remembering Ilan Ramon

The Ilan Ramon Youth Physics Center has been dedicated at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev to honor the memory of the first Israeli astronaut to go into space.

# What Today's Scandals Mean for Israel's Future

BY JENN SHULDINER

When glancing at the headlines in Israel, it is hard for one not to cringe with embarrassment. One reads about a president charged with rape, an investigation into the prime minister's role in the state's sale of a controlling interest in Bank Leumi, and the arrest of the head of the Tax Authority. Corruption in the Israeli government is not a new problem. However, is it getting worse?

Scandals have been a common theme throughout Israel's existence. In 1977, the Labor Party was voted out partly due to the Yom Kippur War and partly because of the general consensus that corruption in the government was widespread. In 1992, Likud lost power due to a similar perception of corruption. Yet, dishonesty in the government seems to have deteriorated in recent years. According to Professor Avraham Friedman, former dean of the Lauder School of Government in Herzliya, this is partly due to the Israeli system doing a better job at exposing culprits. This doesn't change the fact that almost all of the country's recent prime ministers have been investigated for corruption, including Binyamin Netanyahu, Ehud Barak and Ariel Sharon.

The equation often used to measure the extent of corruption in a government is to calculate the difference between public interest in politics and the level of trust the members of a state have in its politicians and government. A study done by the Israel Democracy Index came out with different statistics that enable individuals to grasp the attitude of the Israeli public towards the Israeli government.

The studies show that Israeli citizens are concerned with politics, but they do not feel as though they can have an impact on the government. A survey showed that 82% of the people polled keep themselves informed on politics several times a week. This number is higher than 35 other western countries. Yet, only 27% believe they could have an impact on government policy. There is also a common feeling that politicians can only gain power via corruption. Only 22% of those surveyed trust political parties and only 10% believe that politicians are working for the best interest of the country.

Measuring corruption is not an easy task since the guilty parties are not forthcoming about their actions. Transparency International, a non-governmental organization, developed three annual tests to measure corruption: a Corruption Perception Index based on experts' opinions of how corrupt different countries

are, a Global Corruption Barometer, based on a survey of general public attitudes toward an experience of corruption, and a Bribe Payers Survey, looking at the willingness of foreign firms to pay bribes.

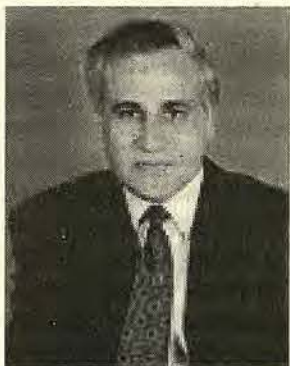
Transparency International ratings are given every year and it is clear that Israel is declining when compared to other democracies around the world. In 2006, Israel placed 20 out of 36 among



Prime Minister Ehud Olmert

western countries, compared to 17 in 2004 and 14 in 2003. These indices give the public an idea of the government's misuse of authority and officials using power for personal gain.

These findings tarnish Israel's reputation and also discourage foreign investment. "Israel is considered one of the riskiest places in the western world, with an unstable, inefficient regime, low accountability, a relatively high rate of state corruption and poor law enforcement," said Tehila Tamir-Yanay, Business Data Israel's general manager.



Former President Moshe Katsav

Israel's corruption problem is not limited to the government. Transparency International also puts out a Briber Payer's Index which measures a country's propensity to pay bribes abroad. The study looked at 30 leading export countries. Israel placed 19 on the list with a score of 6.01 with 10 being bribe free.

Transparency International has a list of five ways in which countries can battle corruption: increasing political accountability, strengthening civil society participation, creating a competi-

tive private sector, institutional restraints on power, and improving public sector management.

Among those who are fighting the battle against corruption is Yaron Zelekha, Israel's accountant general. He presented a three-part plan at a conference in Herzliya. The plan includes watchdogs, legal advisors and comptrollers in government agencies and offices. He claims that there are major leaks in the system. The auditors are dependent on those that they are auditing. Part of the auditors' salaries is based on overtime that must be approved by those being audited. Since there is no budget for each audit, every investigation must also be approved by those being audited. Zelekha mentioned that there is no fixed length of term on the office for the auditors. As time develops, friendships ensue and a set turnover must be instituted. Zelekha believes that all these measures are not hard to implement. All that is lacking is the will for reform.

Another problem is that the ministers, without any formal committee, appoint the director generals. This situation ensures that the government is plagued by cronyism, a term used when friends are appointed into office without consideration for the appropriate qualifications required.

"The State of Israel is more corrupt than it might appear to an observer from the outside," said Zelekha. "The situation in the country is serious and requires reinforced supervision, inspection and control mechanisms."

Dishonesty is not confined to the ranks of the government. In a poll reported by Ha'aretz, over 60% of people polled said they believe that personal honesty is "not good" and only 30% said it is good. Perhaps this is a problem that must be dealt with at the grass roots level.

Until changes are implemented and people are held accountable for their actions the situation will not improve. Yet, one still must be thankful for what Israel does have and not overlook the fact that democracy in Israel is a phenomenon.

Nonetheless, the proper steps must be taken so that the citizens of Israel can have faith in their government once again and the state can run in an efficient and just manner. Then the State of Israel will be the beacon of justice and morality that it is destined to be.

# Aliyah- No Longer Just a Dream

BY JAIMIE FOGEL

After spending a year or more living and learning in Israel, many students return to the United States with passionate future plans to permanently return to Israel. They have often chosen the community in which they wish to raise their families, already know their favorite little eateries and feel that it is only a matter of time before they board the plane for that final ride and fulfill those dreams which have been burning inside them.

But this story often ends at the dream. Many students return to their homes and the communities they grew up in and lose the idealism and passion they had felt so strongly only months earlier. They begin to get comfortable and adjust to American life. There are no longer role models around them championing the idea and the thought of uprooting their lives, and starting anew as an immigrant in a foreign country fills them with dread. Settling the Land of Israel seems about as practical and likely to happen as peace between the Jews and Palestinians and the dream gets labeled as just another teenage naiveté.

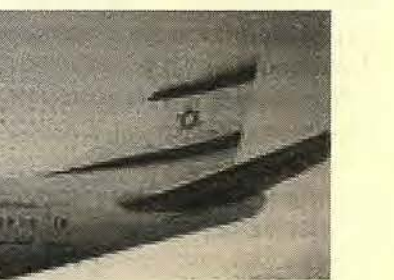
Well, that is all about to change. A group of students at Stern College for Women (SCW) and Yeshiva College (YC) have undertaken a project to begin what is called a *garin* (seedling) or what they hope to call an Aliyah Group. The idea is to take those students who are serious about moving to Israel and create a community which will foster and develop those passions and see to it that they don't get swept under the table while in college. This group intends to do just the opposite. The group hopes to strengthen those dreams through practical discussion and debate. The group plans to attract both single and married women and men from the Beren and Wilf Campuses who are already *aliyah* minded. Its goal is not to become a *kiruv* organization for *aliyah*; rather, it hopes to be a refuge and support network for those who already have the passionate dream to build a life and family in Israel.

The group hopes to meet

once a month, rotating between the Beren and Wilf Campuses to hear from speakers who will offer informative ideas and practical suggestions for their future plans. The Aliyah Group wishes to arm these students with knowledge about Israeli society and the way its systems work. The idea is that when they arrive, they will not feel vulnerable and weak in their new home. They will have been actively preparing for the

move, the language issues and all of the challenges that face every *oleh* (immigrant). The group hopes to create a partnership with

Nefesh B'Nefesh who, knowing that the Yeshiva University community is their greatest feeder for *olim*, will offer seminars, scholarships and long-term positions for the students who dedicate their time to the group, and ultimately to the supportive community it will create. Not only is it important to make the actual *aliyah* process more user-friend-



ly, but it's possibly even more important to cultivate the thoughts and passions of the future *olim* and ensure that they actually make the move, ready and knowledgeable about their future life course.

The Aliyah Group hopes to



have its first official meeting sometime in early March. Look out for flyers and emails which will offer definite details for the upcoming inaugural event.

If you are interested in more information about the project, please email [jaimiefogel@gmail.com](mailto:jaimiefogel@gmail.com).

# SCIENCE AND HEALTH

## The Green Elixir of Life

BY GRACE CHARLES

There has recently been a lot of hype about green tea. If you take a look at the weight loss drugs at your local pharmacy, you're bound to see many boasting that they contain green tea extract. You may also notice the extract added into many over-the-counter cardiovascular medications and in drugs designed to protect you from cancer. Green tea has even been added to instant oatmeal mix due to its great antioxidant properties.

The Chinese have been drinking green tea for centuries. In Japan, it is the most popular beverage. The drink is picking up steam in the American market as well. Green tea is believed to have many positive health benefits. It may increase immunity, lower blood sugar levels, and protect from cavities and tooth decay. The high antioxidant levels in green tea prevent oxidation of free radicals in the body, which prevents the build-up of toxins in the blood. This property leads researchers to believe that drinking green tea will slow the aging process. It is also thought to help reduce cancer risks, lower cholesterol, burn calories, and prevent arthritis. As far as your cardiovascular system goes, many believe

green tea can reduce high blood pressure, reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, and lower the risk of blood clot. The Food and Drug Administration, which approves or rejects statements made by food and drug products, has not accepted any of these potential benefits as facts. However, some studies that give support to these ideas have recently become available.



Spanish and British scientists have discovered how green tea can help to prevent certain types of cancer. At the University of Murcia in Spain, and at the John Innes Center (JIC) in Norwich, England, researchers have shown the ability the compound epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) has to prevent cancer cell growth. "We have shown for the first time that EGCG, which is present in green tea at relatively high concentrations, inhibits the enzyme dihydrofolate reductase, which is a recognized, established target for anti-cancer drugs," said Roger

Thorneley, a professor at JIC. "This is the first time, to our knowledge, a known target for an anti-cancer drug has been identified as being inhibited by EGCG."

Thorneley believes EGCG is probably just one of a number of anti-cancer mechanisms in green tea. Green tea has about five times as much EGCG as normal black tea. The researchers in this study were unsure how much green tea a person would have to drink to receive this particular benefit. However, the results for this study give hope that an anti-cancer drug can be made using EGCG.

A study published in the "American Journal of Cardiology" in 2002 found that people who drink a cup of green tea everyday might be more protected against heart attacks than those who don't. The study found that although people who drank green tea everyday were no less likely to have coronary artery disease than people who did not drink tea, they were much less likely to have heart attacks. The study was done on Japanese patients. Heart disease is less common in Japan than in Europe and the US, which may have to

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## Winter Got You Down? It May be SAD

BY ESTHER FISCHER

Winter brings with it snow, short days, warm hats, and the blues. Although many people experience feelings of lethargy, weight gain, and an increased need for sleep during the winter months, a more severe form of "the winter blues" is recognized as a minor depression and impacts the lives of millions of people each year. It is estimated that over 10 million Americans suffer from some form of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). The disorder commonly begins affecting people in the late fall, peaks in the winter months and resolves in the spring.

The symptoms of SAD are characteristic of depression, as classified in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders ed. IV. They include a lack of energy, a craving for sweets, weight gain, negative thoughts and an increased need for sleep. Various studies have also shown that certain depressed

individuals experience fluctuating moods depending on the season, and that symptoms may be more severe during the winter months. Certain individuals can suffer from depression during the summer months, but this is much less common.

70 - 80% of those that suffer from SAD are women, and the most common age of onset is mid-thirties. Though younger people can suffer from SAD, they are easier to treat for the disease. SAD seems to be caused by the increasing amounts of darkness present in the

winter, which explains why SAD is more prevalent in northern latitudes like the Scandinavian countries. One of the theories is that SAD is caused by a lack of serotonin, which is produced when the body is exposed to sunlight. If the body is exposed to prolonged periods of darkness, such as in the wintertime, periods of overcast weather, or a dark room with limited natural light, serotonin production will halt,

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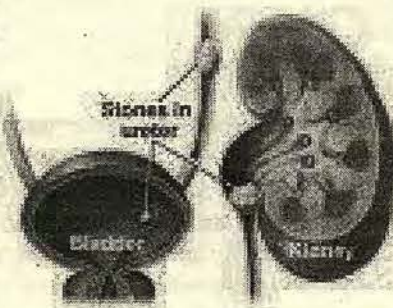
## Kidneys: Small Organ Causes Big Problems

BY SARA RUBENSTEIN

One of the most painful ailments a person can suffer from is kidney stones. A kidney stone is a concentration of minerals that forms in the kidney. It usually forms near the region in which the renal tissue of the kidney connects to the urinary system in order to expel the wastes out of the body in the form of urine. The stone forms when there is not enough water or chemicals to dissolve the particles in the kidney. This occurs over time; it could take a few days to a few years for a stone to become big enough to block the pathway for materials to exit the body, or to get stuck while trying to pass through the system.

There are five main causes of kidney stones, as well as some minor causes. The most common cause of kidney stones is hypercalciuria, large amounts of calcium in the urine. The second is hyperoxaluria, an increased level of oxalate in the urine. The third main cause is hyperuricosuria, elevated levels of uric acid in the urine. The fourth is hypocitra-

turia, low levels of citrate in the urine. The last major cause is low volumes of urine and water in the kidney. Urine and water are needed to dissolve the particles in the urine if they are too big to pass through the urethra in their current state. Some of the other conditions that can result in the for-



mation of kidney stones are low levels of magnesium, high levels of sodium, and abnormal acid levels in the urine. There are also some medical conditions, such as gout, chronic diarrhea and urinary infections, which can make a person susceptible to developing kidney stones in the future.

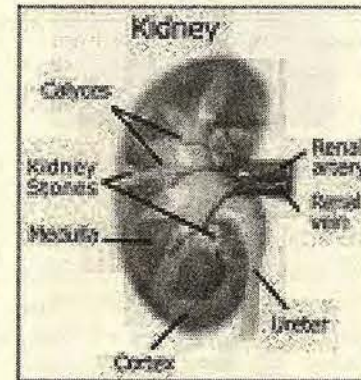
Calcium is found in approximately 85% of kidney stones.

Yet, it only becomes part of a kidney stone once it becomes attached to oxalate, phosphate, or other compounds; it is never found alone in a stone. When calcium leaves a person's bones and enters the bloodstream, it is necessary for that person to exert energy to make sure that the calcium will exit the body. If a person never exercises, the calcium will build up in the urine and can cause the formation of a stone.

Oxalate is found in more vegetarian foods than carnivorous foods. Foods with high levels of oxalates are green leafy vegetables, nuts, teas, and chocolate. In order for a person to decrease their levels of oxalate and reduce their chances of developing a kidney stone, a person can take some medications, but must also take other measures including changing their diet. The easiest thing a person can do is decrease the amount of oxalates they consume each day.

Uric acid is found in around 10% of kidney stones. The stones found in men are more concentrated with uric acid than the stones found in women. Uric acid

becomes concentrated when the acidity of the urine is high since, in that situation, the uric acid won't be able to be dissolved and can cause the person to develop gout. Two ways to treat this kind of kidney stone is to either take medications or take the antacid potassium citrate.



Citrate is a natural antacid in the body. If the levels in the body become low, acid will build up and cause a stone to form. The only way to significantly raise the level of citrate in a person's body is to take potassium citrate supplements.

The last major cause of kidney stones is a decrease in urine and water volumes. This is the

result of many things. If a person consumes only a little water, that person will have a low volume of water. If a person perspires a lot, a significant amount of water will be lost from the body so such a person must make sure to rehydrate. In addition, diseases such as chronic diarrhea and Chron's disease can lead to a person becoming dehydrated and have the wrong balance of chemicals in their body. In order to solve this problem a person should be drinking enough water throughout the day to equal at least two quarts of urine.

Another thing people believe to cause kidney stones is obesity. There have been numerous studies done to determine the relationship between these two things, and results show that there is a direct correlation between the two. Obesity causes hyperinsulemia which leads to an increase in the amount of calcium that is found in the urine of a person. This can cause the development of a kidney stone. Also, the more fat a person has, the more oxalate and uric acid their urine

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## Tornados Hit Florida and Wreak Havoc

BY RACHEL-ALI ELBAZ

On Friday February 3, at three o'clock in the morning, one or two tornadoes decimated more than 1,500 homes and buildings in Florida. At least 20 lives were lost and countless people injured. The destruction and devastation was astounding. Cars were crunched and flung onto porches. Sofas, televisions, and appliances were strewn in precarious piles. The foundations of houses stood naked.

The highway over which the tornado traveled was littered with cars and tractor-trailer rigs.

Governor Charlie Crist declared a state of emergency in the four affected counties. In total, approximately 40 square miles was ravaged by the storm. Many are amazed that more people were not killed. In response, President George W. Bush quickly signed an emergency measure for the four Florida counties, and the services of the Federal Emergency Management Agency were set into motion.

"Tornadoes have been this destructive before in Florida when El Nino conditions have been in place," commented Ben Nelson, a Florida State meteorologist. He was referring to the string of tornadoes that hit Florida in February 1998. They killed more than 40 people in central Florida and injured hundreds more.

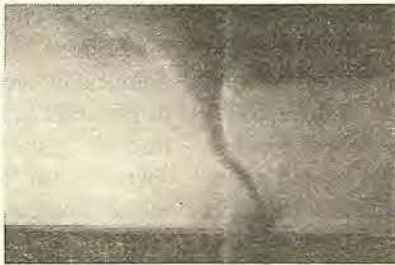
This year, the El Nino effect is promising to make 2007 a very warm

year, perhaps the warmest on record. The extended warming period provided by El Nino will ensure that the surface temperature will match, and possibly exceed, the temperatures of 1998. This does not bode well for the current tornado season.

Tornadoes touch down an average of one thousand times a year in the United States. While only a small percentage makes a direct hit on occupied buildings, people are killed or injured annually. When compared with other states, Florida ranks number four for frequency of tornadoes. However, when the calculation of tornadoes per square mile is taken into consideration, Florida ranks number one.

A tornado is a thin tube that descends from a cloud to the ground. The lower half is surrounded by a dust cloud, kicked up by the tornado's strong winds at the surface of the earth.

Tornados rotate a column of air violently. While tornadoes can appear in many shapes, they usually appear as a condensation funnel where the narrow end touches the earth. More often than not, a cloud of debris encircles the lower end of the funnel. Wind speeds of tornadoes are usually 110 mph and the diameter of the funnel cloud is usually about 250 feet. An average tornado only travels a few miles before dissipating.



Though tornadoes have occurred on every continent other than Antarctica, the vast majority

of them occur in the United States. There are important things individuals can do to prevent being injured or killed should a tornado strike. Being alert to the onset of severe weather is of utmost importance. Most deaths and injuries happen to those who are unaware or uninformed. For those who do not regularly watch or listen to weather reports, the appearance of strange clouds and stormy weather should be an indication that a tornado is on its way.

If the sky appears a pale green, or black-green color, and if clouds are moving very fast in a rotating pattern or converging toward one area of the sky then a tornado may very well be on its way. If one observes the cloud traveling in a distinct direction they may be safe. But, if the cloud does not appear to be moving to the left or right, it may be headed directly towards you. At that point, take immediate cover.

The safest places to go for cover are a storm shelter or within the basement of a home. Since tornadoes most often travel from southwest to northeast, the safest place in a basement is away from the west and south walls. It is best to take cover and not attempt to outrun or if one is in their car to drive away from the tornado.

While the destruction caused by Florida's recent tornado has left many in shock, it is crucial to remember that being prepared is the best way to avoid harm. Knowledge, awareness, and pre-planned safety strategies are the best defense.

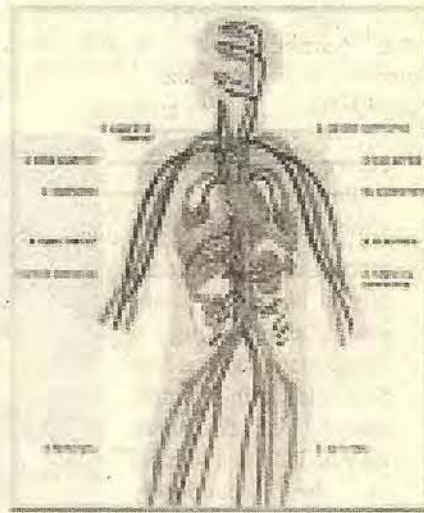
## Does Artificial Blood Save Lives?

BY YUDIT DAVIDOVITS

Blood is essential to life; it carries oxygen from the lungs to all cells in the body and picks up carbon dioxide to be exhaled. Some of the numerous functions of blood include the following: it delivers nutrients and hormones to various parts of the body, removes toxins, and is part of the immune system. Is it possible that an artificial substance can be developed to replace human blood and thus perform all of the aforementioned tasks?

Blood consists of two main components: plasma and formed elements. Everything that is carried by the blood is dissolved in plasma, which is mostly made of water. The formed elements are cells, or parts of cells that include white blood cells (WBC), platelets, and red blood cells (RBC). WBCs are part of the immune system and engulf foreign substances. Platelets release coagulation fac-

tors that, when activated, form clots. RBCs make up 90% of the formed elements in blood and are responsible for carrying oxygen and carbon dioxide. RBCs contain a complex molecule called



hemoglobin that uses iron to bond oxygen. Hemoglobin is composed of a protein complex called globin and four pigments called hemes.

In emergency situations, or during surgeries, blood loss results in a failure of the body's oxygen delivery system. To make up for the lost blood volume, patients receive volume expanders, like saline, to restore blood pressure and let the remaining red blood cells transport oxygen. If the body is not able to function with volume expanders alone, blood transfusions are given to replace the lost blood.

While this method usually works, there are challenges associated with giving patients the blood they need. For example, human blood needs to be kept cool and has a shelf life of just over a month. Therefore, it is impractical to be carried in ambulances and on battlefields, and volume expanders may not be sufficient in keeping a bleeding patient alive. Also, before giving a patient blood, his blood type needs to be deter-

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## Usher Syndrome Links Hearing and Vision Loss

BY CHANIE LADAEW

Usher syndrome is the most common condition involving both hearing and vision loss. A syndrome is a disease or disorder that has more than one feature or symptom. The major symptoms of Usher syndrome are hearing impairment and retinitis pigmentosa. Retinitis pigmentosa is an eye disorder that causes a person's vision to gradually worsen. In addition to hearing and vision loss, individuals with Usher syndrome may also have balance problems.

Usher syndrome was first described in 1858 by Albrecht Von Graefe. Yet, it is named after Charles Usher, a British eye doctor, who believed that the condition was passed from parents to their children via genetically.

Genes are located in every cell, except for red blood cells since they do not have a nucleus. Each person inherits two copies of each gene, one from each parent. Sometimes genes are altered or mutated. Mutated genes may cause cells to act differently than expected, which can lead to many different problems. One of the complications may be a gene for Usher syndrome.

Genes for Usher syndrome are autosomal recessive. This means that Usher genes are located on chromosomes other than the sex chromosomes, and both parents must contribute the mutated gene to the child before the disorder is seen. Parents are usually unaware that they have an Usher gene because they would need two of the mutated genes to show signs of Usher syndrome.

There are three general types of Usher syndrome: Usher syndrome type 1 (USH1), Usher syndrome type 2 (USH2), and Usher syndrome type 3 (USH3). It was

recently discovered that USH1 and USH2 are the most common types found in individuals who are hard of hearing.

Individuals with the first type of Usher syndrome known as USH1 are deaf from birth and have severe balance problems. Visual problems most often begin with difficulty seeing at night, but tend to progress rapidly until the individual is completely blind. The age in which a person with USH1 begins losing his vision cannot be pinpointed; it varies from person to person.

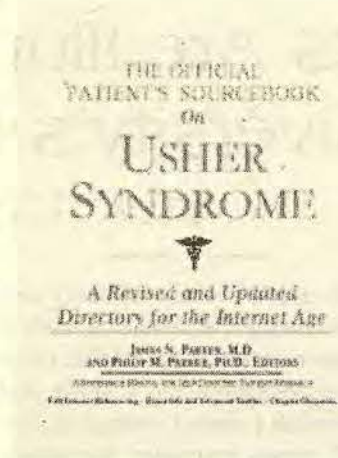
Individuals with USH2 are born with moderate to severe hearing impairment and normal balance. The visual problems in USH2 tend to progress more slowly than the visual problems in USH1. USH2 is characterized by blind spots that begin to appear shortly after the teenage

years. Additionally, when an individual with USH2 begins to go blind, his or her ability to lip-read is lost.

Children born with USH3, the third and least common type of Usher syndrome, have normal hearing and normal to near-normal balance. But, their hearing worsens over time and they usually experience visual loss by adulthood.

Hearing loss and retinitis pigmentosa are rarely found in combination. Therefore, most people who have retinitis pigmentosa and hearing loss probably have Usher syndrome. With the aid of technology, special tests such as electronystagmography are able to detect balance problems and electroretinography can detect retinitis pigmentosa. These machines allow doctors to detect Usher syndrome early. Early diagnosis is important so that affected individuals can begin special educational training programs to help them manage the combined hearing and vision difficulties. Educational training includes learning about the disorder, learning how to type quickly and learning how to use a blind cane. This allows one to be prepared for any difficulties that they will encounter in the near future.

There is currently no cure for Usher syndrome. As of now the best treatment involves early identification.



# Arts and Culture

## Lonely Man of Faith: Yeshiva University Commemorates the Glorious Days of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik

BY LAURA SHUMAN

In his *motzei Shabbat* address in Lamport Auditorium on Yeshiva University's Wilf Campus, esteemed author Rabbi Maurice Lamm advised the hundreds gathered for the New York screening of "The Lonely Man of Faith," "don't view this film as a film, and don't view this film as a critic... but project back to those glorious days when the Rav was in his glory and strength."

"The Lonely Man of Faith," directed and co-written by Ethan Eisenberg and executive produced by two time Emmy award winner Marilyn Ness, is the first of its kind to document the life and legacy of "The Rav," Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik (1903-1993). The 99 minute film, which came about after Eisenberg, then a young film student, was introduced to Rabbi Aaron Rakeffet-Rothkoff, a historian who wished to create a film about Rav Soloveitchik. They wanted the film to not only successfully project back to the glorious days of Rav Soloveitchik's life, but also to

encompass the legacy of a man who fought so hard to save the destiny of Modern Orthodox Jewry.

Because he was one of the most influential leaders of the American-Jewish community in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is hard to imagine encompassing a *Torah* giant such as Rav Soloveitchik in a single sitting. Yet, Eisenberg may be lauded a success as he seamlessly weaved the depths of Rav Soloveitchik together on both an individual and on an American Jewish historical level.

In a single excerpt reading of "Kol Dodi Dofek" (The Heart of my Beloved is Knocking), interlaced with images from the Holocaust, the United Nations announcement of the establishment of the State of Israel, and the famous image of young ideologues dancing following the announcement of Israel's statehood, Eisenberg

manages to capture the strong Zionist feelings of Rav Soloveitchik on film. It is in slices of history such as these that



Rabbi Kenneth Brander leads a panel discussion with former Rav Soloveitchik students Rabbi Hershel Schachter, Rabbi Menachem Genack, and Rabbi Mayer Twersky

Eisenberg fuses the old and new, and manages to delve beyond the factual biography of greatness.

According to the 30 year-old director who was "neither a *talmid* (student) or a *talmid* of the *talmid* of the Rav," the aim of the film was to "give a taste of who the Rav was," adding that the

film is "for my generation and for people outside of the community who may never have heard of the Rav, and at the same time to give

insight into the Rav's personality." This is no simple feat considering that Rabbi Soloveitchik, a prodigy from an early age, proclaimed himself to be, and was proclaimed by others, a lonely man of faith. Rav Soloveitchik's legacy is further complicated by the myriad of students and family members who share their distinct views on who Rav Soloveitchik was and what the Modern Orthodoxy he represented was all about.

Though the film relies heavily on interviews, pictures and other images, due to the scarcity of usable footage of the Rav himself, there was not a dry eye in the entire auditorium when Eisenberg panned down onto the image of the gravestone of Rav Soloveitchik's beloved wife Tonya.

This single example is an

ode to the entire film. "The Lonely Man of Faith" is not a Hollywood drama. It sought not to portray a fiddler on the roof or a secularized Jew. Instead, it depicts a complicated man with a complex story through words and pictures largely extraneous to the man himself. It is a story about Modern Orthodox Jewry, spanning from the moment Rav Soloveitchik stepped off the boat in America to the very moment that his grandson Rabbi Meyer Twersky sat on the stage on *motzei Shabbat* and reflected on a man whose legacy is timeless.

The entire evening, which took place in the very hall that Rav Soloveitchik himself used to deliver his famous *Yahrtzeit* (memorial) lectures, embraced the individual, while joining together a community of people. The words of Torah and contemporary Jewish dialogue in both the film and the reflections following the film united generations of people with a common heritage.

## Torah Texts Are Illuminated in Yeshiva University's New Exhibit

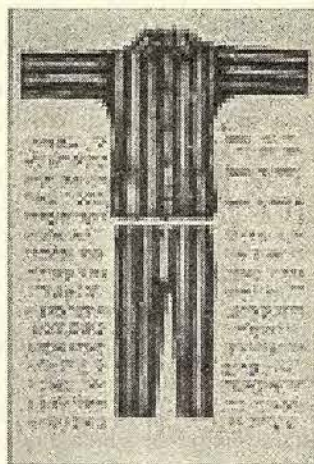
BY BATYA CARL

"The Illuminated Torah" is the newest exhibit on display at the Yeshiva University Museum. The exhibit features manuscripts of a *Torah* illustrated by Rabbi Yonah Weinrib. On display is only a portion of a much bigger project in the works, commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Naftali Tessler, since only the book of Exodus has been completed thus far.

Rabbi Weinrib began the project with the book of Exodus, the second book of the Torah, rather than Genesis, the first, since according "this is when the Jewish people really became a nation," explained Sara Gruenspecht, the assistant to the director of the museum.

The calligraphy used resembles the lettering in a real *Torah*, but Rabbi Weinrib ingeniously turns the simple black letters into an experience. The words of the Torah spring to life. For example, by the splitting of the sea, the letters themselves become a sea split into 12 paths of dry land and

the ends of letters suddenly turn into streams of blood. A staff is drawn frozen in the middle of its transformation into a snake and *pesukim* (verses) containing lists of names rearrange themselves



into small family trees. Rabbi Weinrib's artwork does not merely depict the surface story provided by the *pesukim* (verses), but encompasses the depths of the stories through *talmud* and *midrash*, and according to various commentaries, such as Rashi, Yalkut, Rabbeinu Bachya, the Maharal, and the Sfas Emes, as

well.

The displays are to be viewed from right to left, as one would read a Hebrew text, and explanations are written in mustard color Rashi script. Commentaries scatter themselves between the lines of the text, within the margins, next to an illustration, or even squeezed within the words of the *pesukim* themselves. In the manuscript titled "The Birth of Moses," the daughter of Pharaoh retrieves the basket containing the infant Moses. Within the word "*amata*," which the *midrash* explains to mean "her arm," the letter "*af*" is elongated to show that the arm of the daughter of Pharaoh miraculously stretched far enough to reach Moses.

In one glorious page, pearl-like manna descending from the heavens into the desert is paired with an illustration of two loaves of bread peaking out beneath a cloth cover. Rabbi Weinrib weaves the two concepts together to show that the manna that fell

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## Sephardic Film Festival Returns to New York

BY Yael WOLYNETZ

The New York Sephardic Jewish Film Festival took place during the first week of February for the 11<sup>th</sup> year in a row. The festival highlighted *Sephardic* history, culture and tradition by screening several feature films and documentaries over the course of a week. Several films were premiered and conversations with film makers took place as well.

The New York Sephardic Film Festival is a joint collaboration between The American Sephardic Federation and the Sephardic House, an organization which aims to promote the unique culture and heritage of Sephardic Jewry. According to the website of the American-Sephardic Federation, "the NY Sephardic Jewish Film Festival has gained unprecedented critical and public recognition and has become a

one-of-a kind and important event in the world of Jewish film festivals."

This year's festival was unique in that it focused on *Sephardic* voices in Israeli cinema, a response to the growing influence of *Sephardic*



Stars of *Shalosh Imahot*

moviemakers in the Israeli film industry. The festival included nine different films and a total of 15 screenings at both the Center for Jewish History and The JCC in Manhattan. The films varied in genre types ranging from documentaries to romantic comedies. Among the most noted of the

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## Darna: A Delectable, Mediterranean Experience

BY LEA NEW

Coming in from the blustery Manhattan cold, Darna, meaning "our home" in Arabic, really does have the appeal of a comfortable haven. Darna has the mellow feel of coastal Morocco. Pale colored stone floors are matched with mosaic-like tiles and the light is low and golden. The Mediterranean inflections are there, yet the décor at Darna isn't kitschy or oppressive. The restaurant layout, in addition to the regular dining floor, includes a raised area, partially enclosed by mesh curtains. Set slightly apart from the rest of the dining floor, it contains several tables of its own and allows for a more intimate dining experience for those so inclined.

Darna's specialty is Moroccan fare. The slight smell of spices in the air augurs to the flavors and tastes of our meal to come. A waiter who seems eager to please hands us our menus and they reveal a concise, yet diverse selection of appetizers, soups, and entrées. Dishes including couscous, zaatar, techina, and tabbouleh, which are familiar to even the Ashkenazi diner. Other foods, like kubbeh, tajines, and lachmabain sauce give the diner a sense of exotic foreignness. Appetizers mostly range from about \$6 - \$8, the salads range from \$6 - \$11 and the entrées range from a heftier \$17 - \$30.

Although Darna is a place one would presumably visit for its Moroccan cuisine, the menu also provides recognizable American foods, like short ribs, rib-eye steaks and pan-seared chicken cutlets. Vegetarians would also not be at a loss at Darna. Several appetizers are explicitly listed as vegetarian, and most of the salads and at least one of the soups are meat free. Though most of the entrees contain some form of lamb, chicken, veal or beef, vegetarians could choose from among the few fish and vegetable dishes.

The restaurant begins to reverberate with soft strains of an exotic melody. The waiter doesn't seem to mind as we linger over the menu, discussing our food-options and the general 'feel' of Darna. He has meanwhile brought us a basket of freshly toasted quartered-pita together with a small dish of a spiced carrot salad, and duly fills our cups with cold water. Our plates, cutlery and glasses are refreshingly clean and dust-free, and the napkins on our laps are crisp and spotless. The table we sit at is round and capacious, allowing for a pleasing surplus of space in which to maneuver elbows and extra plates. Tables at Darna are rather closely spaced to one another, but here in New York City, where space is at a premium, one half-expects to be

within earshot of fellow patrons.

The staff at Darna moves around quietly and efficiently. The waiters don't hover, yet they respond promptly when waved over. Once we place our order, the food arrives shortly after. The stuffed grape leaves go quickly, their trace of lime adding a tasty zing that makes a dish go from average to memorable. About 20 minutes later our entrées appear, but the swift arrival of the main course is tempered by the fact that the waiter prematurely begins to clear away our appetizer. We've ordered a lamb tajine (a stew that had been cooked for several hours), and cornish hen stuffed with dates, almonds and mushrooms. Both the tajine and the chicken are carefully arranged on a layer of couscous and boiled vegetables. The portions at Darna are generous. The food tastes very fresh and is quite flavorful. The lamb tajine contains a hint of mint, and the effect is interesting yet very palatable. The nice thing about the food at Darna is that although the dishes have the quality of authentic Moroccan food, the foreign flavor is transmitted subtly and deliciously, also making the dishes agreeable to diners with moderate taste buds. Darna doesn't have much to speak of in terms of dessert; the selection is comprised of two cakes and a pareve tiramisu. We decide on the chocolate mousse cake, which is rather unremarkable.

Darna's tasty cuisine and its practical location in the heart of the Upper West Side make it an attractive place to dine with friends. During the summertime, the front of the restaurant is opened to the outside, giving patrons the option to dine within the restaurant or at tables arranged on the street. Indeed, a visit to Darna makes a fine afternoon or evening out for either big groups or pairs. The service is good, and the ambiance exudes an exotic warmth and appeal. Although a meal is on the pricier side, diners enjoy hearty servings of tasty Moroccan fare set in a mellow incarnation of the East.

*Darna is located at 600 West Columbus Avenue, at the corner of West 89th Street. It is open for brunch on Sunday from 11:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. On Monday through Thursday the restaurant is open for lunch from 11:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and is open for dinner from 4:00 p.m. until 11:00 a.m. It is open on Friday for lunch from 11:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. and those interested in going for dinner must call in advance. Darna is open on Saturday nights from 9:30 p.m. until 12:00 a.m. as well. Darna's can be reached at (212) 721-9123 or seen on the web*

*at <http://www.darnanyc.com/1.html>.*

## The Closet of a Park Avenue Princess

BY Yael Zwanziger

The Metropolitan Museum of Art (The Met) recently released an exhibit featuring Nan Kempner's clothing collections. Nan Kempner was credited as being one of the few Americans who was truly a chic dresser in the 1960s, a praise granted by Diana Vreeland, the editor of Vogue magazine at the time. Although Kepner passed away in 2005, her clothes are her legacy and are to be donated to her favorite charity for auction. However, before their auctioning, her wardrobe was sent to The Met, where viewers could appreciate the beauty and craftsmanship of her collection.



Nan Kempner

An exhibit on fashion tends to lead to very different commentary than a typical art exhibit. Many people were overheard declaring that Kempner's clothing was ugly. Others commented on its poor taste, while some simply stated that many dresses could not suit most bodies. Such statements reveal a common misunderstanding amongst the public, shedding light on an inability to appreciate fashion as art.

Garments, with their bold prints, exquisite weaving, and dramatic cuts, are essentially art. They become even more impressive if they have been filled with the life of a person. Regardless of whether or not Kempner's style is flattering or of a viewer's particular taste, her clothing is both beautiful and truly art. To successfully critique the exhibit, one must analyze the clothing as they

would artwork and not on the basis of whether or not they would be caught in public wearing the item on display.

Kepner was an excellent dresser because she knew how to make a statement with her body. Famously skinny, fashion giant Garavani Valentino compared the way she wore her clothes to the way a dress drapes on a hanger.

Her long 5 foot 9 inch frame resembled an elegant column. Rather than hide from her height and this frame, Kepner emphasized these attributes taking risks and making daring moves by wearing stylish clothing seldom seen on the streets of Manhattan.

The exhibit's backdrop is Kepner's grandiose closet. Her signature pieces are arranged according to color; the thousands of blouses, skirts, and suits that she owned form a harmonious rainbow.

Signature to Kepner's style was designer Yves Saint Laurent, though she also loved French designers Christian Lacroix and Madame Grès. She also loyally sported American designer fashion, often wearing pieces by Bill Blas, Michael Kors and Ralph Lauren.

An entire exhibit was dedicated to displaying a woman's wardrobe. An initial thought bequeaths the question of whether Kepner's clothing deserves to appear in The Met at all. But, fashion is a form of art. Some may even say it is the purest form of art considering people spend their lives in

clothes.

Regardless, should a fashion plate's wardrobe be admired and displayed in the same way as the works of Michelangelo and Picasso? Kempner herself found this slightly comedic. In an interview a year before her death she said: "My husband, Tommy, thinks it's hysterical, because he used to think it was extravagance, and it now turns out that I was an art collector! Museums come and ask me for clothes all the time. Can you imagine?"



The Metropolitan Museum of Art

*The "Nan Kempner: American Chic" exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, located at 1000 Fifth Avenue between 82nd and 83rd Street can be seen through March 4, 2007. The museum is open on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., on Friday and Saturday from 9:30 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. and is closed on*

## Making the Band

BY TIKVA HECHT

Stern College for Women (SCW) students Marina Zilbergerts (SCW '08), Sara Levit (SCW '07) and recent SCW graduate Eli Shulman are the musicians behind the rock group tentatively known as KanKan. The Observer had the chance to talk with Zilbergerts and Levit about the band and their music.

Observer: What are your positions in the band?

Levit: Marina is the lead guitarist and pretty much the songwriter. She is rather poetic and deep. Ellie is the peacemaker, drummer, and all around musical talent. I am the singer, and when I'm good I get to play the triangle.

O: How do you decide what to play?

Zilbergerts: I'm interested in playing music for the sake of art

and self-expression. I want the audience to feel scared, to sprout strange desires to fly, laugh, cry and be nostalgic.

L: I want to give the crowd something to jump around to. While I love a good, deep song, I also like to thrash my hair around to a good 80s metal band... Sometimes you feel like a folk song, sometimes like 80s pop. But I love Marina's music, especially "Maggie by the Sea", my favorite to sing, and "G-Minor Blues", a desperate, Jazzy, song about the woes of fuzzy buds of winter.

O: Who or what are your inspirations?

L: "The Who's Behind Blue Eyes" is one of my all time favorites, as is Aimee Mann's "Pavlov's Bell." When I feel like dancing, Def Leppard's "Pour Some Sugar on Me" always does the job, and I love Harry Nilson. If you want original lyrics, he's

the man. He sings just as evocatively about old desks, puppies, and lime and coconuts as he does about love. But perhaps the most inspiring of all are the Chipmunks and Chippettes. They're the hardest rocking band I have ever laid ears and eyes on! Not to mention, that Alvin is a looker. I guess I have a thing for bad boys.

Z: The Little Prince and Antoine De Saint Exupery, spirituality, physics- the light cone of our universe, G-d, my passionate hatred for bureaucracy and conformity, and the men in my life.

O: How would you describe your sound?

Z: Some songs are jazzy, others are folksy, some are funny and satirical, and others sound like something from a previous decade. I'd like to think the music

*continued on page 23*

# FASHION

## Fashion for a Cause

BY JULIE AST

New York Fashion Week is usually about the latest trends and designers' innovations. But on Friday, February 2, at the Red Dress Collection Charity Show, celebrities walked down the runway for a cause. Stars, including Kim Cattrall of "Sex and the City" and talk show host Kelly Ripa, wore red dresses by participating designers. The event was organized by The Heart Truth Campaign, a program of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) that uses the image of a red dress to raise awareness about heart disease, the number one killer of women in the United States.

Though at most fashion shows, the clothing is scrutinized for how wearable it is, the artistic influence behind it, and its aesthetic appeal, at the Red Dress Show, the focus was on spreading awareness about heart disease and on the celebrities who modeled the red dress as a symbol of women's struggle with the disease.

First Lady Laura Bush, a staunch supporter of the cause, was in the audience and

watched an eclectic group of celebrities, including Angela Bassett, Billie Jean King, Katharine McPhee, Kelly Ripa, Kim Cattrall, and Rachel Ray, model red dresses from the lines of noted designers like Oscar de la Renta, Calvin Klein, Diane von Furstenburg, Michael Kors, and Carmen



Angela Bassett

Marc Valvo.

Kim Cattrall began the show in a one shoulder strap Carolina Herrera frock. She appeared poised, which befitted her sophisticated gown, but other stars took their runway debut less seriously. Kelly Ripa, in a Diane von Furstenburg wrap dress, skipped down the runway, smiling and waving at the audi-

ence. Betsy Johnson, in a cocktail dress of her own creation, actually danced for photographers as they eagerly snapped pictures of her as she posed dramatically.

Tennis legend Billie Jean King came out in a Gustavo Cadile satin pantsuit while "Philadelphia Freedom," dedicated to her by Elton John,



Kelly Ripa

played in the background. "American Idol" runner up Katherine McPhee wore a short Swarovski v-neck dress. Camille Belle, a young actress, was dressed by Oscar de La Renta in a bubble dress with a front bow.

In Sass & Bide and Rock & Republic, the star power didn't shine as bright, but the clothing made up for it since metallic,

sequins, and other bright materials were used. On Saturday night, February 3, Sidney Designer showed a series of sequined vests and biker jackets paired with skinny jeans. Her mini dresses were worn with opaque tights to keep the trend appropriate for winter.

The collection featured



Katherine McPhee

wearable clothing for the young trendy consumer. "I loved it," said Mr. Jay, a judge on "America's Next Top Model." "I adore the girls and love what they do. You can leave their clothes on a hanger and get an idea how the clothing can look and feel on a body. It has hanger appeal- it makes you want to try it on. Young girls can wear it and make it look fun and

sexy." Mr. Jay's favorite looks were the velvets and a sequined vest worn over a cotton jersey dress.

Later on in the evening a rock and roll theme unified Rock & Republic's line, which featured over 70 looks. The majority of the pants, which were done in silver and gold, were too gaudy to wear, but the jeans will be a best seller next fall. "I liked a lot of the jeans that they showed, but wasn't so impressed by the embellishments that they had like the fur and rhinestones," said Anne Harris, a Fashion Week attendee.

There were a series of other notable looks, a product of the label trying to expand beyond its signature jeans. Jackets with fur trim had a lux appeal, belts featured big buckles and heels were sky high and covered in sequins. Dresses ranged from black minis with studded accents to long and sheer gowns with an ethereal quality. "I thought that it was similar to Sass & Bide in that they both had bright shiny metallic clothes," said Harris.

## The Wackiest Beauty Inventions and Trends of 2006

BY SARA LEVIT

Remember Biore nose strips? You know the masking tape that you stuck onto your nose in the hopes of extracting black heads while really all you were doing was leaving your pores open to become even more clogged? Every year the beauty industry rakes in \$160 billion internationally with some truly innovative products that gloss the hair, refine lines and rid the body of unwanted hair. While consumers buy into many of them, hoping to improve some flaw or another, some products seem just a little too wacky to stand up to the test of time. Here are some of the strangest beauty breakthroughs and trends of 2006.



1. Clip on Teeth- As if society isn't already obsessed enough with celebrity culture, Hollywood wannabes can now wear a replica of their favorite star's pearly whites. Yes, that's right; you can now wear removable false teeth to mimic the look of someone else's false teeth. Dr. Mac Leichtung, the New York dentist who invented the dentures, decided that people shouldn't have to wait for old age to stock their bathroom cabinets with Pollygrip.

Personal rating: Gross! I don't even know how this became a craze!



2. The Hug Shirt- This futuristic piece of clothing by CuteCircuit imitates the cuddle of a friend, family member, or anyone else prone to give you a warm embrace every once in a while. Thanks to Bluetooth technology, hugs can be sent wirelessly via cell phone to the hug shirt by supplying all the information necessary to replicate a person's unique squeeze. His or her body temperature, pressure, heartbeat, and the length of the hug are provided. This product is not yet available in stores.

Personal rating: Everything about this is, including the company name, is sappy.



3. The Sphere Macro React tennis dress- Nike created a sports garment to aid in the discomfort of perspiration. The fish-like scales on the back of the dress swing open and closed releasing heat and moisture to the air. The light mesh lining blocks the polyester-spandex material so that it doesn't stick to your skin. Tennis Pro Maria Sharapova wore the dress to the 2006 U.S. Open. Tennis shirts start at \$60 and crew shirts are \$45.

Personal rating: Fish scales? While this sounds somewhat useful, I can't help but wonder whether a plain old hole in the back of the dress would do the same thing. But then again, I don't play tennis so who am I to judge.



4. Air Kiss: Lipstick post it notes- You may have seen lip gloss rings. Now makeup guru Paula Dorf has created a new quick fix in cosmetics. Each post it sheet contains a pair of lips with pre-applied color. You tear the sheet from the pad and peel the plastic off. Then you fold the sheet in half and blot your lips on it. Personally, I find the post it note to be an ingenious invention in itself. These are available at Sephora for \$24.

Personal rating: It sounds like a whole lot of hoopla. Unless you find yourself frustrated with your good old fashioned lipstick and find yourself saying, "dear me, this tube is just so hard to open and smear on my lips" I don't see the need in having lipstick which runs out after one use on crumbly paper.



5. MBT Sneakers- These Masai Barefoot Technology sneakers, invented by Swiss engineer Karl Muller, were originally intended to cure back, knee and Achilles tendon problems. When Muller realized that backaches are virtually non-existent within the Masai tribes of East Africa, he related the phenomenon to the lack of shoes and hard walking surfaces in the region. The multi-layered sole and the curving base of the sneaker forces your muscles to contract by mimicking the sensation of walking barefoot on uneven terrain. When Bliss Spa cleverly decided to refer to the product as "anti-cellulite sneakers" sales skyrocketed.

Personal rating: While I've read many mixed reports on the toning factor, the general consensus on back relief seems positive. Word is that supermodels Giselle Bndchen and Heidi Klum each have a pair. I'm intrigued.

Credits: www.time.com

# WISCONSIN SPORTS

## Keeping Busy During the Off Season

BY NOAH FALKENSTEIN AND ALANA RUBENSTEIN

With Pitchers and Catchers only a week or so away, baseball season is almost beginning. Though the players haven't taken the field in almost six months, the front offices of Major League baseball teams have been busy acquiring new players, trading old ones and making sure everyone is ready for the 2007 season. The Yankees are no different, and Brian Cashman, general manager of the team, has been working hard to present a championship worthy team to the city of New York.

Soon after their devastating loss to the Detroit Tigers last October, the Yankees said goodbye to veteran right fielder, Gary Sheffield. The 38-year old had been out for most of the 2006 season with a wrist injury, forcing the Yankees to acquire Bobby Abreu from the Philadelphia Phillies. Therefore, it was no surprise when Sheffield was traded to the Detroit Tigers for three young pitching prospects including Humberto Sanchez. Sanchez, who is 23, is coming off of a 10-6 season in the Tigers farm system with an impressive ERA of 2.53 and 129 strikeouts in 123 innings. Kevin Whelan is only

22, but he already has impressive numbers boasting a 4-1 record with a 2.67 ERA and 27 saves for the Tigers minor league affiliate. Anthony Claggett, also 22, is 7-2 with a 0.91 ERA and 14 saves.

Another thing on the Yankees agenda was to retool the farm



Andy Pettitte

system. In the last few years the Yankees starting pitchers have been noticeably older than the rest of the league, as Cashman and George Steinbrenner went after big names instead of younger raw talent. The most notorious change is the exchange of Randy Johnson, aka the cancer of the Yankees locker room, for three pitchers and a shortstop. When the Yankees first acquired Johnson in 2004, New York Yankees fans were convinced a championship was on the way. Instead, the 43-year-old Johnson

spent two seasons performing below par, most noticeably in the playoffs where he has never had a win in pinstripes.

Hopefully the new acquisitions will have different luck. Luis Vizcaino, 32, could offer some immediate help to the Yankees bullpen. Ross Ohlendorf, a 25-year-old graduate of Princeton University, and Steven Jackson, 24, are both young and exciting pitchers who will hopefully contribute a lot to the team.

Next to go was Jaret Wright, who was sent packing to Baltimore for pitcher Chris Britton. Though he will probably not begin the season with the big club, Britton gives the Yankees a nice insurance card in case last seasons injury bug continues.

There are new editions to the probable starting rotation though. Andy Pettitte is a Yankee again after agreeing to a one-year \$16 million contract with a player's option for 2008. Pettitte is returning to the team after a three season hiatus in which he went to play for the Houston Astros and helped them win the National League Championship Series in 2004. The 35-year-old left-handed pitcher was 14-13 last year with a 4.20 ERA.

Another pitcher acquired by

the Yankees is Kei Igawa. This will not only be his first run with the Yankees organization, but with Major League Baseball as well. Also a left-handed pitcher, the 27-year-old comes to America after playing with the Hanshin Tigers for eight seasons. Igawa, who Cashman described as being,



Kei Igawa

“not a blower and he's not a soft tosser,” signed a five year \$20 million contract.

The remaining spots on the roster belong to Chien-Ming Wang and Mike Mussina, who signed a two-year contract. The fifth spot will probably go to Carl Pavano, assuming he stays healthy.

Another player unsure of his status on the Yankees is Bernie Williams. Williams, one of the most beloved players of all time, has been playing for the Yankees for 16 seasons. Yet, in recent years he has been relegated to a

more reduced role. Though he is already 38, Williams wants to play at least another season, preferably with the Yankees. But, the team has yet to offer him a contract. He was just recently invited to join the Yankees for Spring Training, an invitation that comes with no strings and no guarantee of a position on the team.

Rounding out the changes are the acquisition of Doug Mientkiewicz and the promoting of Don Mattingly from hitting coach to bench coach. Mientkiewicz is a first baseman and was signed for one year. This will allow Jason Giambi, who has been playing first base despite obvious deficiencies, to primarily be the designated hitter, making even less room for Williams on the roster. Kevin Long was named the new hitting coach.

Despite all the changes on the team, one thing is certain. Yankees fans will still flock to the Bronx come April 2 to watch their favorite team take the field for another season and another run at a championship. Uncertain though is whether the stadium will still be filled once October comes around, the only way to measure if Cashman's efforts were worth the time.

### New York Yankees Spring Training Schedule

Mar. '07	OPPONENT	TIME (ET)	LOCATION
Thu. 1	Minnesota	1:15 PM	Tampa
Fri. 2	at Tampa Bay	2:05 PM	St. Petersburg
Sat. 3	Pittsburgh	1:15 PM	Tampa
Sun. 4	at Philadelphia	1:05 PM	Clearwater
Mon. 5	Detroit	1:15 PM	Tampa
Tue. 6	at Cleveland	1:05 PM	Winter Haven
Wed. 7	Cincinnati	7:15 PM	Tampa
Thu. 8	at Atlanta	1:05 PM	Kissimmee
Fri. 9	Tampa Bay	7:15 PM	Tampa
Sat. 10	at Pittsburgh	1:05 PM	Bradenton
Sun. 11	Cleveland	1:15 PM	Tampa
Mon. 12	at Boston	7:05 PM	Fort Myers
Tue. 13	Cincinnati	7:15 PM	Tampa
Wed. 14	Minnesota	7:15 PM	Tampa
Thu. 15	Atlanta	7:15 PM	Tampa
Fri. 16	at Houston	1:05 PM	Kissimmee
Sat. 17	at Philadelphia	1:05 PM	Clearwater
Sun. 18	Pittsburgh	1:15 PM	Tampa
Mon. 19	at Toronto	1:05 PM	Dunedin
Tue. 20	Philadelphia	7:15 PM	Tampa
Thu. 22	at Cincinnati	1:05 PM	Sarasota
Fri. 23	at Pittsburgh	1:05 PM	Bradenton
Sat. 24	Toronto	1:15 PM	Tampa
Sun. 25	at Detroit	1:05 PM	Lakeland
Mon. 26	Philadelphia	1:15 PM	Tampa
Tue. 27	at Minnesota	1:05 PM	Fort Myers
Wed. 28	Houston	7:15 PM	Tampa
Thu. 29	at Toronto	1:05 PM	Dunedin
Fri. 30	at Detroit	1:05 PM	Lakeland
Sat. 31	Detroit	1:15 PM	Tampa
Sat. 31	at Tampa Bay	1:05 PM	St. Petersburg

### New York Mets Spring Training Schedule

Mar. '07	OPPONENT	TIME (ET)	LOCATION
Thu. 1	St. Louis	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Fri. 2	at St. Louis	1:05 PM	Jupiter
Sat. 3	LA Dodgers	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Sun. 4	at Baltimore	1:05 PM	Ft. Lauderdale
Mon. 5	Cleveland	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Tue. 6	at Houston	1:05 PM	Kissimmee
Wed. 7	at Boston	1:05 PM	Fort Myers
Thu. 8	Baltimore	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Fri. 9	Detroit	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Sat. 10	at Washington	1:05 PM	Melbourne
Sun. 11	at Detroit	1:05 PM	Lakeland
Sun. 11	Florida	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Mon. 12	at Washington	1:05 PM	Melbourne
Tue. 13	at Cleveland	1:05 PM	Winter Haven
Wed. 14	at Detroit	1:05 PM	Lakeland
Thu. 15	Boston	7:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Fri. 16	at Florida	7:05 PM	Jupiter
Sat. 17	at Baltimore	1:05 PM	Ft. Lauderdale
Sat. 17	Washington	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Sun. 18	at St. Louis	1:05 PM	Jupiter
Tue. 20	Baltimore	7:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Wed. 21	at LA Dodgers	7:05 PM	Vero Beach
Thu. 22	at Atlanta	1:05 PM	Kissimmee
Fri. 23	St. Louis	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Sat. 24	Baltimore	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Sat. 24	at Florida	1:05 PM	Jupiter
Sun. 25	Houston	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Mon. 26	LA Dodgers	7:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Tue. 27	at Washington	7:05 PM	Melbourne
Wed. 28	Atlanta	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie
Thu. 29	at LA Dodgers	1:05 PM	Vero Beach
Fri. 30	Florida	1:10 PM	Port St. Lucie

## Artificial Blood

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mined since a deadly reaction may occur if the wrong blood type is given. There are viruses, like HIV and hepatitis that can infect the patient if contaminated blood is given. The amount of people who need blood today outnumbers those who choose to donate blood, and there is currently a blood shortage.

Due to these challenges, researchers have been developing blood substitutes that can carry oxygen when a person's red blood cells are unable to do so. These blood substitutes can be sterilized to kill infections, and can be given to patients regardless of their blood type. They may have a shelf life of more than a year and do not need to be refrigerated.

There are two classes of artificial blood: hemoglobin based oxygen carriers (HBOCs) and perfluorocarbons (PFCs). While the two differ in their chemical structures, HBOCs and PFCs use the same method of passive diffusion. HBOCs are dark red and made from a variety of hemoglobin sources, such as human RBCs, RBCs from cow blood,



and genetically modified bacteria that can produce hemoglobin. Hemoglobin breaks down without the protection of a red blood cell's membrane, so the hemoglobin needs to be modified into a stronger form before it can be used as a HBOC. Once injected into the patient, the HBOC molecule works like a regular red blood cell; floating in the blood's plasma and transporting oxygen to capillary networks within the body. While the HBOC's small size allows it to fit well into damaged areas,

it also has a negative effect. The small size allows the HBOC to fit into the small spaces between cells and bond to nitric oxide. Since nitric oxide is important in regulated blood pressure, it can rise dangerously when the HBOC bonds to it.

PFCs are chemically inert molecules consisting of fluorine and hydrogen. They are able to transport more gas than either water or blood plasma alone. PFCs are suspended in a liquid and are usually mixed with other drugs. The liquid suspension is eventually removed from the body by the liver and kidneys, and the lungs exhale the PFCs.

While artificial blood seems

like a great solution to the problems associated with real blood, it has been at the center of some controversies. For example, the first HBOC tested on humans in the United States, HemAssist, was rejected after more patients who received the substitute died than those who received real blood. Another source of controversy surrounding artificial blood involved the studies done on a blood substitute called PolyHeme. Critics have claimed that the studies done on this HBOC were done without the proper education of patients, resulting in the violation of medical ethics.

In spite of the controversies that arise with blood substitutes, their use may soon become widespread. HBOCs and PFCs are



being developed to look more like blood and to carry some of the enzymes and antioxidants present in real blood.

## Survivor

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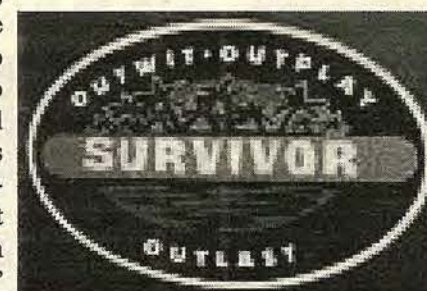
had been changed to improve the game and to make it easier for people to locate and kill their victims. Each player was given their victim's name, in addition to their dorm location on campus, which logistically made it easier for people to find their assigned victims. If they didn't know who the person was, they were able to go to their rooms to try to kill them. "It was kind of stalk-erish, but much smarter," noted Melissa Srolovits (SCW '08). "Last year, I had no idea who my person was and I had no way of finding her, so giving out room numbers this time was really convenient."

The game culminated in a dinner held in the Koch Auditorium on Monday night, February 5. Over 100 students were in attendance, and "people had a great time enjoying a night with their friends," reported Shelton. There was survivor-themed food served, and KanKan, the SCW band, performed for everyone. Prizes were awarded to the three people who had killed the most victims.

The top prize of two orchestra seat tickets to any Broadway show was awarded to Aviva Berkovitch (SCW '08) for having

killed a grand total of eight people. The second place winner was Adina Tepper (SCW '09), who had seven victims and won a brand new Ipod shuffle. In third place was Arianne Thaler (SSSB '09), who killed three people and received a SCW fleece blanket.

Though the excellent prizes awarded to the top three assassins were enough incentive for want-



ing to play the game, many SCW students participated because it was both amusing to partake in and enter-

taining to watch others get involved. "I just love this game," said Srolovits. "People get so into it and it's really fun to kill people, especially if it's someone you know."

Rena Wiesen, secretary of SCWSC, agreed. "So many people really got into and had so much fun playing," she commented. "There were some amazing strategies going on in the Brookdale halls." Shelton echoed that sentiment, calling the game "intense." She was extremely pleased that Survivor generated so much enthusiasm and student involvement on campus, and hopes that it will become a fixed annual tradition at SCW.

## Winter Got You Down? It may be SAD

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causing symptoms of depression. Another theory is that SAD is caused by a low amount of melatonin, a hormone produced in the pineal gland, which regulates sleep-wake cycles. Studies show that mice that are incapable of synthesizing melatonin express behaviors consistent with depression.

There are various treatments for SAD, including light therapy, exercise, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) and psychotherapy. Light therapy consists of exposure to a light source that mimics the brightness of daylight (10,000 lux). These lights are available on the market. The amount of time it takes to alleviate symptoms depends on the individual, though 30 minutes of exposure, which forces the body to produce serotonin, a day is usually sufficient to treat mild SAD. This treatment is usually continued until the early spring when the days become

longer. Exercise, especially outdoors, is also recommended as a treatment for mild SAD. It may improve energy levels, aid in appetite control and enhance serotonin production.



A light box can be used as treatment for Seasonal Affect Disorder

For more severe forms of SAD, a psychiatrist may prescribe SSRIs such as Prozac and Zoloft. These drugs prevent the reuptake of serotonin, elevating

levels of serotonin in the bloodstream. Finally, psychotherapy may provide help for depressed individuals by teaching them how to identify negative thoughts and challenge them to create a more constructive inner dialogue.

Though it is normal to experience a lack of energy, increased appetite and an increased need for sleep during the winter months, it is important to recognize that these symptoms, if severe enough, may be a form of SAD. SAD can impact negatively on relationships, families and jobs, but with simple treatments such as light therapy, exercise, SSRIs and psychotherapy, the winter months may not seem as dark as they used to.

## Kidney Stones

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contains. Studies show that if a person gains a significant amount of weight after they turn about 20, the chances of developing kidney stones is increased. If a significant amount of weight is then lost, the chances don't decrease. An increase in a person's lean body mass, body mass index, waist circumference, or hip circumference all lead to an increase in the risk of having kidney stones form at some point in the person's life.

In order for a doctor to determine if a patient has kidney stones, a few procedures can be done. Blood and urine tests can be performed to find out what is in each liquid. This allows doctors to see if the kidneys are

working correctly. In order to see if a stone is actually in the body, either a computed tomography scan or an ultrasound test can

be done. Once the kidney stone has been detected, one of three things can be done to remove it from the body. A person can either wait for the stone to pass, which can

very painful, have surgery to remove the stone, or undergo shock wave lithotripsy, which is a noninvasive way to dissolve the stone so that it can be removed from the body.



# KanKan

# New Yeshiva University Exhibit

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is versatile.

O: How do you prepare for a performance?

Z: By trying on my costumes in front of the mirror and balancing water bottles on my head.

L: We prepare as last minute as possible.

O: How does creativity fit into Judaism and/or a Jewish lifestyle?

L: Jewish art and music tend to be jovial as opposed to other religious art where suffering is the focus. You can really feel the positive energy in Jewish Folk

Art and Klezmer tunes.

Z: There is no Judaism without creativity—they are inseparable. If not for the creative minds of the *Tanaim* (Rabbis in the time of the *mishnah*) and *amoraim* (Rabbis in the time of the Talmud), we wouldn't have the Talmud, hence Judaism. Regarding artistic creativity, I feel that a person who is passionate about G-d cannot help being a troubled and ecstatic human being... inevitably; creativity will shine though that person, perhaps as an imitation of G-d.

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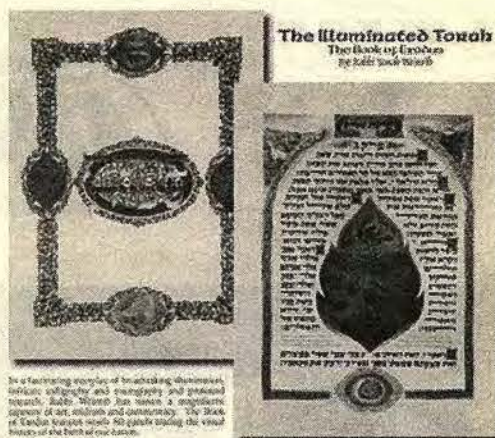
for the Jews in the desert, which were encased by a layer of dew on top and on bottom, is the reason why two loaves of bread are covered on *Shabbat*.

In what may possibly be the most inspirational manuscript, Rabbi Weinrib depicts the *beit hamikdash* (Holy Temple) with a pair of *tefillin* (phylacteries) hovering above it. This simple illustration establishes a link between the *beit hamikdash* and *tefillin*, conveying a profound message. The *beit hamikdash* was a storehouse for G-d's holiness on earth and a resting place for the divine presence. Just as G-d elevates the world with his presence, man can "elevate himself by adorning himself with *tefillin*," according

to the artist. Appropriately bordering this illustration is the micrographic text of the four texts traditionally contained

true masterpiece. His use of bold colors and vivid illuminations reveals the depths of the Torah to the viewer, creating a truly uplifting experience.

"The Illuminated Torah: Rabbi Yonah Weinrib" will be displayed at the Yeshiva University's Museum until May 20, 2007. The museum, located at the Center for Jewish History at 15 W. 16<sup>th</sup> 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.



In a fascinating story of an arching, illuminated, intricate, colorful and complex and profound Torah, Rabbi Yonah Weinrib reveals a significant aspect of the Jewish and Christian. The Book of Exodus depicts the Beit Hamikdash, the visual focus of the book of our lives.

inside the black boxes of *tefillin*.

Rabbi Weinrib's creations, which meticulously infuse a number of artistic mediums including watercolor and acrylic paint, are the beginning of what will be a

## Sephardic Film Festival

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films was "Shalosh Imahot" (Three Mothers), the winner of the 2006 Jerusalem International Film Festival and a nominee for Best Picture at the Israeli Academy Awards.



Jerusalem Post Reporter Hannah Brown revealed that "Zvi-Riklis' mother was part of a set of Egyptian-born triplets," who were a likely inspiration behind the film.

Starring one of Israel's most acclaimed actresses, Gilia Almagor, the film attracted many viewers at the festival, selling out at both of its viewings at the Center for Jewish History. Viewing the film was an appropriate way to kick off the festival because of the way it portrays a *Sephardic* family's journey from Egypt to modern Israel and their integration into Israeli culture.

"Shalosh Imahot" tells the story of Yasmin, Rose and Flora, triplets who were born into a wealthy Egyptian-Jewish family and blessed in person by King Farouk. 60 years later, the three sisters live alone together in an apartment in Israel. Each sister has a story. Yasmine is in urgent need of a kidney transplant, Rose, a once popular singer, is dreaming of returning to stardom, and Flora is a retired midwife. Their lives are burdened by lies and by secrets of their past, all of which are exposed throughout the course of the movie.

In an interview with a British newspaper, Israeli director Dina Zvi-Riklas described the film by saying, "fractured images and memories were woven together with fictional materials to create a story that recounts a winding, emotionally charged relationship between three sisters who stuck together and sacrificed their husbands and children for their love for each other, because they had no other way." The Israeli director integrated various multimedia effects in order to contribute to the reality of the heart-breaking story.



Something Sweet

Aside from "Shalosh Imahot," documentaries including "Shalom Asmara," the untold story of the Jews of Eritrea, Africa, and "Jews of Iran", an exposure of Iranian Jewry were shown.

The romantic films featured included "Something Sweet," a story about a love triangle between a Jewish-Moroccan pastry chef, her younger sister, and a French bachelor, and "Gorgeous," the story of the misadventures of four sassy women living in Paris who are bound by both their friendship and Moroccan-Sephardic heritage.

## The Green Elixir of Life

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do with the fact that, as mentioned previously, green tea is currently the most-consumed beverage in Japan. In Japan the tea is treasured for its antioxidant and antithrombotic (the ability to prevent clots from forming in the blood) properties. Significant research suggests that flavonoids, abundant in green tea and in other foods such as wine and chocolate, may protect against atherosclerosis (the hardening of the arteries), partly by fighting the effects of damaging free radicals linked to the onset of heart disease, stroke and several other diseases. The team found that the number of cups of green tea consumed daily did not affect the risk or severity of coronary artery disease. However, people who drank at least one cup of green tea per day were 42% less likely to have a heart attack than people who did not drink green tea.

In a study published in the "American Journal of Clinical Nutrition," it was found that green tea extract consumption resulted in a significant increase in metabolism and had a significant effect on fat oxidation. An increase in metabolic rate causes the body to burn more calories at rest than it would otherwise. The researchers confirmed that this increase in metabolic rate was not due to the caffeine content of green tea. When the same amount of caffeine as was in the green tea was administered alone, it failed

to change patients' metabolic rates. This led researchers to believe that an interaction was taking place with the active ingredients of green tea, promoting an increase in metabolism and fat oxidation. A 4% overall increase in 24-hour energy expenditure was attributed to the green tea extract. However, the research found that the extra expenditure took place during the



daytime. Through calculations, the researchers concluded that this 4% overall increase in energy expenditure due to the green tea translated to a 35-43% increase in the body's daytime thermogenesis. No side effects were noted during the study, as one would find with most weight loss drugs.

A study presented in the "BMC Clinical Pharmacology" journal found that green tea might help in preventing type 2 diabetes. The study provided evidence of improvement in glucose metabolism in diabetic mice and healthy humans upon green tea consumption. It promoted glucose metabolism in healthy human volunteers and lowered

blood glucose levels in diabetic mice. The researchers concluded that green tea has an antidiabetic effect.

It should be noted that several complications with high green tea consumption have been found. Women who drink large amounts of green tea around the time they conceive and early in their pregnancy may have an increased risk of having a child with spina bifida or other neural tube disorders. Taking folic acid supplements can help to protect against spina bifida. However, large amounts of green tea can actually decrease the effectiveness of folic acid. Also, some believe the high fluoride content in tea can have a negative impact on one's health, especially for thyroid patients. If either of these situations apply to you, it is best that you talk to your doctor before consuming large amounts of green tea.

Green tea has numerous health benefits. It also tastes great and is a healthy low calorie alternative to the many sweet and sugary beverages on the market today. It comes in a wide variety of flavors, including mint, orange, roasted rice, super-antioxidant, decaffeinated and more. So, please, raise a glass of green tea to your health.

“ישתדל אדם להתפלל בבית כנסת עם הציבור”

*“A person should strive to pray with a congregation”*

—Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 90:9—

Join  for a Weekly

# Mincha Minyan

Wednesdays at 2:40 pm

Koch Auditorium

Beginning February 21

Special shiur to follow kickoff mincha:

**“THE UNIQUE VALUE OF  
TEFILLAH B'TZIBBUR FOR WOMEN”**

By SCW Mashgiach Ruchani:

Rabbi Shlomo Hochberg

Many thanks to the male faculty and administrators participating!