

THE BRIDGE

October/November/December 2006

DEDICATED TO KEEPING OPEN HAGESHER THAT JOINS US WITH OUR FAMILIES IN ISRAEL • PARENTS OF NORTH AMERICAN ISRAELIS

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~and more!~

*Kotel soldier guarding the eternal flame
by Jack Hazut, www.israelimage.com*



EDITOR'S NOTE

As I ready this memo for *The Bridge's* September deadline, two months before you read it, I remind myself that this issue heralds the arrival of autumn. In the East, especially, the brilliant autumnal colors of October dim memories of the warm, sunny days spent at the beach, in the mountains or on tour, memories now filed under "Summer '06." In autumn, the tempo picks up and the lazy, hazy days of summer no longer serve as an excuse for idleness. And significant of nothing, did you know that in Hebrew the word for autumn is Stav, which is the name of my July-born grandson? Go figure.

On a more sober note, a dark shadow was cast over summer '06 for many Israelis and families of Israelis. On a personal level, for my family it has been the worst of times, as we still try to come to grips with the loss of our Israeli son, Larry, in May. Larry's all too brief life gave special meaning to Israel for us and to all who knew him. As a sabra friend wrote, "his honesty, integrity, modesty, Zionism, his integration into Israel, his knowledge and love of the country amazed me afresh every time." Tragically, ours is only one of many, many families who have had to bid a last farewell to their beloved Israeli sons — young beautiful Israeli men whose lives came to an abrupt end while courageously defending their country in the recent brutal war in Lebanon. We grieve, too, for the innocent bystanders of every age, who were the unfortunate victims of katyushas that also destroyed cities, homes, and forests in their wake. Larry's youngest son, the same Stav, has been through the hell of this war in Lebanon from its beginning, another nightmare for us that some of you, I know, have also experienced in your family. Everyday, when I spoke to my two older grandchildren in the Galilee, as the katyushas fell, they were heading out to attend a funeral or to visit a house of shiva for a friend, or the brother or uncle of a friend. It is all so chilling, so heartbreaking, so endless. As I write, the cease fire is still holding in the war with Hezbollah (spell that I-r-a-n). I hope it is still true when you read this.

And so we forge ahead.

In these darkest of days, please know that the light that shined brightest for all in my family, and warmed our hearts, came from you. Your ongoing expressions of sympathy, love, and concern were and are deeply appreciated. I have always referred to PNAI as family, and in our recent sorrow there were none more supportive than you — PNAI-niks from every state and in Israel. Thanks for the many, many notes and cards of condolence, the emails and calls to me in Israel. To our president, Rena Safer, and her husband, Fred, who visited us at the Rambam Hospital in Haifa, and my dear friend, Mila Raclaw, from the Philadelphia Chapter, who also traveled north with her son to attend the service for Larry, my heartfelt thanks. Our gratitude to all of you for the outpouring of gifts in celebration of Larry's life to many organizations, and especially to NA'AMAT's Spiritual Adoption Fund. Thanks, too, to Judy Baker who suggested the latter in recognition of my work for this cause that's been a meaningful part of my life. Also, *toda raba* to those of you who planted trees, so desperately needed now to replace the reported 750,000 destroyed by forest fires that were sparked by the rocket attacks in this war. Trees have a special significance in our family. A poem by Nathan Zach, a famous Israeli poet, was quoted in a eulogy to my son. It begins, "Because a man is like a tree, like a tree he aspires high." Like his olive trees and the citrus that he tended with such love, our Larry's roots grew deep in his beloved Eretz, The Land, his home of thirty-five years.

In this new season let us rededicate ourselves to PNAI and to support for Israel and all Israelis in their time of need, and may this autumn (Stav) come to symbolize another beginning. . . the beginning of peace.

B'Shalom

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by Rena Safer

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

classes, and a myriad of meetings since then, and I can quite honestly say that I am really looking forward to our next convention in October 2007.

There is something special about being with other PNAIers, even when we are not talking about our children in Israel. Several of you have discussed this with me during the past year. Some have likened it to a feeling of family. Some have expressed it as a feeling of comfort in knowing the other person understands what you are feeling even if you don't actually speak your feelings.

Certainly our conventions have this underlying feeling. However, we go for the combined reasons that these PNAI national conventions are *fun* and *educational*, and give us a chance to see our families. I hope that many of you will put this on your 2007 calendar now and plan to join us then.

As I travel to other cities for personal reasons, I try to visit PNAI chapters when I can. It gives me a chance to stay in touch with our members. *The Bridge* is another way to stay in touch on a national level. We want to hear about your chapters, and we would like to read things your children and grandchildren have written about their lives in Israel. Please send us your articles and your pictures. They are much more meaningful than reading reprints from other media.

Elsewhere in this issue you will find information about our arrangements with Israil for a third bag. I hope that those of you in the New York area will be able to take advantage of this opportunity.

This is the time of the year when our thoughts turn inward and upward, when we reflect upon the year that has been and burnish our hopes for the year to come. Fred and I wish you and your loved ones a year of peace, good health, and fulfillment.

SPECIAL DEAL NOW ON ISRAIR

Israil Airlines has agreed to grant PNAI members the privilege of taking a third piece of luggage on trips to Israel. This is a six-month trial plan that will be reviewed at the end of that time.

The following guidelines must be strictly followed if you wish the third bag privilege:

- * The reservation must be made through the Israil New York Reservation Center (516-593-1785). This deal is not available on tickets booked through the Internet or a travel agent. You must tell the reservation agent that you are a PNAI member and are requesting the third bag privilege.
- * Reservations for the trip to Israel must be in H class of service or higher. The deal is not available for travel to Israel in N service class. Return tickets from Israel may be in N class if seats are available.
- * This privilege is for adult passengers only, and is only good on the trip to Israel, not the return trip.

This is great news for our members in the New York area, and we thank Israil for their consideration.

In these troubled times for Israel, let me begin by saying that I hope all of your loved ones are safe and healthy. Our prayers are for peace. Once again Israel is badly in need of our support and our presence. We often write on invitations "your presence, not your presents," but I think Israel would benefit from both.

People often complain that they can never reach me because I am always at meetings. It is true that I do attend a lot of meetings, conferences, classes and conventions. I have been doing so since I was a teenager. I have chaired my fair share of these events and been on the planning committees for many, many more. One of the most interesting and fulfilling of these was the 2003 PNAI convention at Nof Ginosar.

To begin with, there were people from across the United States and Canada. It wasn't the same old-same old, the people I am always meeting with locally. It was also a chance to catch up with old friends from elsewhere and to make some new friends. It was large enough that there were lots of people whom I had never met, and small enough that I never felt lost in the crowd. The feeling was relaxed (okay, maybe we rushed attendees a bit with the programming), not tense with politicking and egos, and everyone seemed friendly toward everyone else.

I have attended several conventions, quite a few conferences and



THE BRIDGE

A letter was mailed by a PNAI member to the membership at large regarding the insurance for foreign travel.

The contents of this letter are erroneous. Legislation has recently been passed in the following states of California, Florida, Colorado, Washington, Connecticut, and Georgia that *do not allow* insurers to decline or rate coverage with unfavorable terms based purely on foreign travel (this does not mean permanent residence).

Life insurance has been my profession for the last forty-five years. I am in the favorable position of having friends and colleagues in virtually every state in the nation. I would be happy to assist with new and additional coverage that does not exclude visits to Israel.

Norman Sarkin
normansarkin@yahoo.com
1-800-359-2786 ext. 116

Many of us recognize the importance of the Internet as the new battleground for Israel's image. It's time to do it

better, and coordinate our online efforts on behalf of Israel. An Israeli software company has developed a free, safe, and useful tool for us — the Internet Megaphone.

Go to <http://www.giyus.org> to download the Megaphone and receive daily updates with instant links to important Internet polls, problematic articles that require a talk back, etc.

We need 100,000 Megaphone users to make a difference. So, please distribute this to all Israel's supporters.

Do it now. For Israel.

*Amir Gissin, Director
Public Affairs (Hasbara)
Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
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amirg@mfa.gov.il*

During the thirty-three days of the war in Lebanon, we were able to send out over 20,000 packages to combat soldiers fighting in Lebanon and in Gaza. Most of the soldiers were called suddenly to their units and had very little time to

prepare properly. The packages that your generosity helped us prepare were warmly received by the soldiers.

Although there is a heat wave in Jerusalem this week, it is the time of the year that we turn our attention to sending out our winter packages. They will include a fleece jacket, a t-shirt, long underwear, boxer shorts, anti-fungal stockings, ski hat, a pair of gloves, energy bars, hard candy, cookies, chips, chewing gum, a toothbrush, toothpaste, mouthwash, dental floss, deodorant, shampoo, soap, medicated hand cream, and letters of support and encouragement written in English, Russian, Hebrew, and Amharic.

I want to wish you and your family a very happy, healthy, and peaceful New Year and once again thank you for your participation in helping us to provide morale boosts for our brave combat soldiers.

*Barbara Bloom Silverman, Founder
A Package From Home
<http://www.apackagefromhome.org>*

The Bridge is unable to answer or print all letters, and letters may be edited. For submission requirements, see pages 8 and 23.

CHAPTER NEWS: INFORMATION AND UPDATES FROM PNAI CHAPTERS ACROSS NORTH AMERICA

CHICAGO

This chapter had two meetings in August 2006. A busload of people were brought to the gambling casino in Hammond, Indiana for a lovely day, even if you didn't win. The second outing was an evening at the theater to see the play entitled "Hard Love" by Motti Lerner, an Israeli author, that all enjoyed.

MICHIGAN

The Michigan chapter reports that they are alive and well with the August 13, 2006 program given by recent

olim. Hillel and Susie Rosenfeld are recent olim from Ramat Beit Shemesh. They spoke of how they made aliyah through Nefesh B'Nefesh and how they adjusted, as well as their views of the conditions in Israel and the experiences they are now going through.

MILWAUKEE

Members met for a June 2006 picnic where they said *shalom* to their community Shaliach of the three years, Alon Galron, as he and his family prepared to return to Israel. Four member of the Chicago chapter joined the

Milwaukee members for this picnic. Melvin Askot is the new chapter president.



(left to right) Along Galron, outgoing Shaliach; Moshe Katz, community activist; Fred Safer, outgoing president; Melvin Askot, incoming president.

NEW JERSEY/SIDNEY HIRSHHORN

On September 17, 2006 members met for bagels and conversation. The program was on Israel Now presented by a representative of the Israeli consulate.

NORTH TEXAS

Eight member enjoyed lunch at Stue's Place Restaurant at the August 6, 2006 meeting. The remaining members were missed. President Bob Rivin reports that members are currently voting on the next meeting date to be either in October or December.

PALM BEACH, FLORIDA

The Palm Beach chapter has been a viable part of PNAI for many years and while other chapters have lost membership and have had to disband, we have maintained over one hundred members. This chapter welcomes members of other chapters who have moved to our area and this has helped keep up the membership. For those who have moved to this area or whom vacation there, the chapter meets the third Sunday of the month at 1 p.m. at Temple Anshei Shalom on 7099 W. Atlantic Ave. in Delray Beach from October to April. Listings are in the local papers, so look for there. Good programs and collation keep our members attending the meetings, as well as meeting fellow PNAI members which may just be the best part of the meeting. Many new friends have been made at these meetings.

A chapter questioner was recently sent out to the membership about their families and how PNAI has helped them deal with the separation and other issues. Our bulletin editor, Larry Heyman, has done a wonderful job on this project.

PNAI FAMILY MEMBER IN THE NEWS

Karen Karp, granddaughter of Philadelphia chapter members Joanne and Bill Chertok, was one of the featured speakers at a July 23, 2006 pro-Israel rally in Los Angeles. Over 10,000 people attended the rally which featured speeches by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Rabbi Marvin Hier of Los Angeles' Simon Wiesenthal Center. Ms. Karp is twenty-one and is studying at Hebrew University.

Palm Beach chapter reports a major problem being the lack of new leadership. President Jules Schlesinger and Treasurer Albert Feldman are wearing many hats and doing most of the work. Since the meeting room is not free, finances are also a problem, as we do not do fundraising to compete with other organizations. Arlene Hersh has become Membership Vice President and is doing a great job.

PHOENIX

Guest speakers at the May 21, 2006 chapter meeting were Saul and Honey Yellin who gave a moving presentation of Saul's experience on the "Hatikvah"—the forth illegal ship that tried to bring survivors of the Shoa past the British blockade and into Palestine before Israeli independence. The book, entitled *Hatikvah: Song of Hope*, was written by Harriet Steur Yellin and is a fictionalized account of Saul's experiences (Saul & Harriet Yellin, 15835 N. 6th Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85023).

Saul had enlisted in the U.S. Navy at age seventeen. He was twenty-one when he was discharged from the Navy and asked to volunteer to take an illegal ship to Palestine. He boarded the ship that was to become the "Hatikvah" and the rest is history.

TUCSON

At the May 16, 2006 lunch meeting, members were excited to meet, hear from, and question the newest shaliach, Moshe Babel-Pour who moved to Tucson in August for three years with his wife and two children. Mr. Babel-Pour, who came to Israel at age ten with his family from Iran, lives in Tel Mond, a small town along the green line southeast of Netanya where he directed a nearby community center.

EASTERN REGIONAL PNAI CONFERENCE REPORT



(left to right) back row: Nancy and Stuart Schoenberg of Annapolis, Sol Freishtat, Philip Davidson, Howard Benn, Irene and Jim Churgin, Herman Taube

front row: Mona Freishtat, Rosanne Benn, Lorraine Davidson, Susan Taube (all of Washington chapter)

Coordinator, welcomed guests from Philadelphia; Washington, D.C; Annapolis, M.D.; New Jersey; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Judy Baker was extolled for her work as registrar, along with Jim Churgin and Hilda Jaffe as committee chairs. Friday night services followed, coordinated by Bill Chertok, our resident religious director. Two students from a Baltimore Day School were recruited to help with services and the Torah reading, but it was impressive to note the participation of many of the members. Rena Safer, PNAI National President spoke Friday night with ideas about the activities

The Eastern Regional PNAI Conference met from March 24-26, 2006. East met East to “Study The Past, Prepare For The Future — and Live Now. Forty-four PNAI members gathered at the beautiful camplike wooded setting of Pearlstone Retreat Center. Sharing experiences around the stone fireplace, walking around the grounds, enjoying meals together, and being stimulated at services and meetings, everyone established a feeling of camaraderie. The staff at the center was most congenial and with snacks and drinks made everyone feel welcome.

Appropriately, the activities began with a communal lighting of the Shabbat candles, and a Shabbat dinner, where Miriam Bedein, Chair, and Joanne Chertok,



Dancing to Al Machaya Klezmer band from left to right: Nita Quint, Rena Safer, Joan Polin

TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN: AACI AND PNAI

by Chana Givon

As a former member of Parents of North American Israelis (PNAI) and now as part of the Association of Americans and Canadians in Israel (AACI), it is with pleasure that I write about both organizations. I have experienced both, and they are two sides of the same coin

When both of my daughters and their families made aliyah from Los Angeles — one in 1988 and the other in 1993 — who could better understand my concerns than those who were in the same situation: PNAI members? We were united in pride and, at the same time, worried about the welfare of our children, their adjustment to a new country, the language, work prospects, and that yearning for more personal contact.

Trips to Israel brought us the joy of reconnecting with those whom we loved and the delight of re-acquaintance with grandchildren. Then, of course, the necessary parting was not as easy. Members of PNAI have that built-in understanding, and the friendships that developed within the group grew from that mutual feeling. Our need to understand the lives of our loved ones was also satisfied in part by having speakers attend our meetings to keep us informed all aspects of life in Israel.

When I decided to make aliyah just three years ago, my time schedule did not coincide with any group. I traveled on El Al — solo but not alone. The Los Angeles Jewish Federation had a representative who had prepared me well by contacting AACI prior to my leaving the United States.

When I arrived at Ben Gurion Airport, I came as an immigrant and was not heading for the familiar

‘Visitors’ line. Following directions, I noticed a tall man who was the AACI volunteer holding a sign. As I approached him, he smiled and said my name. This was a warm introduction to my new home; with a couple of others we were led through the initial steps and ‘shoehorned’ into life in Israel. Although I was fluent in Hebrew, I still needed help with official terms.

My first experience in Israel was such that I immediately became involved in the national AACI, as this was an opportunity for me to help others. I found a well-organized group of English-speaking professionals augmented by a cadre of volunteers with offices in Jerusalem, Haifa, Tel Aviv, Netanya, and Be’er Sheva.

The AACI not only extends pre-aliyah support but offers absorption and employment counseling and financial assistance, as well as lobbies for improved conditions in the quality of life. Cultural activities for English speakers include such programs as a July 4/Canada Day picnic, national memorial ceremony, Thanksgiving dinner, and clubs, lectures, outings, and entertainment. Volunteerism includes professionals who offer consultations in areas of their respective expertise, such as legal and tax information. The AACI has been instrumental in helping 120,000 former North Americans now living in Israel.

The fighting in Lebanon and northern Israel created an expanded need and the AACI once again rose to the occasion. A web page was created and updated daily, with useful emergency information. Host families desiring to help were matched with people in the north who needed to get away.

Assistance of various types was provided for those who turned to the

AACI for help. Senior members of the organization were contacted to check on their well being and see if any help was needed. Expanded outreach to those in the north is planned to deal with solutions to problems and post-war trauma.

While providing for the new reality, the AACI has continued to be available for the 650 new olim who arrived in Israel this past summer. Welcome fairs and meetings with invited representatives of banks and health funds have been conducted in cooperation with Nefesh B’Nefesh. It is obvious that the professional services provided by the AACI have made it a valuable organization for those making aliyah, thus it is important to their families in the United States and Canada.

In this regard the AACI would like to expand even more by encouraging the creation of a stronger link between its Israel organization and PNAI. This would be in the form of an overseas membership in AACI which would be designed to strengthen the ties between families on both sides of the ocean. On the Israeli side it would enable the continuity and broadening of fine programs. On the North American side it would provide families with an opportunity to feel more involved in the lives of their loved ones.

AACI invites PNAI members to join AACI as overseas members. For more information, email:

*info@aaci.org.il
or view <http://www.aaci.org.il>.*

Chana Givon lives in Jerusalem and is involved with many hasbara efforts since making aliyah in 2003. Contact her at:

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Thanks!!

Have a good vacation and enjoy *The Bridge* upon your return — we cannot make short-term address changes.

NATIONAL PNAI CONVENTION AT THE DEAD SEA

October 8-11, 2007



October 8-11, 2007

Shabbat extensions available for you and your guests.

Additional information forthcoming.

*Joanne and Bill Chertok
Co-Chairs,
2007 Convention*

Hum along, Chaverim.....
By the sea, by the sea
By the beautiful sea
You and I, you and I
Oh, How happy we'll be

As we bask in the sun
Dive into the pool
We're not going to fool
We'll relax in the spa
Enjoy a massage
Recoup lost energy
Revitalized, we'll be

We'll visit the deserts open spaces

and search for a beautiful oasis
We'll stimulate your mind,
you'll see
How invigorating study can be.

By the sea, by the sea
By the mineral sea.....
At the 2007 PNAI National Convention
At the luxurious Novotel
Thalassa Dead Sea Hotel



ADDING SOME TWISTS TO THANKSGIVING TRADITIONS

by Daphna Berman

*Reprinted with permission of
Haaretz Daily Newspaper, Anglo
File, November 25, 2005*

For the Safer family of Rehovot, celebrating Thanksgiving is a way to reconnect with the memories, tastes, and traditions of the "old country." Since immigrating from Boston seven years ago, they have made sure to have turkey with all the trimmings — stuffing, cranberry sauce, and sweet potatoes — each November. But they say it is difficult to celebrate it on Thursday, as in the United States, so like many American-Israeli families they merge the American holiday with the

Friday evening Shabbat meal.

"It's simply more convenient," admitted Hershel Safer, who celebrated Thanksgiving with his family last week — one week early. "We work during the week and getting everything prepared by Thursday isn't very practical."

"There's a lot to be thankful for," Safer added. "For starters, we live here and though a lot of people talk about coming, not everyone manages to do it."

Josie Arbel, director of absorption and co-executive director of Americans and Canadians in Israel (AACI), confirms the popularity of the schedule shift. "Many American

families who celebrate Thanksgiving actually do it on Friday, instead of Thursday," Arbel says.

Each year many Americans frequent Anglo-oriented supermarkets in search of elusive products such as fresh cranberries or canned sweet potato. Email lists are dotted with queries about where to find canned pumpkin or jellied cranberry sauce, while butchers recently began taking orders for what could be the only whole turkeys they will sell all year.

"About 25 people buy turkeys from us every year around this time," says Chaim Shoshani of the

(continued on page 10)

(continued from page 9)

Shoshani Butchery in Jerusalem's German Colony. "But each turkey feeds around 20 people so we're talking about 500 people eating from the turkeys that we sell [for Thanksgiving]."

At Tehilla, an organization for religious immigration, Thanksgiving is used to encourage immigration. This year, participants in their pilot trips for prospective immigrants from North America are attending the annual AACI turkey dinner so that "old pioneers could welcome new pioneers."

"We thought that the theme of Thanksgiving really dovetails what we're trying to do," said Ilene Bloch-Levy, co-director of the Tehilla pilot trip program. "It's important to remember that the new pioneers who are planning to leave 'the old country' don't have to forget their traditions or memories that have been important to them."

Some former Americans incorporate Jewish religious elements into Thanksgiving. "We prepare a song sheet with zmirot [traditionally sung at Sabbath and Festival meals] having to do with thanking God," says one former Miami resident now living in Ra'anana who hosted over forty people at the feast this year. "We also make sure to invite new American families so that they have a chance to feel connected. It's a lot of people this year, but there were just so many new Americans who moved into the neighborhood."

Students at religious schools catering to English-speaking adults do not get the day off. But at Jerusalem's Darchei Noam, which includes Shapell's yeshiva and the women's seminary Midreshet Rachel, executive director Kenny Kodesh approved a Thanksgiving-

themed lunch of turkey, stuffing, cranberry, and sweet potato. "It costs a little extra money, but we have a high concentration of Americans," the former Ohioan said. "It's not like in the United States, where the leaves are changing color, there are football games on television, and family and friends come together. Here, it's business as usual, and we still have regular classes. But it's a nice holiday with great memories."

Not every American continues to celebrate Thanksgiving regularly after immigrating. "I keep track of what goes on in the United States in terms of news, but Thanksgiving doesn't play as large a role in my life here," says Abe Finkelstein, a Baltimore native who lives in Givatayim with his Israeli-born wife. He has celebrated the holiday only once during his five years here.

"Thanksgiving snuck up on me this year," he admitted. "I don't have time off from work and my wife is Israeli, so it doesn't always happen. Last year, my friends talked about doing it because we really missed the turkey, sweet potato, and stuffing. But I guess we must have forgotten about it, because Thanksgiving is here again and we didn't plan anything."

For Mark Zober, who lives in Jerusalem and is active in Democrats Abroad, the holiday is an annual must. "We make sure that there's no difference. Maybe in the United States, we'd be with more family but here we're with our adopted family," Zober says. "As long as you've got a whole turkey, good spirit, and some friendly faces, you've got Thanksgiving," he said. "There's no difference."

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AIRPORT**

**RECEIVE PNAI
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All members should receive PNAI news. Members who are on the internet may go to the PNAI website at www.pnai.org and click on PNAInews newsletter. If they cannot get on the internet, send an email to Jim Churgin at:

churgin@estart.com

CROSSING THE YARDEN: ONE YEAR!

Reprinted courtesy of Al Ha Makom

A year?

Could it be true? Have we really been Israeli citizens for a year? Are we starting to lose some of our “olim chadashim” baby teeth? Can I get a real passport yet? How ‘bout a gun?

Any Israeli will still be able to pick us out even before we open our mouths and give it all away, but we are no longer paralyzed by fear at the thought of going grocery shopping or arguing a phone bill. We are not fazed when someone calls us Friday morning to invite us for Shabbat meals. Driving to Tekoa or Bet Hagai no longer seem like taking a mission to Afghanistan. We have favorite stalls in the shouk where we buy our fruits and vegetables. We even have our own “egg guy.” (In the U.S. I had my own doctor and my own lawyer, but I never imagined I would have my own “egg guy”).

The year has passed faster than any in my life. I find it hard to believe that we are soon going to be welcoming a new group of clueless Olim to the country and to the Yishuv. It will now be our turn to tell them how you get a drivers’ license and where the best shwarma is. We can explain that the shortest way to Ramat Bet Shemesh is to turn right at the “Don’t Turn Right” sign, and that a typical day “camp” is a day washing cars and eating chocolate on bread.

I will never forget the day we arrived. After two days of traveling from San Francisco to Israel, a jour-

ney that was both physically and emotionally draining, I got to embrace my former and soon-to-be future neighbor at the airport. No matter how often I explained the feeling of uprooting myself from my community and family to live in the Jewish State, the only ones who could really understand the powerful emotions I felt deep down were the ones who had done the same thing. Now it will be my turn to tell the new arrivals, “It’s ok, you made it. Welcome to the club.”

So after a year, perhaps it’s a good time to give the real answer to the question “Why did you make aliyah?” While Israel may have lots of better things, from Jewish schools to humus, honestly that’s not why we came.

We came because every time I visited Israel beforehand, I found myself crying as the plane crossed the Mediterranean, and I could see we were over land. I felt my heart beat faster as the plane came to a stop by the terminal, and I could see the blue and white flags flapping in the breeze. I even felt like the tired-looking, overworked, young woman who stamped my passport was my cousin.

On the return, I always felt that something was wrong as soon as I checked my bags. At first, I could not understand this feeling. By the last visit, (when we had definitely decided we would NOT be making aliyah), I was physically sick in the airport. I had this huge feeling of guilt that I was abandoning the land of my ancestors, the land that should be mine. To make matters worse, the plane to New York had been used the

day before as one of the Nefesh B’Nefesh flights. The Nefesh B’Nefesh logo was painted in bright colors by the plane’s door. By instinct, I reached out my hand and touched it, much as you would a Mezuzah and with tears in my eyes thought “maybe, one day.....”

The day came and we are here, thank G-D. It’s not Disneyland. There are big struggles like the fight to save the yishuvim, and little struggles like remembering to say “L’hitraot” instead of “Itriot” when saying goodbye. But you know, with all the challenges and struggles that lie ahead for us, we are still living a dream that millions of Jews through thousands of years would have done anything to live.

After one year, I can proudly look from the top of Neve Daniel out to the horizon and say with conviction, “This is our home and we’re not going anywhere.”

A welcome to the new olim and Shabbat Shalom from our blessed nation.

Yarden Frankl is the former Executive Director of the Torah School of Greater Washington. He, his wife Stella, and children made aliyah in July 2005 and now live in Neve Daniel where he writes a weekly column. Contact him at FranklsinIsrael@gmail.com.

THE IMPENDING HOLOCAUST OF THE NEW JEW

by Oz Almog

The current war in Lebanon will come to an end sooner or later. We, the Israelis, will survive, and then lick our wounds, recharge our diminishing energies and return with revitalized enthusiasm to the commercials, holidays, and tele-amusement shows.

The Hezbollah will probably suffer some damage and we might buy ourselves a temporary fake peace sponsored by some international scarecrow force in Bermuda shorts and opera glasses. We might also succeed in getting back our kidnapped soldiers through some sort of a cynical deal that will allow both sides to swallow the pill. Yet whatever the consequences of this endless confrontation we cannot win this Lebanese war that was imposed on us.

We will not win because we cannot uproot the Hezbollah from Lebanon, just as we cannot uproot Muslim fundamentalism from the Arab states.

We will not win because our enemy is an antidemocratic group (certainly not minor in the Muslim population) that had legitimized lies and forgery in its cultural tradition. It is a group that tends to build its life picture by wishful thinking and talk, and not by vigorous empirical methods and a sense of criticism and integrity. For even when Israeli tanks stand on the doorstep of Beirut, Hassan Nasraallah will portray himself and will be accepted by the Arab public as a new Salah al-Din. And even if the entire Hezbollah army falls in battle, their organization will proclaim a Zionist defeat.

But above all, we will not win because this war is only a single battle, just a “promo”, to the real Great War, waiting in the wings: The Third World War — the Islamic Jihad against the free world.

It is astonishing, even heart-breaking, to see how immense the similarity is between 1933 and 2006. In those days the western world witnessed some loony, who took over the German regime, a bizarre character, almost comic who developed a satanic ideology targeted at wiping the democratic cultures off our planet. By the same token, Ahmedinajab, the ruling president of Iran, is perceived by many in the western countries as no more than an aggressive bully who cannot control his mouth. However, Ahmedinajab, like Hitler, is neither marginal nor alone. Millions of fanatical Muslims march behind him, applauding his inciting speeches. They have replaced the outdated ‘Zieg Heil’ with the fashionable roar ‘Allahu Akbar’.

The forgotten World War II arose out of a deep inferiority complex and sick chauvinism, and this impending war will emerge out of a deep inferiority complex as well as insane chauvinism (there is no society that tramples women and rejects feminism more than the fundamental Islamic society). These negative feelings and the culture of chauvinism conceived ruthless hostility and slander, which eventually fashioned well-oiled machinery of brainwashing, operating in private houses, mosques, institutions of education, and the Arab media.

Nasrallah kidnapped our soldiers and bombed our cities in the name neither of Lebanese interests nor Palestinian rights, but in the name of an organized religious agenda,

which is aimed at the destruction of Jews and the Jewish state.

And again, just as in the old horrifying days, the object of the collective hatred, the generator of the vicious ideology against the free world, is the Jewish stereotype.

In the old days it was the stereotype of the ugly and the deceiving merchant in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, who was presumed to plan to rule world economy, along with the stereotype of the Jewish Communists, who were presumed to be plotting to abolish the Aryan European race and culture.

Today it is the “Jewish settler” (in all Israeli territories, not just in the occupied territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem) who is tied to the American imperialist, the symbol and leader of the free world, in a joint scam to occupy Muslim lands, to desecrate Muslim holy places and to drink Palestinian children’s blood.

The rhetoric is very similar. Just listen to what they’re saying now in Iran, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, or Gaza — actually in the whole Muslim world. In one of his recent speeches the chairman of the Iranian Parliament described Hassan Nasrallah as a holy warrior with the late Khomeini’s blood flowing in his veins. Truly, this blood is pulsing through the arteries of thousands of Muslim priests and preachers, hammering at the temples of millions of ecstatic shaheeds who are yearning to blow themselves up, taking as many Jews as possible with them just to fulfill the sacred commandment and to earn the glory of murdering the Jewish Satan.

(continued on page 13)

(continued from page 12)

And all those western politicians and opinion shapers (no wonder the Spanish prime minister reacted to the recent news from Lebanon by donning a kafiyyeh), particularly the European media, focus their eyes and their camera lenses on the destruction caused by our defensive guns and missiles (as if it was we who initiated this bloody conflict and are keen to kill innocent civilians just for the fun of it and to flaunt our prowess) accusing us — with double-standard morality — of carrying out disproportionate retaliation: these are the descendants of the Europeans who did nearly nothing to save us when the fires of the crematoria were blazing. They are helping — directly and indirectly — to fashion the old Jewish stereotype into the new one — the “New Jew,” namely

the Israeli. They are not rushing to stop the Iranians from building new military machinery that will burn six million New Jews in the nuclear furnace of the global era.

And what are we, the Israeli Jews, doing to survive? Not much. Just like our grandfathers and grandmothers we deny the apocalyptic news, waiting for this racist hurricane to pass. Moreover, our democratic tolerance and Jewish masochism make us accept, often encourage, Israeli pseudo-intellectuals who blacken our image, condemning our acts of self-defense in their hypocritical articles and interviews in the local and foreign media. In the name of some “divine” moral standards they denounce and despise Israeli aggression and arrogance, helping the new Anti-Semites to demonize us.

Can we stop the ticking clock of Muslim anti-Semitism, which is targeting the Israeli state? Perhaps this latest war in Lebanon will shed more light on the genuine motives of the fundamentalist Muslims and will open some more eyes in the western world. I beg you: Do not make the same moral mistake you made during and before the Holocaust. If you do not wake up soon, we will no longer be here to blame you.

*Oz Almog is Professor at the University of Haifa, Israel. He is the author of *The Sabra – the Creation of the New Jew*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1997. Email him at:*

oalmog@univ.haifa.ac.il

This article was originally published in Hebrew on July 30, 2006.

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Kate Deutsch and grandmother Harriet Potashnick

THE BLOWING WIND

by Kate Deutsch

The wind blows through the streets through open windows, rustling through leaves in the street, papers on my desk.

Even the wind is restless.

Pictures of boys lost.

Pictures of my brother.

We are uneasy, we are scared and angry. Such mayhem, such quick sand.

The weather has become chilly keeping us thinking of the missing soldiers. Keeping us thinking of the bodies we have so far been unable to retrieve from the burnt out tank.

I think of my brother, constantly worry about him.

What to say? What to do?

Dare we hope Gilad Shalit will be returned to us?

My mind can not comprehend, can not explain why they are not more like us, why they are so driven to murder, revenge?

The wind whistles at the window, sweeps into the room chilling my bones. I raise my eyes to the ceiling as if I might see G-d or if not perhaps see the answers he will send me.

Every bone in my body wants those soldiers back. Every bone in my body wants revenge for so much blood spilled, on our side and theirs. "But, war" my father tells me "is a messy business, people get hurt".

I am Israeli

I am a Woman

Above all, I'm a person.

I hope G-d has mercy on us all.

Since the author wrote this poem, her brother Avi (20), who is an Officer in the Armored Core (Tank Unit), was injured during the war. Fortunately, Ms. Deutsch reports that he was not injured very badly. PNAI wishes a full recovery for Avi and sends blessings to all the family.

Kate Deutsch (22) lives in Jerusalem and works for UJC-Israel. She is the granddaughter of Harriet Potashnick, who is a member of the Philadelphia chapter. Contact Ms. Deutsh at ehhyh@yahoo.com.

PNAI PAYS TRIBUTE TO ALL DEFENDING ISRAEL

The Parents of North American Israelis pay tribute to the Israel Defense Forces and all the young men who courageously served in the recent war. We thank all those who fought so valiantly against the fanatical Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Hamas at Gaza .

Please know, we grieve with all Israeli families who mourn a lost son, husband, father, brother or uncle — all heroes who gave their lives in defense of their homeland, The Jewish State of Israel.

Our hopes for the safe return of the kidnapped soldiers and our prayers for Gilad Shalit, Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser will be recited until they come home again to the warm embrace of their loving families.

We pledge our support to rebuilding Northern Israel with gifts to those organizations that we trust to bring necessary help in times of crisis: Jewish National Fund to replace thousands of scorched trees, Magen David Adom that supplies the vitally needed ambulance services in war emergencies, The Soldier's Welfare Fund that aids and assists Israel's fighting men, Na'amat and Hadassah who provided shelter and other necessities for the evacuees from cities in the north of Israel, and Federation's Israel Emergency Fund for replacement of destroyed infrastructure, and the provision of other human services.

This is not a complete list of organizations, simply those whose work is most recognizable, and as we work and pull together, let us proudly declare: Am Yisrael Chai.

ANOTHER NAME FOR JEWISHNESS

by Howard I. Bogot

I have always defined Zionism as another name for Jewishness. When we lived in Netanya, as olim chadashim, and I was privileged to teach in Beit Berl College's program for new immigrant English teachers, personal definitions of Zionism became the core of my persona. Achad HaAm, A.D. Gordon, and Berl Katznelson were no longer authors to be read. Rather, they became my mentors.

Zionism for moderns is an assertive commitment to Jewish survival. Zionism for moderns identifies the fact that the State of Israel can and should advertise and model the Jewish people's unique essence — social, intellectual, cultural, historical, and religious.

Zionism for moderns implies the primacy of Jewish education because Talmud Torah is the essential discipline by which Jews sustain their collective profile as Am

Segulah, Am Kedushah and Am HaSefer.

Zionism for moderns requires a Jew to advocate and support the principle of Kol Yisrael Areivim Zeh BaZeh, Each Jew is responsible for every Jew. Zionism for moderns promotes the Jews' historic right to enjoy the recognition and security of national renewal and autonomy.

Therefore, I believe that our cherished Israel Defense Force (IDF) is not only fighting to promote the security of Medinat Yisrael. These essential battles against terrorist fighters, their international puppeteers, and financiers are also brave actions to protect all of us and our Jewish identity.

We, too, must become soldiers in an ongoing battle. We must help our loved ones *and* our friends and neighbors realize that while Israel has been forced to continue the 1948 war, she has also continued to pro-

mote democracy, welcome Jews seeking safety and authenticity, profile sophisticated forms of health-care and technology...and sanctify life.

Ours will always be an educational mission. We must be a "light to the nations" and the advocates for Tikkun Olam in the image of Oseh HaShalom.

Rabbi Prof. Howard I. Bogot, D.D. is the Dean of Adult Jewish Study at Old York Road Temple-Beth in Abington, Pennsylvania. Contact the author at hbogot@yahoo.com

Mary K. and Howard Bogot are the parents of Lisa Ney (with son-by-marriage Benny Shoham) and grandchildren Eyal, Ma'ayan and Elad, living in Nes Tziona. Through the sale of tribute cards, they represent Netanya's English-Speaking Branch of the Association for the Wellness of Israel's Soldiers (view information on this page).

BUY A CARD AND SUPPORT ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCES

PNAI members, Mary K. and Rabbi Prof. Howard I. Bogot invite members to support Israel Defense Forces (via the English-speaking branch of the Association for the Wellness of Israel's Soldiers [AWIS]) by purchasing tribute cards/envelopes.

Each card is printed in Hebrew and English for \$10 per card. The card is designed so that personalized messages of congratulations, condolence as well as good and welfare can be included.

Located in Netanya this unique AWIS chapter has equipped over 100 frontline IDF "clubhouses" and the 414th Observation Regiment on

the Egyptian/Israeli border with toaster ovens, TV sets, water boilers, air conditioners, hot plates, audio players ,and refrigerators as well as bullet proof vests.

Interested members should contact Mary K. or Howard Bogot by email: hbogot@yahoo.com or telephone: 215-887-8063.

Email, postal, or phone orders should include contact information as well as a mailing address.

Payment, by check, should be payable to:

English Speaking Branch in Israel
of AWIS

or

The Association for the Wellness of
Israel's Soldiers

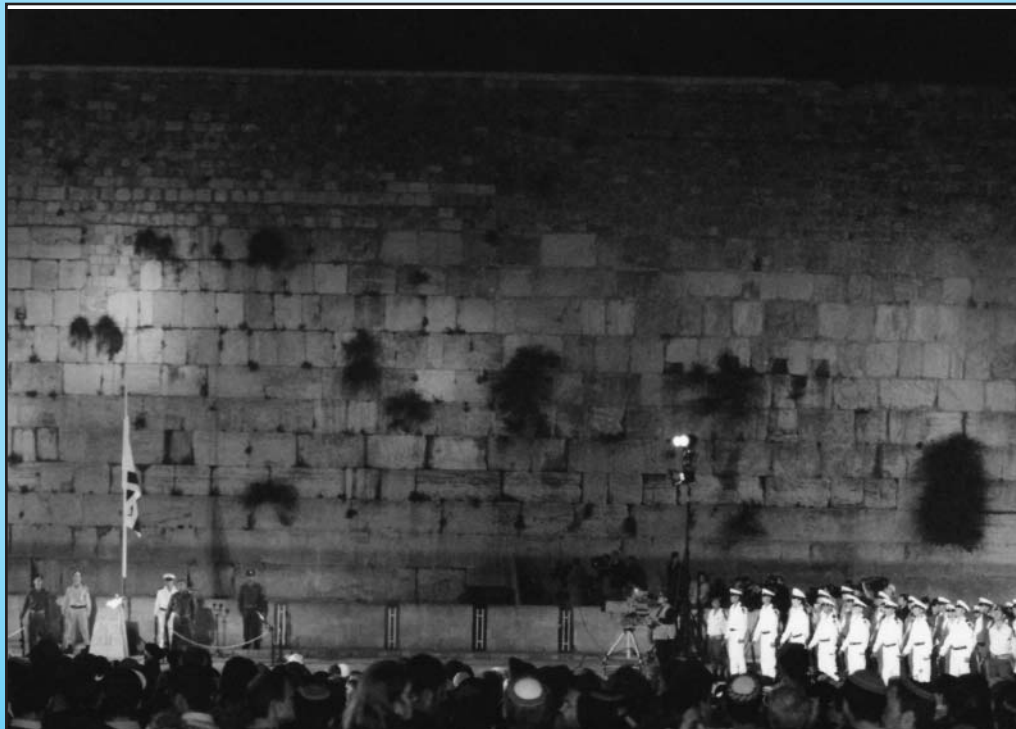
and mailed to:

Prof. Howard I. Bogot, D.D.
Beaver Hill 601 N
309 Florence Avenue
Jenkintown, PA 19046

Currently, 73 cards/envelopes are available.

Delivery will be by postal mail or the cards can be picked up at Beaver Hill North.

Photos courtesy of Jack Hazut, www.israelimage.com





ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCE PHOTOS



CELEBRATION WITH THE IDF

by Mila Raclaw

In planning a celebration to mark the 85th Birthday of my stepfather, John Radovitz, we tried to think of a unique way to commemorate this special event. During the past twelve years such family occasions have always been bittersweet for us, because each time we keenly felt the absence of our son and family who live in Israel.

My mother Sima planned a party in John's honor for family and close friends, which was held on May 21, 2006 at their home in Lower Merion. A modest man by nature, instead of gifts John asked their guests to contribute to the Friends of Israel Defense Forces (FIDF). The idea



was enthusiastically received by all.

My husband Hillel and I had long-standing plans to visit Israel in May 2006, as it was our son Nissan's 35th Birthday and we wanted to spend this special day with him and his family. It so happened that we were unable to be at John's Birthday celebration, yet we wanted to mark it somehow in a tangible way. An idea occurred to me, would bring a special dimension to John's distinctive milestone, even though we were unable to attend.

During World War II, John volunteered and served in thirty missions as an engineer and top turret gunner on a B-17 bomber of the 8th Air Force. Those were some of the most memorable and poignant years of his life. With this in mind, I asked Nissan to make arrangements with a commander of an Israel Defense Force (IDF) outpost near Modi'in (where Nissan and his family live) to allow us to bring pizzas, soft drinks, and a birthday cake to the soldiers in order to celebrate John's 85th Birthday with them. After a thorough security check, the commander approved our proposal and accepted it with great enthusiasm.



mately thirty soldiers gathered around us. I explained why we were there and asked them to wish 'happy birthday' to John while we videotaped and photographed the wonderful young men and women in IDF uniforms singing Happy Birthday and Yom Huledet Sameach to John. My heart was filled with joy as I looked at their bright smiling faces, heard their bursts of laughter, and watched them eat pizza and cake with hearty appetites. I felt as if each one was my child, and I wanted to protect them all while at the same time keenly aware of the fact that *they* were protecting us. What touched me was the concern they showed for one another. I heard them ask each other whether pizza and cake was saved for those who were on duty at checkpoints or on observation towers. As we were about to leave, we were highly praised for our thoughtfulness and attention. To each "toda raba", we replied with a heartfelt "toda raba" of our own. Without reservation, this was one of the most gratifying experiences of our lives.

As I write this, an enemy vowing to destroy all of us is fighting our IDF forces. They are our children, and I pray for their safety and victory over our enemies. May God give them strength, keep them safe, and protect them all. Amen.

Mila Raclaw is a member of the Philadelphia PNAI chapter. Contact her at raclaw3@comcast.net.

FRIENDS OF IDF

In 1942, Ben Gurion established the Committee for the welfare of soldiers, now named the Association for the Wellbeing of Israel's Soldiers (AWIS).

The Friends of Israel Defense Force (FIDF) is the American partner of AWIS, which supports projects such as Wounded Soldiers Program of rehabilitation, summer camps for children, aid to widows of fallen soldiers, education and recreation facilities while on active duty, and university scholarships to soldiers upon completion of military service.

This organization is maintained entirely by private contributions of its dedicated supporters.

FIDF contributions are tax deductible by United States law. To designate a specific program, please contact FIDF:

Tel: 888 318-3433

Website: www.israelsoldiers.org

Address: Friends of IDF

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New York, NY 10118

WHO WE ARE...FOR SOON-TO-BE MEMBERS ONLY

We are *Hagesher*, the bridge between our families in the United States and Canada and our children and grandchildren in Israel. We are 2,300 families in over 35 chapters in many states and provinces. We are an all volunteer, nonprofit, nonfundraising organization. We welcome as members children, siblings, grandparents, and other close relatives of North American Israelis.

We come from diverse backgrounds and all walks of life and, although we differ in our religious practices and our political preferences, we are bound together by a common hope and concern for our children's and grandchildren's future. We want enrichment of their lives. We want safety and peace for them and the State of Israel. We want strong bonds of family bridging the seas.

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Date _____ Signature _____

EL AL AND NEFESH B'NEFESH CARRY 230 AMERICANS ON FINAL SUMMER FLIGHT TO NEW LIFE IN ISRAEL

*Reprinted from an August 30, 2006
El Al press release*

El Al assisted as two hundred thirty North American immigrants moved to Israel recently as part of a global "Aliyah" (immigration to Israel) campaign by Nefesh B'Nefesh. The last of seven special El Al flights this summer departed New York (JFK) on Tuesday, September 5, 2006 and landed in Israel on Wednesday, September 6, 2006 resulting in the highest level of immigration in Israel's history.

This summer five flights from New York, one from Toronto, and one from London have brought a record number of more than three thousand North American and British immigrants (in Hebrew, "Olim") to Israel through the Nefesh B'Nefesh Organization (<http://www.nbn.org.il/>). Nefesh B'Nefesh removes or minimizes the financial, professional, logistical, and social obstacles of "Aliyah," and the organization works in close cooperation with the Jewish Agency for Israel (<http://www.jafi.org.il/>).

The United States flight departed

JFK carrying two hundred thirty passengers, which included fifty-eight children who immigrated to Israel to start the school year as Israeli citizens, bringing the summer total to eight hundred fifty young students.

Among those that left are Daniel and Andrea Leubitz who named their two-year-old daughter, Ma'ayan Naim, after a soldier killed in a suicide bus bombing. The two families have been in close contact and looked forward to the emotional meeting at Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv.



DIRECT SERVICE FROM CHICAGO ON EL AL

*Reprinted from a September 12,
2006 El Al press release*

El Al airline is doubling the frequency of its direct flights between Chicago and Israel. Passengers can fly direct from Chicago to Tel Aviv four times a week, effective October 22, 2006.

The direct flights will operate Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday offering travelers convenient departure and arrival times with no change of plane, year round. The service will operate on state-of-the-art Boeing 767 aircraft featuring a recently improved Platinum Business Class product. Easy connections to many Southern and

Midwestern cities such as Dallas, Houston, Detroit, Minneapolis, and St. Louis are available.

An added convenience to El Al's new direct service is that, traveling from Israel, passengers will go through Customs and Immigration clearance in Chicago which is now the first point-of-entry into the United States.

Passengers utilizing this new direct El Al service will experience very convenient departure and arrival times. The flight will depart Chicago every Sunday, Monday and Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. The Thursday flight will depart at 3:00 p.m. and arrive in Tel Aviv before sunset on Friday (Shabbat). Returning from Israel, the direct flight will conveniently depart Tel Aviv at 12:30 a.m., allowing passengers a full day in Israel, and will arrive in Chicago early in the morning the same day.

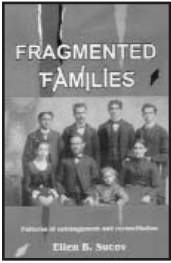
The Boeing 767 aircraft that are utilized on the nonstop flights between Chicago and Tel Aviv have been fully upgraded and now feature new Platinum Business Class ultra-

suede, electronically controlled spacious seats that are designed for comfort and have a sixty-inch pitch with a recline of one hundred sixty-five degrees. Each business class passenger can enjoy movies, games, and music on a personal DVD player, and each business class seat has a 110-volt electric outlet for a laptop computer.

El Al is currently upgrading in-flight entertainment in all classes of service and is offering greater menu options as well as enhanced meals. Additionally, the 767 aircraft, which has recently been equipped with IRIDIUM Satellite telephones, allows passengers to call anywhere in the world while in flight, at a cost of \$1.60 per minute. El Al is the first commercial airline in the world to operate a satellite by IRIDIUM.

For updated daily departure and arrival flight information, travelers can call (800) El Al-747, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For reservations, call (800) 223-6700 or in the New York area (212) 768-9200 or any travel agent or visit www.elal.com.

JEWISH BOOK LOVER'S REVIEW



**FRAGMENTED
FAMILIES: PATTERNS
OF ESTRANGEMENT
AND RECONCILIATION**

by Ellen B. Sucov,
Ph.D.

Publisher: Southern Hills Press
Reviewed by Ellen B. Sucov, Ph.D.

I am a member of the Pittsburgh chapter of PNAI. My husband and I have two separate families. Several of our adult children and grandchildren live in scattered parts of the United States. My son and his large family live in Israel. For more than fifteen years, we have been spending half of each year in Jerusalem. This pattern presents various challenges to us and to our children. As we move back and forth between two worlds, two cultures, two languages, and several very different family life styles, how do we stay connected? What are some of the problems that inevitably arise in such a diverse, far-flung family?

I am a retired psychologist from the Faculty of the University of Pittsburgh. In the summer of 2006, I published *Fragmented Families*, the outcome of my years of exploring the dynamics of families with estranged members. Some people thought it was a preposterous task, to be writing a book at age seventy-something. But I was encouraged by the words of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, who said: "Whoever is able to write a book and does not, it is as if he has lost a child."

The topic was inspired by an episode in my own family — a prolonged and bitter estrangement that was resolved after more than fifty years. The book itself evolved out of my ongoing efforts to stay connected



with the many different branches of our two families, here and there, religious and secular, Israeli and American. Some of our adult children are still emotionally connected to us and maintain frequent contact. Others are more separated, turning their energies to raising their own children or to their jobs and independent lives. My book explores some of the tensions that arise in conflicted families. There is no end to the provocations that can turn parents against children, sister against brother. Differences in religious observance, political convictions, life style, choice of profession, attitudes toward money, and responsibility for aging family members are only a few of the "hot spots" that can stir up hostility and lead to family alienation.

When I began to organize my ideas and collect stories, my intention was to produce a book for family therapists and other professionals who work with all types of troubled families. As the book progressed, the focus of my life shifted. Living part-time in Jerusalem, I have had numerous opportunities to study Torah and its commentaries. As my interests, curiosity, and commitments turned more frequently to Jewish themes, I realized that my perceptions of family conflict would be seen through a Jewish lens. Many of the narratives I collected are about Jewish families. Some tell of families whose estranged children or siblings are living in distant parts of the world. Others describe families with members who live nearby but never speak to each other. These diverse situa-

tions may be especially relevant to PNAI families.



The book opens with general descriptions of family dynamics and types of provocations that are likely to lead to conflict and estrangement. Chapter Two discusses the cultural, historical, and religious aspects of family life, focusing on those factors that have had significant impact on Jewish families. In Chapter Three, the dimension of ultimate values, the moral and ethical aspects of family life as depicted in the Hebrew Bible are addressed.

Shifting from sacred to secular literature, Chapter Four contains excerpts from fiction, drama, and biography. These narratives emphasize the complexity of discordant relationships and may chart the path to reconciliation.

The next sections contains stories of real families, including my own, who have experienced the pain of estrangement. Some of these families are still in the midst of the struggle; a few have found ways to rebuild connections and achieve closure.

The final chapters speak of reconciliation and its manifestations. For readers who are struggling with crucial questions about their own family conflicts, strategies for finding effective answers are suggested.

To order or for further information, go to www.fragmentedfamilies.com or email the author at ellengene@verizon.net or call at: (412) 781-1503 / 02-563-7036.

PROTECTING A MILITANT DEMOCRACY

by Aharon Barak

*Reprinted from ISRAEL21c.org
newsletter, March 19, 2006*

I am not a philosopher. I am not a political scientist. I am a judge — a judge in the highest court of my country's legal system. So I ask myself a question that many Supreme Court judges — and, in fact, many judges on all courts in modern democracies' ask themselves: what is my role as a judge?

According to my judicial philosophy, the main two roles of a judge — Supreme Court Judge — in a democracy, are to bridge the gap between law and society, and to protect democracy and its constitution.

Indeed, if we wish to preserve democracy, we cannot take its existence for granted. We must fight for it. This is certainly the case for new democracies, but it is also true of the old and well-established ones. The assumption that 'it cannot happen to us' can no longer be accepted. Anything can happen.

If democracy was perverted and destroyed in the Germany of Kant, Beethoven, and Goethe, it can happen anywhere. If we do not protect democracy, democracy will not protect us. I do not know whether the judges in Germany could have prevented Hitler from coming to power in the 1930s.

But I do know that a lesson of the Holocaust and of the Second World War is the need to enact democratic constitutions and ensure that they are put into effect by judges whose main task is to protect democracy. It was this awareness that, in the post-World War II era, helped promote the idea of judicial review of legisla-

tive action and made human rights central. It led to the recognition of defensive democracy and even militant democracy. And it shaped my belief that the main role of the judge in a democracy is to maintain and protect the constitution and democracy.

What is democracy? According to my approach, democracy is a rich and complex normative concept. It rests on two bases. The first is the sovereignty of the people. This sovereignty is exercised in free elections held on a regular basis, in which the people choose its representatives who, in turn, represent its views. This aspect of democracy is manifested in majority rule, and in the centrality of the legislative body through which the people's representatives act. This is a formal aspect of democracy.

The second aspect of democracy is reflected in the rule of values (other than the value of majority rule) which characterizes democracy. The most important of these are separation of powers, the rule of law, judicial independence, human rights, and basic principles which reflect yet other values (such as morality and justice), social objectives (such as the public peace and security) and appropriate ways of behavior (reasonableness, proportionality and good faith). This aspect of democracy is the rule of democratic values. This is a substantive aspect of democracy.

Both aspects — the formal and the substantive — are necessary for democracy. A regime in which the people are not sovereign, and the legislative and executive branches do not represent it, is not a democratic regime. A regime devoid of the separation of powers, the rule of law,

the independence of judges, human rights and fundamental values is not a democratic regime. Indeed, a regime in which the majority denies the minority of human rights is not a democratic regime.

One should not forget that a large part of Israel's population immigrated to Israel from the Near East and from Eastern Europe — places where there are no democratic traditions.

Democracy is thus young in Israel. Furthermore, because of English influences, many view democracy in formal terms. Parliament, for them, is omnipotence. Furthermore, for a variety of reasons, the concept of 'it is not done' is not a central part of governing in Israel. Israel lacks a rigid constitutional framework. Basic structures and concepts can be changed by bare majorities. The protection of those structures and concepts need judges who see their role as protectors of our constitution and democracy.

Human rights in Israel until 1992 were largely the creation of the courts. Since 1992 some of them are embodied in two basic laws. The Supreme Court interpreted those basic laws to mean that the courts have review power of the constitutionality of these laws.

The Parliament and the Executive branch are following this decision. In order to properly fulfill such power, one needs a judicial philosophy that views the protection of human rights as a major role of the judges. Such philosophy is especially important when a country is under security risks.

The political non-accountability of Israeli judges makes us fit to protect human rights against excessive demands of security. And so we decided that interrogators cannot use torture in order to protect us against a “ticking bomb” situation; that the security fence, in some parts, is illegal. And so we are asked to decide about the legality of the disengagement from Gaza Strip and the northern part of the Shomron.

Israel is a militant democracy. In order to be militant and still be a democracy, Israel needs judges that do believe that the protection of Israel’s democracy is their main task.

Does all this affect the confidence of the people in the judges? I don’t know. Polls of Israeli public opinion show that judges in Israel have — like the Israel Defense Forces — the highest rate of confidence. It may of course change. I do believe that at this stage of our national development we need judges with a strong commitment to democracy and its protection. In better times, things may, and probably will, change.

I regard myself as a judge who is sensitive to his role in a democracy. I take seriously the tasks imposed upon me. Despite frequent criticism — and it frequently descends to personal attacks and threats of violence — I have continued on this path in the twenty-eight years I am on the Court. I hope that by doing so, I am serving my legal system properly.

Indeed, as judges in our country’s highest courts, we must continue on our paths according to our consciences. A heavy responsibility rests on our shoulders. But even in hard times, we must remain true to ourselves.

As a judge, I do not have a political platform. I am not a political

person. Right and left, religious and secular, rich and poor, man and woman, disabled and non-disabled — all are equal in my eyes. All are human beings, created in the image of the Creator. I will protect the human dignity of each. I do not aspire to power. I do not seek to rule. I am aware of the chains that bind me as a judge and as the President of the Supreme Court. I have repeatedly emphasized the rule of the law and not the rule of the judge. I am aware of the importance of the other branches of government - the legislative and executive.

I view my office as a mission. Judging is not a job. It is a way of life. An old Talmudic saying regarding judges is the following:

“You would think that I am granting you power... It is slavery that I am imposing upon you.”

But it is an odd sort of slavery, the purpose of which is to serve liberty, dignity, and justice. This is the promise which accompanies me to the courtroom daily. This is my concept of judging in a democracy.

Excerpts from a lecture delivered at Honorary Doctorate Ceremony, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, May 30th, 2006.

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DEADLINE FOR EDITORIAL CONSIDERATION IN THE NEXT ISSUE IS DECEMBER 1, 2006.



EL AL HONEY CAKE

Food Restaurant Review



*Reprinted from a September
18, 2006 El Al press release*

GOLDA'S ISRAELI HONEY CAKE

YIELD: 9 x 13 Cake / 36 Muffins

Chef Avner Niv, executive chef of Borenstein Caterers, El Al's in-flight caterer and daughter company, will prepare an Israeli New Year favorite — Golda Meir Honey Cake — for passengers flying nonstop from New York (JFK/Newark) and Miami, and direct from Chicago.

“Borenstein Caterers is dedicated to offering unique healthy in-flight menu options, including authentic Israeli treats to El Al passengers. We are delighted to prepare this traditional New Year treat for those traveling with El Al this holiday season and hope our passengers will be inspired to create it at home,” said Chef Avner Niv.

Enjoy the special treat at home with the following recipe direct from Borenstein Caterers' exclusive El Al recipe file.

- 1 cup honey
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 whole eggs
- 1 cup coffee, black, room temperature
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vegetable oil
- 1 orange, fresh, grated fine (juice, pulp and skin)
- 4 to 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour (adjust flour amount to ensure mixture is moderately loose/pasty but not too loose)
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- Pinch (1/8 tsp) salt
- 1 cup raisins

Blend and mix honey, sugar, eggs, coffee, oil, and orange mixture. Sift dry ingredients and mix in slowly, blend well. Add raisins last and incorporate evenly. Pour mixture into 9 x 13 greased baking pan or a tin for 36 muffins and bake at 350 degrees F. For approximately one hour. Test for doneness and let cool on wire rack. Enjoy and L'Chaim!!

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