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Christian missionary activity on campus is at an all-time high and too many Jewish students are vulnerable to their devices. But there is a new publication that is making a difference.



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Throughout the country, a movement is growing to transform the experience of Jewish students. Through more focused programming, campus rabbis are forging lasting connections with students that is affecting a generation.



31 Campus Innovations *by Amy Dubitsky*

Accompanying our feature by Charlotte Friedland is a series of profiles, sharing the stories of innovative campus programs that are shaping the next generation of Jewish adults.



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Ruach Yehudit (Jewish Spirit) is rapidly becoming a force in Jewish education in Israel, providing public school children with the Jewish education surprisingly absent from their curriculum.



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14 Lori's Diaries: A Stranger Comes Home

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The native environment of the Jewish soul is Israel. Remove it, and it will only be able to grow so much. Bring it to Israel – even for a short time – and it will begin to soar.

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The NFL lockout has ended but, unfortunately, many Jews remained locked out of Judaism because of the same short-sightedness in the NFL.



18 Jewish Spirit Book Club

by AJS Staff

In addition to the seven books we review, this issue includes an interview with author Yvette Alt Miller.

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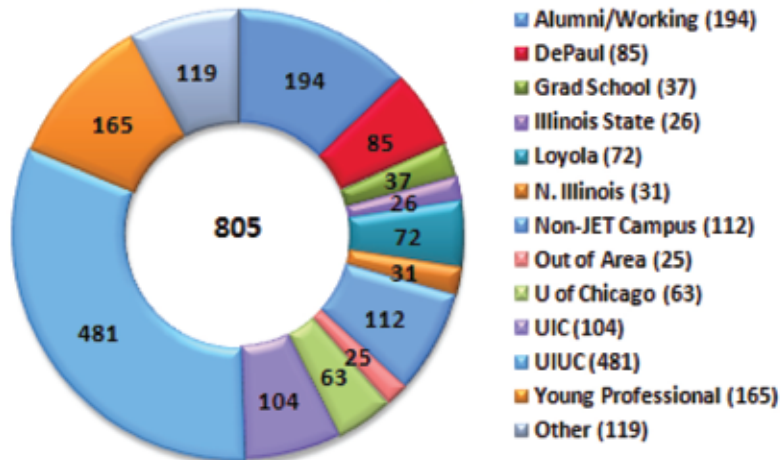
Kosher Elegance, by Efrat Libfroind, is a stunningly beautiful book with recipes equally as delicious. Persian Food for the Non-Persian Bride, by Reyna Simnegar, is an exotic opportunity to enjoy delicacies from a far-off culture.

56 From The Editor Head for the Sukkah

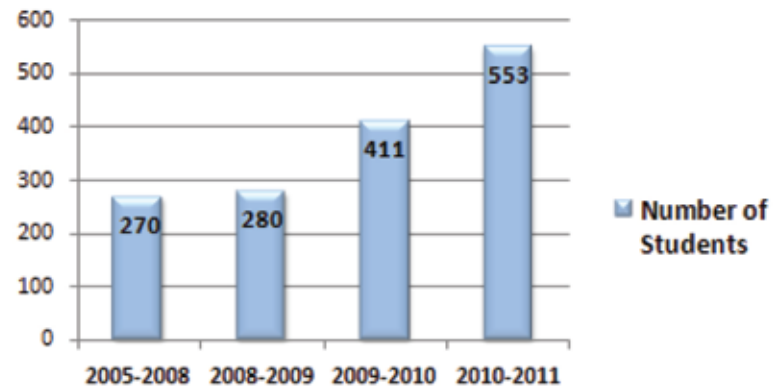
There's lots of noise out there in the world, shiny lights and constant movement. In Jewish thought, the sukkah represents a personal, protected space God provides for us to be ourselves.

Congratulations to JET- Jewish Education Team on their 6th year working with College Students and Young Professionals throughout Illinois!

Total JET Students (by campus, 2010-2011)



**Total New JET Students
(by School Year)**



JET 2010-2011 Highlights

2nd year with a full-time JET presence at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
 Celebrated **1st** anniversary of JET YP, the weekly downtown program for Young Professionals

JET 2010-2011 by the numbers

Impacted **805** students and young professionals!
 Sent **128** students on continuing Jewish education trips to Israel and in the US
99 participants in JET Maimonides programs on 4 campuses
 Served over **3620** homemade Shabbos/holiday meals... and an untold amount of Challah!!!
 Passover seders for over **120** students and young professionals
200 participants in classes and social programming in the first year of JET YP
 Hosted **110** students and young professionals for a Metrofest Shabbaton weekend at the Westin North Shore

JET Lifetime Totals (since 2005)

344 JET Maimonides graduates
325 students on continuing education trips to Israel and in America
21 JET marriages; **9** JET babies ... and many more on the way!
1514 students and young professionals attended at least one JET program



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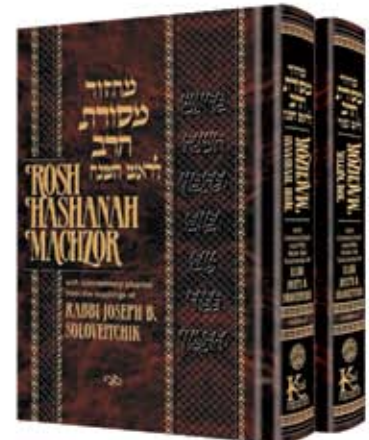
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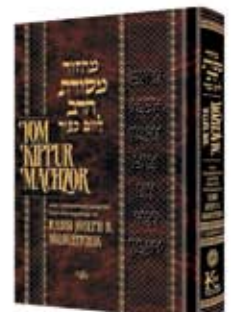
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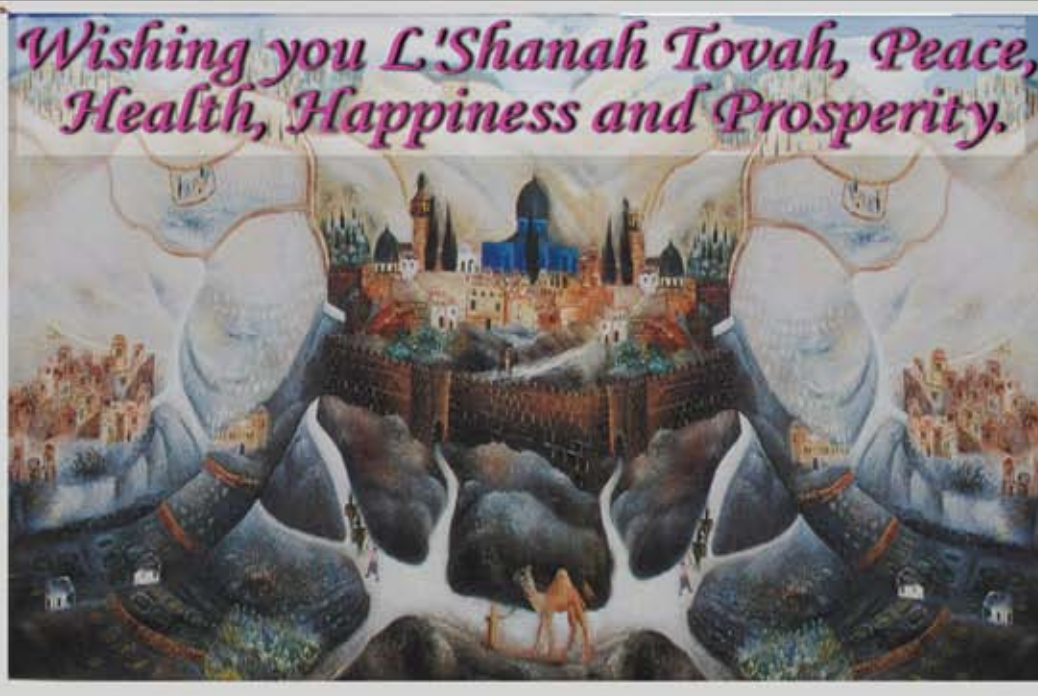


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Crestor 10 Mg 84 tab.	\$119	\$1,708	\$1,001	\$1,232
Nexium 40 Mg 84 tab.	\$149	\$2,064	\$1,089	\$1,468
Activella 3 disp packs	\$45	\$984	\$819	\$804
Actos 45 Mg 98 tab	\$398	\$3,000	\$1,886	\$1,408
Acipex 20 Mg 98 tab	\$199	\$2,484	\$1,370	\$1,688
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*Competitor Prices 03/11		**Medicar prices for Kaiser drug Benefit calculator		

a letter from

our publisher

This summer I had the opportunity to visit the Jewish community of Denver, Colorado for an extended period of time. The amazing thing about traveling Jewish is that you have an immediate friendship and community built in. We chose to rent a house within the Jewish community near the shul and what a blessing that was. My kids had tons of Jewish kids to play with all summer and we had many Shabbat invitations with new people who quickly became our friends.

Looking back, I am so grateful to the many people in Denver who contributed to our summer experience. Without their chesed and Jewish friendship, it would not have been nearly as meaningful. This got me thinking about how much I should appreciate my own community in Scottsdale, Arizona and the many people I work with on this magazine.

So I hope you will not mind if I use this space to extend a special and heartfelt thank you to all the partners who have made Jewish Spirit possible for the last six-plus years. First and foremost I am thankful to Rabbi Zvi Holland of the Phoenix Community Kollel, who originally invited me to launch Jewish Spirit Magazine. Secondly, I owe tremendous gratitude to Miriam (Valerie) Waxman and her late husband David Smilovic (o.b.m) who financed the venture. Our tremendously beautiful articles and photos are thanks to the dedication of the brilliant Rabbi Dovid Goldman, our editor extraordinaire. Anne Patterson, who moved back home to Australia a few years ago but has not missed a beat, has been our faithful graphic designer since day one; clearly, she has the ability to read our minds and express them beautifully. I could not have done my job without the constant support and friendship of Esther Bronsteyn, our advertising executive and a devoted friend.

To all the talented writers and regional partners thank you for joining with us to bring inspiration and Torah knowledge to so many Jewish households nationwide. Finally, thank you to the all our advertisers who committed their precious dollars to Jewish Spirit. While my emails and phone calls may have been too plentiful, know that my intentions were only to bring Torah to tens of thousands of households nationwide. Have a wonderful, healthy, happy and prosperous new year.

Shana Tovah,
Robin Davina Meyerson

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Sharsheret's Pink Shabbat program was introduced four years ago to students on college campuses nationwide in an effort to enhance each student's Jewish journey by uniting them around a common spiritual experience, teaching them what's Jewish about breast cancer, and inspiring them to be proactive about their own health. Pink Shabbat was so popular on campus that many students wanted to introduce the initiative to their communities after graduation and Sharsheret has received hundreds of phone calls and e-mails about hosting Pink Shabbat events from synagogue representatives across the country.

Since Sharsheret's founding in 2001, they have responded to more than 23,000 breast cancer inquiries, involved more than 1,350 peer supporters, and presented over 250 educational programs nationwide. Sharsheret supports young Jewish women and families facing breast cancer at every stage - before, during, and after diagnosis.

Sharsheret's Pink Shabbat program engages Jewish communities at the national level in raising awareness about breast health, the risks of hereditary breast cancer, and the impact of breast cancer on the Jewish community. Communities nationwide are baking pink challahs using Sharsheret's exclusive recipe, distributing Sharsheret resource materials, and inviting breast cancer survivors to share their personal stories at local Pink Shabbat for Sharsheret events.

Host a Pink Shabbat for Sharsheret in your community and take action in the fight against breast cancer! Together, we can make a difference and save lives. To learn more, please contact Sharsheret's Director of Community Engagement Rebecca Schwartz at rschwartz@sharsheret.org or (866) 474-2774, ext. 2237. For more information about Sharsheret's national programs and services, please visit www.sharsheret.org.

Kosher GPS:

The Search for a Kosher Meal

Two of the most common challenges facing the travelling Jew are "Where can I eat?" and "Where can I find a synagogue?" In the old, pre-GPS days, Jews on the road had to spend time searching around the community for a hint of Jewish life, maybe call the local rabbi, or track down a long-lost cousin who might live there. Today, with a smartphone app for everything, there is also a "kosher GPS" that locates all the venues the Jewish traveler might need.

Launched about four years ago, **Kosher Restaurants GPS** allows GPS users to access a database of kosher restaurants and to find those closest to them. Unlike public restaurant databases, which include even non-kosher restaurants and those with questionable certifications, the Kosher Restaurants GPS database is private, and includes only restaurants with the widely-accepted kosher supervision.

The database contains over 1,000 kosher restaurants, almost 2,000 Orthodox prayer locations, a list of mikvahs, and even a Prayer for the Traveler (Tefilas HaDerech). The current version of **Kosher Restaurants GPS** has been launched as a free app for both Android and the iPhone. The app now allows travelers not only to find kosher restaurants throughout the United States and Canada, but also to find nearby synagogues and mikvahs.

An added perk for users of the app is that there are discounts to various restaurants which range from 15% off to a free glass of wine for customers who show the owner or manager the app with the discount marked in red.

Where once there was stress for Jewish travelers, now there is convenience. Whether you are on vacation or a business trip, you will find this app is exactly what your smartphone was made for.

Visit kosherrestaurantsgps.com or search for "kosher restaurants gps" in either the iPhone app store or the Android marketplace.



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Despite the history of Mid East conflict, the Israeli stock market has outperformed most developed markets over the past decade. As measured by the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange 100 Index (TA-100), the Israeli stock market has often outperformed the S&P 500 Index and the Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) World Index.

A few amazing facts about Israel, its economy, and its people: Israel ranks number one in the world for investment in research and development as a percentage of GDP. Israel has more engineers per capita than any other country in the world. One in eight Israelis holds an advanced degree. Israel leads the world in venture capital as a percentage of GDP. Israel has the highest rate of patent registration per capita in the world.

Israel also has the highest rate of start-up companies in the world. Since the country is not abundant in natural resources, Israel has focused on developing new technologies. Many products Americans use on a daily basis were developed in Israel, such as America On-Line's Instant Messenger technology, Motorola's cell phone technology, the Pentium-4 microprocessor, and Microsoft's Windows NT and XP.

The American Israeli Shared Values Capital Appreciation Fund was founded on the desire to support Israel. It provides investors with a vehicle to invest in the Israeli economy and creates more liquidity in the Israeli stock market.



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A Stranger Comes Home

by Lori Palatnik

In 1985, I was 24 years old, post-college, single, and working in Public Relations for McDonald's Restaurants in Ottawa (for you Americans, that is the capital of Canada). One day, I received a large envelope in the mail. Inside, was a letter from Aish HaTorah of Toronto, inviting me to apply for The Jerusalem Fellowships – a six week study and touring program in Israel that summer.

I had never heard of Aish, but just reading the word "Israel" brought me back to the previous year when I veered off a solo, European backpacking expedition and spent three weeks in Israel. During that time, I had longed to feel something Jewish, to get clarity on my Judaism, and to connect in some way. On every tour, at every historical site, I waited to feel something. But I felt nothing.

So I gave up and decided to just enjoy this land like any of the other countries I had just visited – the food, the museums, the people. So what if everyone was Jewish?

And of course, when I finally stopped looking to feel something, I started to feel something. At one point, I felt that if I didn't leave then, that I would stay forever. I felt like I was home. It made no sense. So I left.

About four weeks into the six-week program, those feelings started coming back again. "If I don't leave now, I am never going to leave."

I went back through Europe some more and then home to Ottawa. And here I was, standing in my apartment, looking at the letter. A chance to go back to Israel...? Although I had traveled through some of the most beautiful countries in the world, I could not get Israel out of my head or out of my heart and here was my chance to go back again. I took it.

It was an incredible program, touring the land but also learning Torah. This was definitely not the Torah of my upbringing, which consisted of dusty Bible stories and men in robes walking through sand dunes. This was *Torat*



Chaim, Instructions for Living. It turned out this Torah had what to say about love, dating, marriage, business, friendship – in short, everything in life that matters. Who knew? The Bar and Bat Mitzvah factories of my youth definitely did not share this wisdom with us. That is why our Bar and Bat Mitzvahs became our graduations out of Judaism, instead of what they are supposed to be, which is our graduation *in*.

About four weeks into the six-week program, those feelings started coming back again. "If I don't leave now, I am never going to leave. This is feeling too much like home." But this time I understood why. It had something to do with God and my people. And I wanted to know more.

Today, I lead highly subsidized trips to Israel for women throughout the year. Over the course of this year, we are bringing 1,000 women from seven different countries for a nine-day transformational experience. When they land at Ben Gurion airport, after their long flight, I am there to greet them. "Welcome home," I say. They smile, but often look perplexed. Home?

But by the end of the trip, they understand what it means.

My husband always points out that the small cactuses on our kitchen windowsills can only get so big. In fact, their growth is hardly detectable. But if you go to Arizona, these same cactuses are eight, ten, even twenty feet high. Why? Because they are in their native environment.

The Jewish soul has a native environment as well and that is Israel. Remove it from the Land, and it will only get so big, it will only grow so much. Bring it to Israel – even for a short time – and it will begin to soar, soaking in the spiritual nutrients it craves and breathing in its heritage.

With so many trips available, there is no reason not to give your soul a chance to feel the warmth of its own home. It is a feeling that *you* will never forget.

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Don't get locked out... of Judaism

16

by Alan "Shlomo" Veingrad



Another season in the National Football League is now underway but it almost never happened. For months, players were locked out of their jobs, as owners and players failed to reach an agreement. This happened to me as a player, but even worse.

Imagine what this is like: you're playing professional football — your dream for most of your life. You just start your second year in the NFL, everything is going really well for you, and then all of a sudden, right in the middle of the season, the collective bargaining agreement between owners and players breaks down and the season grinds to an immediate halt.

You are locked out: you can't even get into the locker room, weight room, or stadium. Your season is over just like that. You are not even sure what the whole thing means but you know this: there are no more games, no team, no job and no paychecks. But the worst part is that the owners bring in replacement players to fill their rosters and all you can do is watch on TV as your own "team" plays every Sunday. This is what happened in the last strike.

This was not how my career was supposed to go. I didn't even know what to do. Should I keep working out, expecting this to be over soon? Should I go try to find another job?

I felt terrible. I worked so hard to get into the NFL. I had built my life around this — why did this happen? All because the two sides couldn't agree — because they were unwilling to compromise on their demands. In the end, they didn't really get

what they wanted anyway, but to fight for it, they could have ended up with no season.

This almost happened again this year with even more at stake. The NFL now brings in more than \$9 billion in revenues each year and the whole season was jeopardized because the principles were not getting exactly what they wanted.

Nobody likes to accept Plan B but if that's what it takes to win, there's no time to fret over it. You make the adjustment and get right back out there.

Sadly, this refusal to compromise, this rigid approach to insisting on our own terms, is not limited to the NFL. It almost took down our whole country in the recent debt-ceiling fiasco. And it is one of the most common reasons people pass up on invaluable opportunities for meaningful Jewish experiences.

"That synagogue is not my favorite," "this rabbi seems too religious," and "those classes make me uncomfortable" are just some of the reasons we just stay home, locking ourselves out of our Jewish communities — and ultimately out of our own Jewish lives. We set high expectations for the Judaism we want, which may even be appropriate, but when they are not met we give up.

In the NFL, few games go according to plan. The passing game you were counting on gets thwarted by a great defense, or even by bad weather. A key player gets hurt and someone has to take over a job they're not suited for. When that happens, it's time to embrace "Plan B." Nobody likes to accept Plan B but if that's what it takes to win, there's no time to fret over it. You make the adjustment and get right back out there.

In Jewish life, Plan A's can be hard to come by. But Judaism is too valuable to lose out on. \$9-10 billion is nothing compared to what there is to gain from investing yourself in Jewish living and learning. You just have to be willing to give a little here and compromise a little there. The truth is, that's when the game really begins and that's when winners prove themselves.

This New Year, don't let anything lock you out of the stadium. The payoff is just too great. Have a healthy, happy and sweet new year.

About the speaker Alan Shlomo Veingrad

Alan Shlomo Veingrad, had a seven-year career as an offensive lineman in the NFL, first with the Green Bay Packers and then the Dallas Cowboys, with whom he won Super Bowl XXVII. He has been the subject of features on NBC, NPR, JM in the AM, and the Jewish Channel; and in the NY Times, NY Post, Dallas Morning News, and the Miami Herald. In a one-of-a-kind presentation, Alan shares with audiences around the world the story of how he became aware after retiring from professional football that his lifestyle was more style than life. It left a void in him that ultimately led to his becoming an Orthodox Jew. For more information about hearing his uniquely entertaining and valuable perspective, please visit www.alanveingrad.com.

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THE JEWISH SPIRIT BOOK CLUB



KIDS SPEAK 6

by Chaim Walder

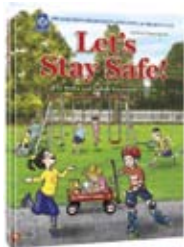
Fantastic news for kids — and parents! *Kids Speak 6* is hot off the press, and that's a sure cause for celebration. It's no wonder kids are so enthralled by and addicted to the bestselling *Kids Speak* series.

With stories so genuine, characters so authentic, and the struggles so true, young readers instantly connect to these powerful, transformative books. In *Kids Speak 6*, you'll meet another cast of courageous characters. What will

Avi do when he and his friends are trapped in a raging fire? Tali is suspected by her classmates of stealing, but her detective work pays off when she finds the real culprit! What happens when Chaim endangers his own life to save none other than "Haman" himself? And meet Tova, who works hard to prepare a surprise package, only to discover that her life is threatened by it.

These stories are thrilling, uplifting, and inspiring. The only trouble with these books is that they're much too hard to put down — even for parents!

List Price \$22.99. Feldheim Publishers, Hardcover, 202 pages.
Feldheim.com



LET'S STAY SAFE

Illustrated by Tova Leff

Raising children has never been an easy task, but nowadays parents must deal with many issues that were unheard of in previous generations. We know that there are dangers out there, we know that we must alert our children to them — and we know, also, that we want our

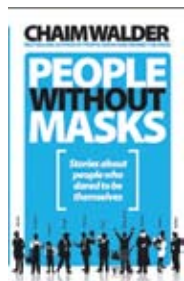
children to grow up confident, not anxious; joyous, not terror-stricken. And, of course, most important of all: we want to keep them safe.

issues. In rhymes that are fun to read and fun to hear, parent and child can learn about bicycle safety, about how to cross — and how not to cross — a street, what a child should do if he is lost, and how to stay away from strangers. Personal and privacy safety issues which are so relevant today are also addressed, in a modest and age-appropriate way.

Because of the sensitivity of many of the safety issues, every word in *Let's Stay Safe* was carefully scrutinized and assessed by experts in childrearing and education. Over two years in the making, *Let's Stay Safe* is recommended by Torah Umesorah — the National Society for Hebrew Day Schools.

List Price \$11.99. ArtScroll/Mesorah Publications, Hardcover, 32 pages. Artscroll.com

ArtScroll, in conjunction with Project Y.E.S., is now releasing an important new picture book, *Let's Stay Safe*, that will help parents begin the vital conversation they should have with their children about a host of safety



PEOPLE WITHOUT MASKS: STORIES ABOUT PEOPLE WHO DARED TO BE THEMSELVES

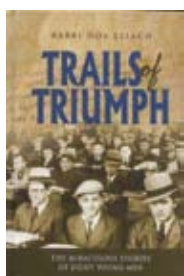
by Chaim Walder

This powerhouse of a book tells the stories of ten fascinating individuals — fearless, original thinkers who had the courage to pursue the truth wherever it led them, people whose thoughts and deeds provide inspiring

insights into life.

Riveting, funny, and frank, *People without Masks* will take you on an enjoyable journey, helping you to better understand many of the factors that influence our lives — social standing, self confidence, character traits, and the significance of the ego.

List Price \$24.99. Feldheim Publishers, Hardcover, 240 pages. Feldheim.com



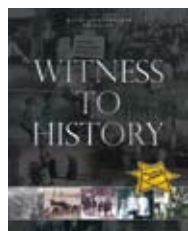
TRAILS OF TRIUMPH: THE MIRACULOUS STORIES OF EIGHT YOUNG MEN

by Rabbi Dov Eliach

Based on twenty years of interviews, these riveting, firsthand accounts of yeshiva students of yesteryear vividly portray life in the small towns and yeshivos of Eastern Europe. The students describe their lives and how their upbringing prepared them to withstand the spiritual

challenges posed by the powerful currents sweeping Jewish communities worldwide — the Holocaust and the war, the hardships of life in Siberia and on the steppes of Asia, and even in the countries in which they settled. These harrowing tales of courage and sacrifice, filled with rare photographs, will keep you mesmerized and inspired from first page to last.

List Price \$27.99. Feldheim Publishers, Hardcover, 437 pages. Feldheim.com



WITNESS TO HISTORY

Edited by Ruth Lichtenstein

Lay readers and students interested in learning about the Holocaust have faced a challenge in finding books that are both accessible and scholarly sound. The vast canon in Holocaust publications actually tend toward either huge multi-volume works written by and for professional historians, or single-themed, reductive works that give short thrift to the long view of the tragedy.

In this light, the much anticipated second printing of *Witness to History*, the Werdiger Edition, is nothing less than a "game changer." Accessible and academically grounded – at over six hundred pages the book brings the gravitas to the proceedings its grave subject demands – *Witness to History* responds to the needs of lay readers and students while speaking with great insight and sensitivity to religious communities. Richly illustrated and engagingly written, the book provides a nation-by-nation account of how the Holocaust unfolded and includes a helpful multimedia DVD.

The extensive use of primary sources, eyewitness testimonies, maps, and scholarly literature, makes *Witness to History* and its DVD the "go-to" reference source for lay readers as well as a brilliantly realized textbook for students in a wide range of educational settings. Notably, the book breaks new ground in exploring the underreported Orthodox and Sephardic Jewish experience during the Holocaust. A veritable "A-list" of Holocaust scholars each contributed to chapters pertaining to their area of expertise.

Witness to History is a deeply compassionate work. It restores to life the historical narrative of an unarmed Jewish nation under existential threat that nonetheless denied the Nazis their "Final Solution" through an arsenal of faith, dignity, and courage. Likewise, the book introduces to us those long-forgotten non-Jews – the "righteous among the nations"—who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. Herein lies the true power of *Witness to History*. As a work of scholarship, it not only informs but also transforms our understanding of the Holocaust. In doing so, *Witness to History* renders the victims' lives and legacy relevant and immediate to our time and our lives, and for generations to come.

List Price \$60. Published by Project Witness, Hardcover, 613 pages.

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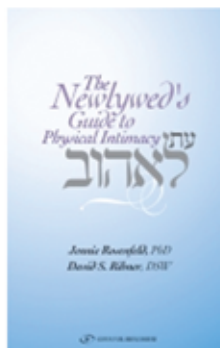
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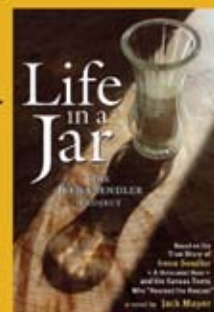
Life in a Jar
The Irena Sendler Project by Jack Mayer

"You won't be able to put this book down!" – reader from Canada

We would like to introduce you to a new book by Jack Mayer on the heart-warming story of the courageous Holocaust rescuer from Poland who saved 2,500 Jewish children, Irena Sendler, and the Kansas kids who discovered her. This work of 378 pages and 34 photographs, shares the beautiful story of Irena Sendler's life. She gave incredible hope in the dark hour of the Holocaust and is still such a light in the darkness.

Books may be purchased at www.irenasendler.org.

Note from a Jewish child survivor: "The book is very powerful; I could not put it down. Irena's devotion to making a difference is very inspiring."



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ANGELS AT THE TABLE: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO CELEBRATING SHABBAT

by Yvette Alt Miller, Ph.D.

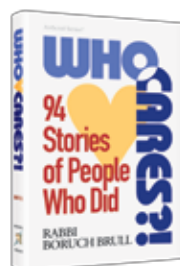
At last: a clear, practical guide to the weekly Jewish holiday of Shabbat. The Torah teaches that Shabbat is a taste of the World to Come but not everyone knows how to appreciate it. Here is a book that helps readers tap into thousands of years of Jewish tradition to learn how to savor each Shabbat, claiming its sweetness and majestic heritage as their own.

Angels at the Table: A Practical Guide to Celebrating Shabbat uses clear, straightforward language to describe and explain the practices, rituals, customs and prayers of a traditional Shabbat. It includes stories, songs, prayers, recipes, anecdotes and insights.

Whatever your level of knowledge or religious observance, *Angels at the Table* will answer your questions and become your must trusted resource in celebrating Shabbat.

In the words of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of Great Britain, "Keeping Shabbat is a life changing experience and one of the surest routes I know to deep and lasting happiness. Yvette Miller has written a beautiful book about it: read it and it might just change your life."

List Price: \$34.95. Continuum Books, Hardcover, 384 pages. Continuum.co.uk



WHO CARES?!

94 STORIES OF PEOPLE WHO DID

by Rabbi Boruch Brull

Who cares? We all do! In a world where headlines and news broadcasts are all about violence, corruption, and anger, the word *chesed* (kindness) sounds very good.

In this marvelous collection of almost a hundred true stories, author Rabbi Boruch Brull finds *chesed* in so many places and in so many different forms. He finds it in a pair of socks tailored to fit a student's "flip-flops" and in a wedding put together in 18 hours so that the bride's sick mother can attend. He discovers extraordinary acts of kindness during a hurricane in Miami, in a surgical recovery room in Boro Park, and in a Displaced Persons camp after the Holocaust.

Unexpected, heartwarming, often amazing, and always inspiring, *Who Cares?!* will light up our lives and show us how to find the kindness that is all around us. Because, ultimately, we all do care.

List Price \$24.99. ArtScroll/Mesorah Publications, Hardcover, 364 pages. Artscroll.com

An Interview with Author Yvette Alt Miller

AJS: What did you hope to accomplish with *Angels at the Table*?

YAM: I think of this book as a toolbox. Shabbat is a gift from God to every Jew, but many of us are unsure how to fully use it. *Angels at the Table: A Practical Guide to Celebrating Shabbat* takes readers through every part of a traditional Shabbat. It uses humor, anecdotes, personal stories, quotes from Jewish sources and even an occasional joke. And it covers the whole day – from before candle-lighting on Friday through Havdalah (the ceremony that marks the end of Shabbat) Saturday night.

AJS: I notice you say “celebrating” Shabbat rather than “keeping” or “observing” it. Why?

YAM: One of my main goals was to stress the appeal of Shabbat. It’s not just something to observe – it’s something to celebrate. Friday night dinner should be the highlight of the week for everyone in the family.

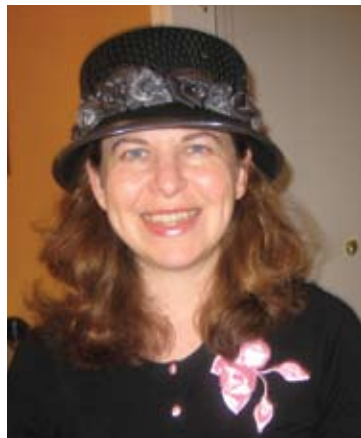
With *Angels at the Table: A Practical Guide to Celebrating Shabbat*, I want to help Jewish readers dip into the beauty of this day and enhance their own celebrations of it.

AJS: How has *Angels at the Table* Been Received?

YAM: Thank G-d, it’s been picked up by lots of rabbis and Jewish educators, and was already used in an international Jewish Learning Institute course that was offered in 330 locations worldwide.

AJS: What is your favorite part of the book?

YAM: Singing is a big part of Shabbat. Since this book is aimed at beginners as well as those with a strong Jewish background, I had a lot of fun selecting Jewish songs that appeal to everybody, and including them – along with other resources – in the back of the book.



*Yvette Alt Miller, Ph.D. is a popular contributor to Jewish websites such as aish.com and chabad.org. Her recent book *Angels at the Table: A Practical Guide to Celebrating Shabbat* (Continuum 2011) introduces readers to the beauty of a traditional Shabbat.*

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Reaching Out to Israeli Students

Ruach Yehudit (Jewish Spirit) is Strengthening Jewish Knowledge, Awareness and Connection in Israeli Public Schools

by David Possess

For the State of Israel's first few decades, the Ministry of Education passionately backed the teaching of Jewish subjects in the nation's schools. The goal was to instill a strong sense of Jewish identity and develop a generation of Israelis who would grow up as knowledgeable Jews. Even the most secular schools maintained rigorous coursework in Bible (Tanach), Talmud and Jewish law (Halacha).

In recent decades, this standard has sadly vanished. Today, the majority of Israeli secular schools no longer include any traditional Jewish content whatsoever. Accordingly, their graduates lack even a basic understanding of Jewish culture, let alone the deeper, more inspiring ideas and tenets of Judaism, and they struggle to make sense of their own Jewish identities. Bereft of the answers Judaism provides to even fundamental questions about life, today's Israel risks producing generation after generation of "sons who do not know how to ask" - children who share no common values with their heritage, and have no religious bond with their people.

It is no wonder that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently said, "I see strengthening Jewish identity, both in Israel and abroad, as absolutely critical to the future of our people."



Solving the "Crisis of Identity"

Jewish Spirit (Ruach Yehudit) is the name of an organization established in 2007 to help Israeli youth connect to their Jewish culture. Working with middle school and high school students within the Israeli public school system, Jewish Spirit provides a unique and enriching learning experience that inspires feelings of belonging and that demonstrates the relevance of Judaism to their lives. Within the next three years, Jewish Spirit expects to operate in one third to one half of the public schools in Israel. Training seminars for school teachers and university students in the field of Jewish education will also be expanded.

Jewish Spirit is an informal educational program that uses modern, relevant, and hands-on methods to bring Jewish culture to schools throughout Israel. They do not preach, judge or proselytize. Rather, students learn about Jewish ideas in the context of Jewish culture rather than faith, which allows

students to relate to their heritage in a way that feels right for them and their particular circumstances.

The program provides a setting in which students can experience – and experiment with – Jewish concepts such as moral values, life-cycle events, festivals and symbols. It is a forum that focuses specifically on their world as adolescents and that engages them to explore topics they care about, offering a unique and enriching learning experience that inspires feelings of belonging.

Working with middle school and high school students within the Israeli public school system, Jewish Spirit provides a unique and enriching learning experience that inspires feelings of belonging and that demonstrates the relevance of Judaism to their lives.

The program is led by a professional and experienced team of administrators and educators, from both observant and non-observant backgrounds. The Jewish Spirit staff is comprised of young academics, trained in Jewish philosophy and culture, who work in full collaboration with the schools' professional staff. School teachers also attend Judaism workshops held by the staff.

The students who encounter Jewish Spirit tend to be facing complex identity issues, such as their role within the family or in society at large. The staff helps them address those issues through diverse enrichment activities – art,



drama, discussion and debate – based on lessons drawn from the wisdom of Jewish texts. Jewish Spirit counselors meet with their students in small groups, which fosters an informal, fertile atmosphere for the exchange of thoughts, ideas, doubts and feelings – in short, a true, learning environment.

Jewish Spirit in Action

This spring, a Jewish Spirit instructor visiting a boarding school in southern Tel Aviv entered class to find a student who was obviously angry and upset, sitting with his back to the rest of the class and his hands crossed. No matter what the teacher did, the boy refused to take part in the lesson. Finally, he told them what was wrong.

Fifty shekels (about \$15), which was supposed to last him for two weeks, had been stolen the previous night. The teacher helped him try to find the lost bill among his belongings, but to no avail. The boy was so distraught that the teacher finally pulled fifty shekels out of her own wallet and handed it to him. "Take it," she said, "I don't want to see you so upset." The boy took the bill and participated in the entire lesson, which was discussing the inner meaning of Shabbat.

Within the next three years, Jewish Spirit expects to operate in one third to one half of the public schools in Israel.

As the lesson ended, the boy approached the teacher again, saying, "I am sorry but I can't take it," and tried handing the fifty-shekel bill back to her. She told him not to worry about it, saying he should take it as a gift. The boy then confided to her that he now realized that the money wasn't the real issue. He continued, saying that it was really the fact that he felt how no one cared about him or respected him or his property. But now, knowing that someone cares as much as she did meant the world to him.

Awakening Doron

Doron, a teenager from Ashkelon, was obviously struggling. Showing little if any interest in his studies or in school activities, he was the source of a lot of the troubles and fights in school, often getting tossed out of class and sent to the principal's office. Recently, the principal was surprised to find Doron there on his own, having become so excited by an assignment that he wanted to share it with others.

The students who encounter Jewish Spirit tend to be facing complex identity issues, such as their role within the family or in society at large.

The subject of his Jewish Spirit class was honoring one's parents, and the students were told to go out and help their parents with Shabbat grocery shopping. While he didn't indicate why, Doron was clearly thrilled to be participating in this activity. The teacher knew how rare it was for him to be excited about anything. She was so impressed with Jewish Spirit's ability to bring Doron out of his shell and connect with him that when the Education Ministry representative was considering allowing the program to continue at the school, she used his story as the clincher.

The Results Are In!

The Jewish Spirit program — currently in its fifth year — has grown to become the largest one of its kind in Israel. Fundamental to its phenomenal growth is its unique partnership with the Israeli Ministries of Education and Immigrant

Absorption as their preferred provider of Jewish heritage, Jewish cultural and Zionist educational programming in Israel's secular secondary schools. This special relationship facilitates Jewish Spirit's entry into an increasing number of venues. Since 2007, the number of classrooms added has steadily increased, with 183 total classes in 2009, 254 in 2010, and close to 400 classes in 65 schools in 2011.



And the Program is Working!

Annual findings from institutional professionals speak to the effectiveness of the Jewish Spirit program:

- A steady increase in the quality of the program
- A high level of professionalism
- Outstanding educational methods and a significantly valuable impact on program students
- 60% of students feel the program introduced them to new concepts and views.
- Close to 75% indicated they are better acquainted with Jewish culture, and almost two-thirds citing clearer understanding.
- Nearly 50% of students report an improvement in interpersonal relationships, while over one-third report improvements in family relationships.

Jewish Spirit Success Stories Continue to Grow

Jewish Spirit is "turning on lights" by increasing students' awareness of, and appreciation for, their Jewish heritage. While this expansion and positive results are certainly palpable, it is the stories of young people - whose lives have been notably impacted by the Jewish Spirit program — that truly speak the loudest.



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Missionaries on Campus: The Cause and the Cure

by AJS Staff Writers

As freshman Josh W. walked across the quad of the Student Union at City College last March, he noticed two curious signs posted below a literature display. "Free Bibles for all students — Free Tanakhim for Jewish students," they read.

"This is an odd mix," he thought, and veered left to take a closer look at the loose assortment of books scattered on the two folding tables. Indeed, there was a variety of paperback and hardcover Bibles, bearing such diverse names as "Holy Bible," "Good News Bible," "the New International Bible," and more. A few had a distinctive Hebrew theme, like "the Complete Jewish Bible" and "the Jewish Annotated New Testament."

Behind the tables stood Max, a tall, stocky man with a thin beard, sporting a tweed, herringbone driving cap. Josh judged him to be in his late 20's. "Are you selling these?" Josh queried.

"Actually I'm giving away a copy of your choice if you can answer four questions," Max smiled.

"Like Passover?" Josh offered.

"Even more significant than Passover," Max enthused.

"Ok, I'm game," Josh said.

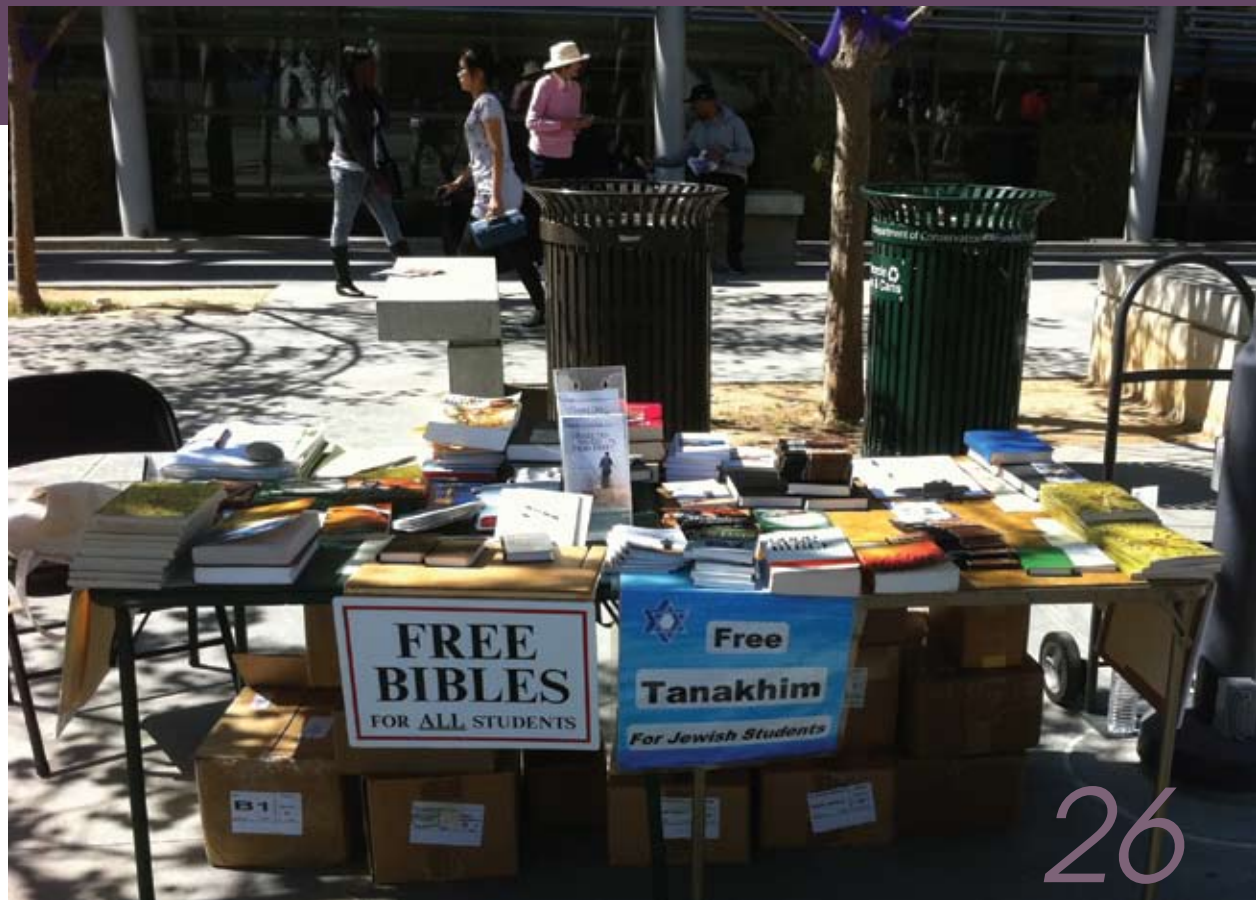
"Are you Jewish?"

"Yes, I am."

"There are some 300 prophecies in the Jewish Bible that speak of the Messiah. Have you read them?"

"No, I haven't."

"Did you ever hear in Jewish day school that you can actually know the Messiah, in the same way you know a good friend?"



"I never heard that one!"

"We're having a Jewish Discovery dinner this Friday night just off campus. It's free and it's kosher. We'll talk about some of these prophecies. May I invite you to have dinner with us?"

"Cool! Sounds like fun."

"Great — if give me your cell number, I'll text you directions. And please take whatever Bible here you like."

In literally less than a minute, Josh has been charmed by Max, a seasoned campus missionary who is himself a product of a nominal Jewish home.

Max had attended a free Passover Seder during his sophomore year at university, where he discovered what the missionary Seder leader called "Messiah in the Passover."

While the above exchange may sound Jewish, it's not. Max's core beliefs are those of an evangelical Christian who believes that the only way to heaven is through faith in Jesus. And Josh is a piece of gefilte fish away from becoming a de facto Christian, albeit in Jewish garb.

Max, however, did not grow up with these beliefs. Disenchanted with what he called "wooden ritual with little spiritual," he had attended a free Passover Seder during his sophomore year at university, where he discovered what the missionary Seder leader called "Messiah in the Passover." Now a part-time graduate student, Max spends several hours a week reaching out to "share his faith" with other Jews on campus.

Missionary activity targeting Jews on campus is at an all-time high.

Missionary Activity at All-Time High

According to Rabbi Zalman Kravitz, educational director for the LA-based branch of Jews for Judaism, missionary activity targeting Jews on campus is at an all-time high. "It's not new, but it is more aggressive and sophisticated than when the messianic movement began over 30 years ago. Their approach has a distinctively Jewish look and feel that can be initially attractive to Jews with

little Jewish background. Overall, missionaries invest over \$250 million annually to convert Jews. It's no surprise that the messianic movement receives a lot of missionary support."

Kravitz explains that a missionary uses "a different dictionary" when using such words as Bible, God, salvation, faith, sin, sacrifice, Torah, commandments, messiah, savior, synagogue, rabbi, and prophecy. "This can be confusing to an uninformed Jew who thinks she shares a common language with the missionary, but these words mean different things to Christians than to Jews," Kravitz notes. (Incidentally, Rabbi Zalman Kravitz's father, Rabbi Benzion Kravitz, was the founder of Jews for Judaism International and authored a well-known booklet *The Jewish Response to Missionaries*. It is available in seven languages as a PDF download at JewsForJudaism.org under the Resources section on the left side of the home page.)

Rabbi Moshe Shulman is the founder of NY-based Judaism's Answer and is an expert in missionary theology and strategies. "Years ago," he says, "Missionaries would quote a few key Bible passages into which they would paint the person of Jesus. Today, they are data-mining the Talmud, the Midrash and other rabbinic sources to project him into those writings. All of this is an attempt to legitimize messianic Judaism as the 'continuing story' of the Jewish Bible and the necessity of

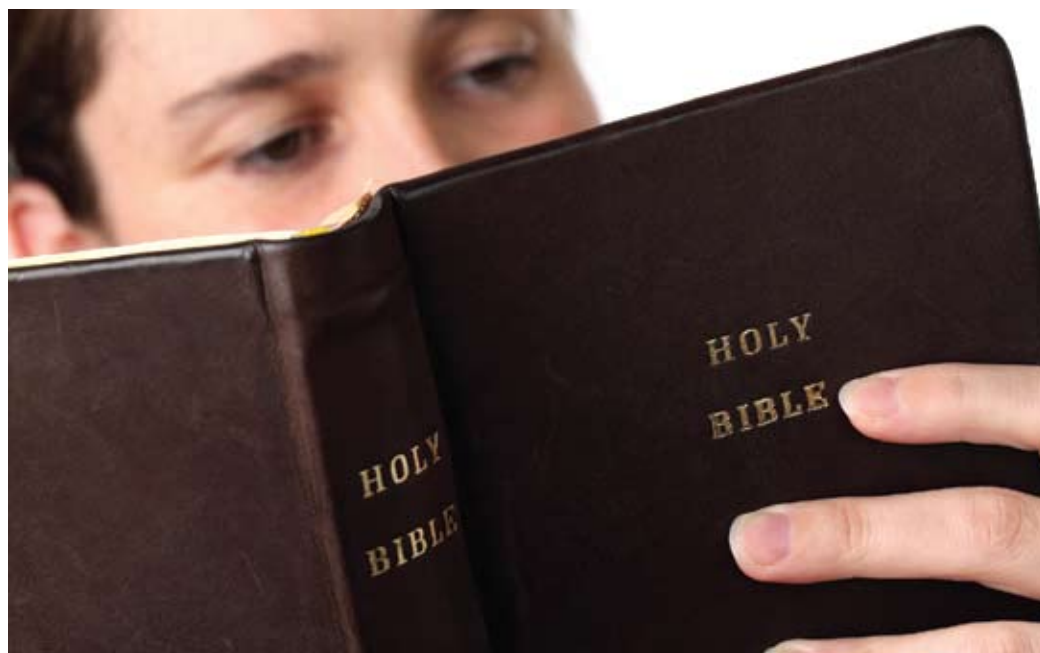
believing in him as the messiah (though they call him by the Hebrew name 'Yeshua Hamashiach').

"At its core, though, messianic Judaism is really evangelical Christianity wrapped up in a tallit. Though they never say this up front, they believe that Jesus is not just the messiah but the son of God — a deity in the flesh. To a Jew, that's plain idolatry." (Rabbi Shulman has uploaded a number of helpful articles on some of the more complex missionary arguments on his website JudaismsAnswer.com).

The ArtScroll English Tanach

Few people have more of an insider's view of the messianic movement than Gavriel Aryeh Sanders, a Torah-observant convert who was formerly an evangelical minister and a Hebrew-speaking missionary in Israel for nearly four years. Sanders notes that "most Jews think of missionaries as clever deceivers; they are not. They are sincere believers. The power of that sincerity manifests in a three-fold belief in prophecies misconstrued to be fulfilled in Jesus, in his alleged resurrection, and through their personal testimony of a changed life through faith. To a 'Jew for nothing,' Jews for Jesus look like they've found something. And they have — it's just not Jewish."

Returning to the college campus, Rabbi Michael Skobac of the Toronto branch of Jews for Judaism says that Jews themselves provide missionaries with the needed leverage to persuade a student to convert, whether to overt Christianity or the more "kosher-style" messianic movement. "Collectively, we've never known less about who we are, where we come from, or what our forebears believed, practiced, and sometimes died for. We are woefully ignorant — and that's the chink in our armor. When it comes to knowing the classic Jewish texts our great-grandparents knew, we're largely illiterate. The good news, though, is that, these days, this condition is very easy to correct."



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"There is no substitute for providing our Jewish students with a readable translation of Tanach that is faithful to the Hebrew and supported by a classic commentary that gives a clear Jewish perspective on what our Bible says." — Gavriel Aryeh Sanders

One of the corrective resources described by Rabbi Skobac is the recently released ArtScroll English Tanach: the Jewish Bible with insights from classic rabbinic thought (ArtScroll Mesorah Publications). Its commentary addresses a number of passages which are commonly mistranslated in non-Jewish English Bibles.

Skobac says, "Missionaries use Leviticus 17:11 to 'prove' that forgiveness of sins is only possible through a blood sacrifice. They declare the death of Jesus to be the ultimate and final sacrifice for the sins of all. But as this English Tanach's commentary makes clear, blood was but one of several methods by which atonement was achieved. In explaining the classic Jewish view, this Bible clarifies many other missionary proof texts, such as the 'virgin birth' (Isa. 7:14), 'messiah born in Bethlehem' (Michah 5:1), the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, and others."

Gavriel Sanders has been at the forefront of an effort to raise funds to distribute an outreach edition of the ArtScroll English Tanach on college campuses. "We've just begun really, but there is no substitute for providing our Jewish students with a readable translation of Tanach that is faithful to the Hebrew and supported by a classic commentary that gives a clear Jewish perspective on what our Bible says." Sanders points out that, without being polemical, the ArtScroll Tanach does treat a number of the major passages cited by missionaries. Sanders cautions that "no Jewish student should be sent off to college without a copy of this English Tanach. Chances are high that he or she will have a missionary encounter, even at Brandeis and even in Israel. Make sure your son or daughter is equipped with knowledge beforehand."

Educating Our Students

Acquiring the skills to counter a missionary is a task unto itself. Los Angeles attorney Asher Norman, author of *26 Reasons Why Jews Don't Believe in Jesus* (26reasons.com), describes his initial inadequacy when he was unable to defend his own Jewish beliefs when challenged by a missionary. "I realized right away that I was the typical American Jew — more American than Jew.



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And now this guy that has co-opted my Bible is telling me I'm going to hell and is showing me how much more he knows. And he certainly did know my Bible better than I did!"

Rabbi Tovia Singer (outreachJudaism.org) has been a well-known debater of missionaries for over twenty-five years, particularly on college campuses. In his early days, he would play a dual role, appearing on stage first as a missionary dressed in a "Jews for Jesus" tee-shirt. After sufficiently riling the audience with "messianic proof texts" and changed-life testimonies, he would quickly exit the stage, change his shirt, and appear moments later to refute the missionary presentation he'd just made.

Through the years, he has distilled his missionary refutations into a comprehensive 472-page book and 24-part audio series called *Let's Get Biblical: Why Doesn't Judaism Accept the Christian Messiah?* The audio series is available as a free MP3 download online at SimpleToRemember.com




under the Top Speakers column. The book is available, along with many articles, at his website: outreachJudaism.org.

Let's return to the dialog in the opening paragraphs above. Josh and Max were created

for this article, but the conversation between them is representative of a standard missionary encounter, and the picture of the literature table is very real. It was taken March 10, 2011 at Santa Monica City College and comes to us courtesy of Jews for Judaism of Los Angeles.

Josh and Max both illustrate a serious challenge to Jewish continuity — as well as a serious solution, hinted to by the saying "when the People of the Book become separated from the Book, they eventually separate from the People." We also learn another important lesson from this pair: If we don't provide our Jewish students with an authentic copy of the Jewish Scripture, someone else will — and it won't be authentically Jewish. The ArtScroll English Tanach answers this need (ArtScroll.com/bible).

Finally, if you yourself have never read the Jewish Bible from cover to cover, make this the year you take your essential Jewish learning to a new level. Your future generations will thank you! 

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Students from University of Pennsylvania on a trip to Cordova, Spain, posing in front of the statue of Maimonides in the Jewish Quarter.

Campus Spirit Rising

By Charlotte Friedland, Profiles by Amy Dubitsky

I spotted them out of the corner of my eye at a wedding smorg in Baltimore. A dozen collegiates sat in a tight circle listening raptly as a young man at the nucleus spoke in rapid animation. When the ceremony was about to start, they respectfully seated themselves in the back rows and watched intently as the bride and groom, their parents, and a cadre of rabbis crowded under the *chupah*. The group seemed more like tourists than guests, and from their expressive faces it appeared they were exploring what might have been an exotic city — or another planet.

They meandered together toward the reception hall, their guide fielding questions. I watched them as they took up positions around the perimeters of the room where they could observe jubilant guests encircling the bride

and groom respectively. As the music grew louder and the dancing moved ever faster, hands reached out and pulled one after another from this group into the circles. Surprised at first, the “tourists” linked arms and danced with joyous abandon.

Who were they? What were they doing at a wedding where they clearly did not know the celebrants? My curiosity overpowered me. Edging close to one of them, I whispered, “friends of the bride?”

“Uh, no.”

“The groom, then?”

“Uh uh.” Then she brightened a bit. “We’re with Maimonides!”

Though he looked a bit rabbinic, their young mentor didn’t resemble Maimonides to my mind. Besides, wasn’t Maimonides a twelfth-century philosopher?

One Hart becomes Heart 2 Heart

Most college students are open to having a good time with a few friends but walking into a Shabbat dinner on campus with 799 other people that you don't know can be daunting, especially if you don't know that much about Shabbat, either. When Hart Levine was a student at University of Pennsylvania, he sensed that too many students were finding all this too much. He observed that although 800 or so students came to Hillel events at the beginning of the school year, by the second semester, that number was down to about 400, most of whom were Orthodox.



Hart Levine (left) and his peers at a Heart2Heart Chanukah celebration at University of Pennsylvania, December 2009.

Hart realized that something was missing – heart. Many students, he felt, needed a more personal connection, which he felt ought to come from fellow students. So he planned a smaller Shabbat meal based on personal invitations. He invited five Shabbat-observant students and ten who were unaffiliated. Some stayed for four hours. One had such a great time, she said, "I want to do this every week!"

During the first year of what would soon become a national movement, Hart arranged nine more Shabbat meals like the first. Simply having his friends

invite some of their less involved peers they knew from classes or other campus activities caused a major ripple effect. By Hart's senior year, he arranged 35 Shabbat meals, and Passover seders, too. "One invitation with some heart can make all the difference," says Hart, now 24.

Hart is working with about 1,000 students on 100 campuses to help "bridge the gap" between more actively Jewish students and those who are less affiliated.

Hart has taken his proven theory and created The Heart 2 Heart Project, mobilizing students around the country to reach out to each other. Some of the campuses that are participating in The Heart 2 Heart Project are: University of Maryland, NYU, Columbia, Brandeis, Rutgers, Cornell, Princeton, Northwestern and Queens College. Hart is working with about 1,000 students on 100 campuses (50 actively) to help "bridge the gap" between more actively Jewish students and those who are less affiliated, bringing everyone together to celebrate Shabbat in warm and friendly atmosphere.

While the name of the Heart 2 Heart project may have started out as a play on his name, Hart Levine has proven that one person can make a difference to the lives of many and that each individual has that potential to make that impact. Aside from contributing to the lives of the many students who have become more active in Jewish life on campus and beyond, Hart has empowered the already active students to look beyond themselves and to recognize their ability to create positive change. "Everyone has a heart that they can use for this purpose," says Hart. That's a lesson we can learn at any time in life.

For more information, visit www.theheart2heartproject.org.

I pursued my informant. "Is that Maimonides?" I asked pointing to their leader. "LOL! We're 'Maimonides Fellows' from the University of Maryland. The rabbi brought us here to experience a religious wedding. Gotta tell you, I've never seen anything like this!" At this point, a number of her friends gathered round. "Nope never! This totally blows me away..." "Who knew a Jewish wedding could be so much fun?" "I'd love to get married this way..." Some were astounded, others giddy, but all were inspired.

Determined to find out more about the Maimonides Fellowships, I've since discovered that it is one of several highly effective college outreach programs, the flagship of a movement that stretches across the USA and around the world – educating, motivating and building better Jews. This time, it was my turn to be blown away.

Associated primarily with an organization called Meor, Maimonides Leaders Fellowships got its start at the University of Michigan in the late 1990s. Paying the students a small stipend to meet for 2-3 hours per week to explore their Jewish heritage, the semester-long program features formal

Spreading JAAM — in Michigan and Beyond



Rabbi Fully Eisenberger teaching Maimonides Leaders Fellowship at the JRC on campus at University of Michigan.

Jewish outreach is found on college campuses all over the United States, but in 1980, Rabbi Avraham Jacobovitz was one of the first to recognize the need for organized yet informal Jewish education on campus. It started when he created a Sunday program for high-schoolers. A group would get together with Rabbi Jacobovitz, who is originally from Tel Aviv, for breakfast and 2 hours of learning. "After a while, some of the kids brought some of their college-aged friends along and I saw their thirst and enthusiasm for Judaism and learning."

Rabbi Jacobovitz started his first program on the campus of Michigan State University and soon launched programs on campuses throughout the state (calling them at the time The Jewish Learning Network of Michigan). In 1994, he purchased a building at the University of Michigan which became a primary facility for programming and shabbatons. It was in 1999 that "Rabbi J," as he came to be known, renamed the program Jewish Awareness America, or JAAM, as his programming ideas began to "spread" to campuses throughout the United States.

In 2001, Rabbi J took the next step in campus outreach when he launched the groundbreaking Maimonides Fellowship Program, beginning with 17 students on the University of Michigan campus. The Maimonides Fellowship required a commitment from students to maintain a journal to chart their growth over the 10-week program, attend all of a special series of classes, two shabbatonim, and a trip to another Jewish community. In return the students qualified for a \$500 stipend, funded in part by the Wolfson foundation and partially through local fundraising, and received a certificate at an awards ceremony at the completion of the program.

The Maimonides Fellowship Program is now offered on 50 campuses throughout North America, with thousands of students participating each year.

Ten years later, Rabbi Jacobovitz can report with pride that the Maimonides Fellowship Program is now offered on 50 campuses throughout North America, with thousands of students participating each year.

Rabbi Fully Eisenberger and his wife Shani are now at the helm of outreach at the University of Michigan's campus outreach, now called the Jewish Resource Center or JRC. They tap into the rich resources of the local, Detroit Jewish community and have been leading Israeli-government sponsored trips to Israel to train students to be advocates for Israel on campus. That is where they can now meet Rabbi J, as he has relocated to Ramat Beit Shemesh in Israel.

"I have not retired," say the Rabbi, "There are many young Rabbis in the United States that can connect to the students on campuses. I have come back to Israel to create a support system and to act as a resource for the many graduates of the Maimonides program that come to Israel to continue their Judaic studies." A true leader in campus outreach, Rabbi J leaves a true legacy in North America — we can only await the great work he will undoubtedly contribute in the Land of Israel.

classes, informal discussions, a traditional Shabbat experience, as well as off-campus excursions, such as attending an observant Jewish wedding (with the permission of the wedding party, of course.) Not every applicant is selected to participate, and the prestigious program goes out of its way to provide students with guest speakers who will ignite their passion for Jewish communal leadership. The program has been replicated on dozens of

college campuses from Boston to Berkeley, including the Ivy League schools, educating approximately 3,000 students in the past year alone.

The experience is transformational. Students who participate develop a deep personal identity with the Jewish people, a healthy respect for Torah wisdom and an abiding love for Israel. Sometimes they are shocked to learn just how modern our ancient Jewish texts can be — how every aspect of life is open for exploration and understanding. It's theirs for the asking — the Jewish take on spirituality, sex, mysticism — and nothing is off the agenda.

More often than not, their wives and children play a very significant role – schmoozing, teaching, and simply "being there" as a warm family environment for students who may be far from home.

At the Maryland Jewish Experience (known as MJX), for example, those Maimonides Fellows I encountered – and all Jewish students – can choose from a kaleidoscope of activities including weekly Shabbat meals and kosher cooking classes. They can opt for a second, more advanced round of Maimonides classes ("Maimonides Reloaded") or access Book-a-Rabbi for one-on-one study.

Campus programs for Jewish students are not new, of course. Hillel and Chabad have been on or near American campuses for years, each bringing its unique style of Jewish experience to those who seek it. And sometimes, just one or two dynamic people have created awareness where there was none. Rabbi Avraham Jacobovitz, an Israeli with a flair for engaging student minds and hearts, started his Jewish Learning Network back in 1980, eventually building (in 1996) the Jewish Resource Center at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, serving 6,000 Jewish students and faculty. It was through his most recently innovated national program for students, Jewish Awareness America (JAAM), founded in 2001, that he launched Maimonides Leaders Fellowships. The rapid proliferation of the program cross-country and its startling success exceeded even his expectations. Further responding to myriad requests, Rabbi Jacobovitz also authored *Perfect Strangers: redefining intermarriage*, a straightforward discussion of a complex topic, to enable those contemplating intermarriage to make an informed decision.

Deep, genuine concern about each student's life – his studies, his family, his future career – is the hallmark of campus outreach.

In recent years, what has changed is the dynamic and sophistication of campus outreach, including the considerable numbers of yeshiva-educated, charismatic men and women now working full time in outreach programs. Rabbi Avraham Edelstein is director of Ner Le'Elef, a funding and resource umbrella organization based in Jerusalem that reaches 102 American campuses through the programs of Meor, Aish HaTorah, Ohr Somayach and

other institutions. In the past academic year, Ner Le'Elef tabulated more than 20,000 students walking through the doors of American outreach programs, including 7,500 – 8,200 who are deeply involved participants. And the numbers escalate dramatically each year.



Students in front of "the box" at MJX – Maryland Jewish Experience at University of Maryland with Rabbi Ari Koretsky (top center) and Rabbi Ozzie Burnham (back right).

He credits the rapid growth of such programs in the past five years to a significant shift in thinking within the Orthodox community: major philanthropists, anchored by the Wolfson Foundation, have given priority to campus outreach, and rabbinic leadership has put its strength full square behind the efforts. With the encouragement of their mentors, the availability of professional training, and funding provided for their livelihood, young rabbis have enthusiastically answered the call. More often than not, their wives and children play a very significant role – schmoozing, teaching, and simply "being there" as a warm family environment for students who may be far from home.

The Lakewood Fellowship: Yeshiva for a Week

Beth Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, New Jersey is the largest yeshiva in the United States and is home to approximately 6,000 students from around the world. Most of these students have strong backgrounds in Talmudic studies and many areas of Jewish learning, and many aspire to become rabbis or community leaders. Twice a year, however, it is home to another group as well: participants in The Lakewood Fellowship, a week-long program for students who have never visited a yeshiva much less attended one. A program of Torah Links, the outreach division of Beth Medrash Govoha, The Lakewood Fellowship is designed to give students a yeshiva experience they will never forget.

Aside from the intense learning
experience, the men are also treated
to some intense fun.

Acceptance into The Lakewood Fellowship requires a strong recommendation from a campus outreach director, an online application and an interview. The seventy-seven students that have been accepted and participated over four sessions so far have experienced a week of intense learning and complete immersion into the life of the Yeshiva and its surrounding community.

Each day the students participate in lectures on topics such as Jewish Ethics, parsha with the commentaries of Rashi and Ramban, an in-depth analysis of contemporary Talmud and presentations such as "The Interface of Medicine and Halacha" and "Balancing a Professional Life with Torah Values." Additionally, one-on-one "chavrusa" style Talmud learning sessions are held, pairing up each fellowship participant with a Beth Medrash Govoha graduate student.

"The program exceeded all of my expectations," expressed Zach Miller on the Lakewood Fellowship web site. "It was the first time I really learned Talmud from the actual text. It was such a positive, enlightening experience that I wouldn't trade this week for anything in the entire world."

Aside from the intense learning experience, the men are also treated to some intense fun. Rock climbing, laser tag, sports, barbecues, and boating are some of the lighter items on the itinerary. Of course what trip to the NY area would be complete without a Mets or Giants game, too?

According to Rabbi Aaron Gruman, director of Torah Links, one of the greatest highlights of the program is a melave malke and kumsitz with inspirational singer Rabbi Yehuda Green. While in Lakewood the fellows are hosted by area families whom they often keep in touch with long after they return to their own college campuses. Rabbi Gruman also explained that some of the fellows set up chavrusa study sessions via Skype with the mentors they had learned with in Lakewood.



Fellow Ryan Weiss commented, "All of these rabbis are as intelligent as they are kind, and they are as considerate as they are welcoming. I hope to come back soon."

"Even if you feel trepidation going into it," says another participant, Josh Schwartz, "leaving you feel completely at ease. I'm going to be glowing for a month... for a year."

For more information, visit www.lakewoodfellowship.com.

You have to really care, say campus outreach workers. It's not enough to engage students in Torah classes, not enough to offer Jewish holiday services or barbecues. Deep, genuine concern about each student's life — his studies, his family, his future career — is the hallmark of campus outreach. "It's not about programs, it's about process," says Bracha Zaret of the Jewish Awareness Movement (JAM) in California. Pioneers in campus outreach, Bracha and her husband, Rabbi Moshe Zaret, founded JAM in 1996, eventually building a multi-million dollar JAM center at UCLA and placing highly motivated, dynamic young couples to mentor students at the University of Southern California (including San Diego and Santa Barbara campuses) and San Diego State University. Their brand of Judaism is something most students have never encountered, even in their dreams, and the effect is far reaching.



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Now going into her senior year at UCLA, Lisa Weissnar recounts how her involvement with JAM started in her freshman year due to a bout of pneumonia. Her sorority and friends were disappointed that she couldn't join in their fun, but it was JAM Rabbi Jacob Rupp, his wife Julie and others whom she had casually met at JAM who came to her aid and nursed her through her illness. That simple act of *chesed* — basic, Jewish kindness — forged a connection that only grew stronger in the ensuing years. Lisa began to go to the Rupp's home for Shabbat, experiencing family togetherness (with no interruptions!), intriguing discussions (the *parshah* is cool — who knew?), and fab food (oh, the food!) "They opened my eyes to a new kind of Judaism," she recalls. "You develop deeper relationships with people at the Shabbat table because the conversation is about meaningful things. It's not like your usual superficial friendships that are based on, 'Oh, you like rock? Me too.'"

With the encouragement of the Zarets, the Rupps, and Rabbi and Mrs. Dovy Sales, Lisa went to study in Israel — extending her stay to attend Neve Yerushalayim, a women's seminary catering to beginners, where she learned more about her heritage and deepened her commitment. "I was so grateful to them and so excited about what I was experiencing, that I brought my friends to JAM. In fact our sorority became sort of a JAM sorority. Some of us started keeping Shabbat more seriously so we started a Shabbat Club, and it's growing."

This year, Lisa is looking forward to taking an apartment with some of her friends, and they plan to have a kosher kitchen. ("We're on the phone night and day with the rabbi about this.") After graduation, she looks forward to

I worry about them at night. If one of my students has a problem, I have a problem."

Passionate about Judaism and determined to make a difference, Rabbi Rupp is one of many — perhaps a majority — of outreach workers who themselves developed an attachment to Torah observant Judaism during their college years and went on to become active in this field. They understand the hesitation, the conflicts, the questions and the yearning in young hearts.



Students from JET-Chicago on Ohr Somayach's JLE Mentors Mission, overlooking the Hula valley in the Golan, Israel.

"Most Jews don't even know they're looking for Judaism" he conjectures. "But when they start to learn, they discover that the words of the Torah are very

"You develop deeper relationships with people at the Shabbat table because the conversation is about meaningful things. It's not like your usual superficial friendships that are based on, 'Oh, you like rock? Me too.'" — Lisa Weissnar, UCLA

spending more time at Neve before moving on to law school. "JAM really got me thinking about my values and helped me define how I want to work, what kind of life and family I want," Lisa reflects. How is her family reacting to these changes in Lisa's life? "My mother is glad that I find Judaism meaningful, so she's supportive. The JAM families invited her for Shabbat so she could better understand what I'm experiencing. And you know, she's been there several times, along with my brother and sister, and they all enjoy it."

Lisa's experience reflects the kind of one-on-one caring relationships fostered by the JAM environment. Rabbi Rupp put it quite simply: "Listen,

powerful. So there's an emotional component, an intellectual aspect, and the simple desire to understand how to relate to Israel and to other Jews." Eschewing the idea of lecturing large classes ("You can't individualize!"), he spends 5-6 hours a day teaching on campus, usually one-on-one.

Like JAM and Maimonides, most college outreach centers offer trips that enrich the students' Jewish experience and reinforce what they've learned. At the University of Pennsylvania, Rabbi Shmuel Lynn is campus rabbi for "some very smart kids," and their strong intellectual abilities demand Jewish studies that challenge their minds. He has implemented the Maimonides program there with great success. "We're here to empower them — through

information and inspiration — to make important decisions in their lives,” says Lynn.

Developing pride in being Jewish and understanding where each person fits into the chain of Jewish history is the goal of many trips Rabbi Lynn takes with his students. They’ve gone to Poland and Prague, to Spain and Morocco, to South Africa, and of course, to Israel. In each location, he connects them to a different facet of their heritage. “For instance,” he explains, “in Poland it’s not about hearing that Jews were led like sheep to slaughter in the Holocaust. It’s about exploring the vibrant, rich Judaism that existed in Europe before the war and learning about the tremendous acts of bravery that Jews exhibited in the concentration camps — how they ingeniously managed to keep many *mitzvot* at the risk of their lives. We don’t focus on anti-Semitism, we discover the tenacity and the endurance of the Jewish people, and we learn to understand why they held onto their Judaism against such odds.”

In Spain, the rabbi delves into *Kuzari*, a classic Spanish-Jewish text, and introduces his charges to the magnificent poetry, philosophy and culture of the medieval Spanish Jews that produced great thinkers, writers and diplomats such as Don Isaac Abarbanel, Nachmanides, and Maimonides. (The students have a special affinity for Maimonides, he notes.)



Trips to Israel are an integral part of all outreach efforts. Rabbi Zev Kahn, director of Chicago-based JET (Jewish Education Team), has turned his organization into a magnet for students from 20 colleges in Illinois. Foremost among these are University of Illinois at Chicago and at Urbana-Champaign, University of Chicago, DePaul and Loyola. Along with two other full-time rabbis, Rabbi Kahn’s organization provides a full range of learning and social opportunities including Shabbat hospitality, Maimonides programs and trips to Israel. Birthright is the entry level trip, but students who have been to Israel before or who want more advanced Judaic studies woven into their trip may opt for HaMerkaz, Meor, or Jewish Learning Experience itineraries. Ranging from 10 days to several weeks, each trip is geared to the needs of the particular group. No matter what their starting point, students learn that Israel isn’t only about horseback riding on the beach or falafel stands in Tel Aviv; they invariably discover Israel’s spiritual power, a quality that brings out Jewish longings they never knew existed.

On their trip to Spain, the rabbi delves into *Kuzari*, a classic Spanish-Jewish text, and introduces his charges to the magnificent poetry, philosophy and culture of the medieval Spanish Jews.

Journeys closer to home are also instrumental in crystalizing what it means to be Jewish. “Early in the semester, we take our Maimonides Fellows for a Shabbaton in New York,” says Rabbi Ari Koretzky, executive director of MJX. “It’s a real eye opener!” Placed in observant homes for Shabbat, students are amazed by the genuine warmth and hospitality of their hosts and the entire community. They build friendships “in a matter of hours,” says “Rabbi K.”

Ultimately, it’s all about Shabbat, whether students experience it far away or around the corner. At the University of Illinois-Champaign, students consider the JET House a home away from home with an average of 30 people coming for Shabbat. Rabbi Kahn surmises that one of the reasons that the Shabbat experience is compelling is because so many people are overwhelmed by electronics, 24/7. It’s a chance to unplug, to get away from the constant flicker of texts and emails. JET Rabbi Shalom Garfinkel notes that there is another attraction, more subtle at first, but remarkably powerful: “People sense something real, something authentic in the way the family members interact. They see a mother light candles welcoming Shabbat into her home, they watch a father bless his children; there is holiness here. And they realize that this is not just a family meal. The parents and children are connecting on a much deeper level.”

The warmth of the rabbis' families and the great traditional food are important components, "but it's not just about *cholent*," notes Rabbi Kahn. Students ask a lot of questions, and they are intrigued by the intellectual depth of Judaism. Relaxed in a non-judgmental atmosphere, in the company of like-minded Jews, they can ask, argue, and probe. And they leave anxious to continue the conversation into the next week. They can do that in a variety of Torah study programs or simply by contacting one of the rabbis to discuss, well, anything.

"They know I'll be there for them," remarks Rabbi Garfinkel. "They break up with their girlfriend, I get a text; they're wondering how to tell their parents they want to study in Israel, we'll schmooze; they want to do a *mitzvah* and don't know how, my phone will ring." He recounts how one of his students recently texted, "Rabbi I just got a mezuzah for my folks' house. What's the *brachah* [blessing]?" He texted him the blessing. Minutes later, the next text came, "Mezuzah's up. We all said *brachah*. *Todah rabbah!* [Thanks very much!]"

Utilizing Twitter and Facebook, rabbis can reach hundreds of students at a time, advertise upcoming events, and create a community of students supportive of each other's journey into Judaism. But it's the day to day

"They break up with their girlfriend, I get a text; they're wondering how to tell their parents they want to study in Israel, we'll schmooze; they want to do a *mitzvah* and don't know how, my phone will ring."

— Rabbi Shalom Garfinkel, Chicago

Friending Students on Facebook

While most people in their 20's and 30's are pretty tech savvy these days, those who reach out to college students need extensive knowledge of all the late-breaking methods of social media. Twitter, Vimeo, YouTube, and the quickly growing Google Plus, are popular, but according to the Executive Director of Jewish Arizonans on Campus, Rabbi Elimelech Adler, on campus, Facebook is still king. Students are "on Facebook" constantly throughout the day and is the most popular means of communication between campus rabbis and students.

"Virtually every student I meet becomes a Facebook friend," says Rabbi Adler. "It creates a tremendous opportunity, knowing that everything we post is in their line of sight and consciousness — and they are on it ten times a day." Rabbi Adler uses Facebook in many ways from the practical to the thought provoking. When he does send out a "tweet" or upload a video to YouTube, it posts to his Facebook page as well.

When events are held on campus — anything from a shabbaton to a trivia night — an event page is created. Aside from being an extremely practical, as it both informs students and takes their RSVP's, it also creates a great "buzz" that spreads faster than word of mouth. "Every time a student responds that they will be attending, the

other students can see that immediately," explains Rabbi Adler. "It builds excitement."

Campus rabbis also use Facebook to inspire. They post pictures of their sukkah or Chanukah menorah, for example, to give the students an extra moment of Judaism that day that they wouldn't have had. They also post thought provoking questions or articles to start dialogue with students.



With almost 1350 Facebook friends, Rabbi Adler appreciates that the web site allows him to keep in touch with people they usually wouldn't be able to. With that in mind, he turns the impersonal status updates and comments posted by students into opportunities to make personal connections. When a student's status reflects that they are going through a difficult time, Adler doesn't rely on Facebook to reply, but tries to make a personal phone call to check in with the student and be there as a support.

To be effective in reaching out to young adults, you have to be where they are. Today,

that means social media as much as anything. It's just one more way of keeping Jewish students connected.



contact, the continuous involvement in students' lives that builds a trusting relationship.

And it doesn't end at graduation. Anyone involved with college students — on any campus — will tell you that they make lifelong friends. Sometimes, specific programs keep them in touch. JET, for instance, not only helps find internships for students during their academic years, they also network to

help them find jobs, and have formed a young professionals group of former students (and their friends) that meets on a regular basis in Chicago. But even without a formal structure, campus outreach families keep tabs on their former students as they move from one stage of life to the next. "We'll get invited to a wedding or a *bris*, and we'll think back to the first time that student first crossed our threshold," says Rabbi Lynn. "They've become part of our family."

Twitter and Facebook, rabbis can reach hundreds of students at a time, advertise upcoming events, and create a community of students supportive of each other's journey into Judaism.

3

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The Mentor's Mission to Israel

Of all the campus outreach trips to Israel and in the US, the Ohr Somayach JLE Mentor Missions might be the most unique. The program sends students on a trip, but it also sends successful professionals who lead active Jewish lives to accompany them as "mentors." Learning and bonding with a rabbi is one thing, but learning and bonding with a 'regular' Jew who lives in the real world and maintains his observant lifestyle is another.

Josh Gorelik, found the program through JET — Jewish Education Team, on campus in the Chicago area and offers his perspective:



Josh and Gershon, both in caps, studying in Israel with two other students.


"When I first heard about the JLE trip from my local rabbi, it sounded like a great experience, but not something that I could see myself doing. Over time, though, I kept running into former participants who would get excited at the very mention of the trip, and had many great stories to share. My curiosity was escalating, but the idea of traveling halfway across the world for three weeks was

still a bit too nerve-racking to take seriously.

"To make a long story short, going on JLE was one of the best decisions I've ever made. After going back and forth in my mind and with my parents, I realized that this was a once in a lifetime opportunity that would be a great shame to pass up. The rabbis, madrichim (counselors) and mentors made me feel surprisingly very comfortable, and in no time, Israel felt like my new home. In fact, I loved being here so much, that I extended my trip. I have been here almost two months now, and I can't get enough.

"Having mentors on our trip was a very refreshing and eye-opening experience. When I first met with my mentor, Gershon, he looked very "normal" to me, so I was shocked once I found out how observant he is. Studying business in college, I was afraid that becoming more observant would mean having to choose a more limited career path. Gershon, a very successful business man, assured me that success and religion go hand in hand. Studying Torah would not only help build my relationship with God, but also improve my relationships in the workplace and even mold me into a savvy businessman. Gershon helped me to break down the walls I was building in my head, and I made a lifelong friend and mentor in the process. The mentors program was definitely one of the most valuable experiences of the JLE trip."

For more information about JET and the Mentors Mission visit www.jetcampus.com and www.mentorsmission.com.



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You could say that college outreach is a huge movement, one that creates ferment in campuses around the world; but you could also say that most people deepen their Jewish belief and practices only because one individual reached out to them. Both are true, and this phenomenon was foretold in the Torah 3,300 years ago! In Deuteronomy (4:25–29), there is a prophecy that is

startling to contemporary readers because it is a searing description of our Jewish history and experience.

Moses tells a shocked Jewish nation – which is about to joyously enter the Promised Land – that someday the entire nation will fall to a low moral state and betray God so thoroughly that He will exile them. "I appoint heaven and earth this day to bear witness against you that you will surely perish from the Land...God will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations... There you will serve gods, the handiwork of man... From there **you will seek Hashem, your God, and you will find Him**, if you search for him with all your heart and all your soul." Remarkably, the first **you** in that last sentence is in the Hebrew plural form, addressing many people; but the second **you** is written in singular form, as though addressing just one person. The search will be universal, on a large scale, but Jews will find their G-d individually, each following his or her own path.

3

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Jewish Student Unions

With most men and women waiting longer to marry than in the past, fewer students tend to have marriage on their minds during their years on campus. But at many of the programs discussed throughout this article, students have been celebrating an increasing number of weddings among their friends. And many of the happy new couples are choosing to settle within the Jewish community they got to know during their years on campus.

Learning about and being exposed to the warmth and the joy of married life within the Jewish community could not have left them unaffected.

According to Rabbi Jordan Brumer, Director of JAC – Jewish Arizonans on Campus, as many as ten to twelve couples who met through his programs have married and continued living in the local communities. An additional five couples are currently living in Israel, some planning to return after a year or two of additional study, and several others having relocated to other parts of the country.

While JAC doesn't do anything to encourage marriage, a number of factors may influence this trend, such as learning about commitment, family and community among other Jewish values and seeing the marriages of their young rabbis and rebbetzins and among others within the community.



Heather and Jarred Elias on their wedding day

Heather and Jarred Elias, both graduates of ASU, were married in December of 2007 and now have two children, Elisheva and David. "My mom said that I have to meet Jewish people," explains Heather, so she went to check out an event at

the Chabad center on campus, where Jarred was on a planning committee. "He was the first Jewish person I met on campus."

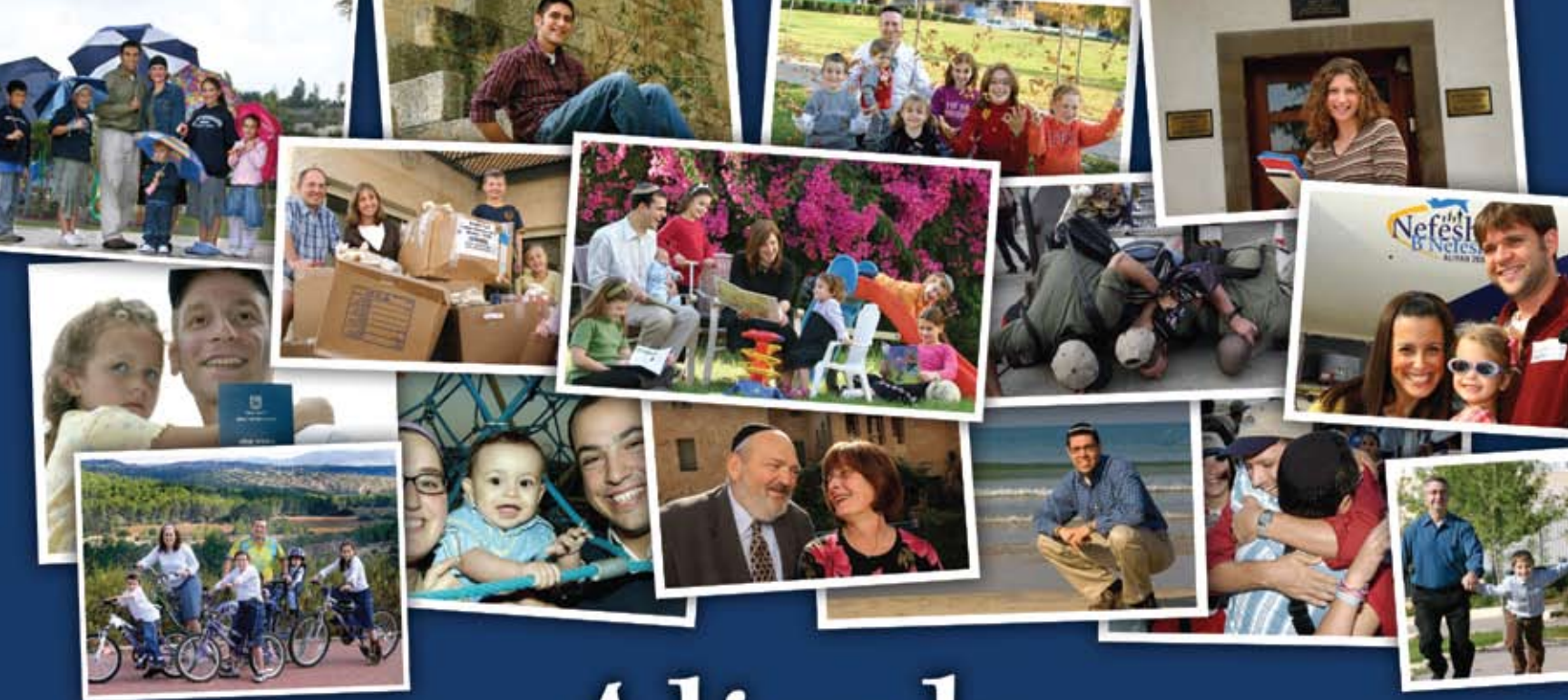
As JAC's presence on campus grew, Heather and Jarred became closer with Rabbi Brumer and his wife Risa, and they remained close during their graduate studies as well. Learning about and being exposed to the warmth and the joy of married life within the Jewish community could not have left them unaffected.

"Now, we host young professionals almost every Shabbos," says Heather, "and whenever JAC is having a Shabbaton in the area, we will host some of the students for meals as well." Heather credits the Brumers' caring of the students and their willingness to help them out, whatever their needs, for the desire of so many of the young couples to stay close by.

Today, these couples are all active in the local congregations, which have been rejuvenated by their involvement. And many are already becoming leaders in the Phoenix area Jewish communities, taking their Jewish experiences on campus to the natural next step.

And that return is precisely what we are witnessing today. There is a climate of searching, with thousands of people participating in outreach – mentoring thousands more on campuses, in schools, synagogues, online, informally and formally through outreach programs for every age, worldwide. Yet the restoration of love between God and His people does not occur en masse. The process of finding Him and committing to His *mitzvot* only happens little by little on a deep personal level, one precious soul at a time.

In addition to the individuals mentioned in this article, Charlotte Friedland would like to thank the following people for their invaluable insights and information: Batsheva Bennett of Ner Le'Elef; Rabbi Ari Burian of JET; Rabbi Raphael Butler of Afikim; and Rabbi Tzvi Gluckin, author of numerous books including the recently published *Knee Deep in the Funk: Understanding the Connection Between Spirituality and Music*.



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THE KESHER WIFE PROGRAM IT'S ALL ABOUT CONNECTION

BY AMY A. DUBITSKY

In 2011 women are busy, especially married women and mothers — busy with children, jobs, classes and community. With everything there is to do in life, women can sometimes be distracted from the need to maintain the strength of their marriages. Sara Yoheved Rigler, the regular contributor to aish.com, who is also a bestselling author and noted lecturer, has recently decided to turn her attention to this vital subject. Seeing the lack of a focused program that applies Jewish values to marriage guidance, she began the Keshet Wife Program, which consists of a three and a half hour, interactive workshop, with an optional, online "Keshet Wife Club" available thereafter.

"Keshet" is the Hebrew word for connection. The main premise of Mrs. Rigler's program is that women, when faced with a challenge in their

says Rigler. To accomplish this, the Keshet Wife program teaches women how to use their marriages for their own spiritual development.

Women walk away from the workshop with sixteen tools that they can put into play when they are faced with a challenge in their marriage.

marriage should choose connection with their husbands. "People tend to wait for problems to arise and then go to a counselor for advice. These workshops are meant for women with healthy marriages who would like to make them stronger,"

After completing the workshop, which is based on the teachings of Rabbi Eliyahu E. Dessler, Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe among other great rabbis of the 20th Century, women walk away with sixteen tools that they can put into play when they are faced

with a challenge in their marriage. Such challenges, Rigler says, can lead either to disconnection from their husbands or to *more* connection. They are illustrated through scripted drama, guided visualization and interactive exercises, which often result in laughter, as women recognize themselves in the scenarios, explains Rigler.

In the past year, Rigler has presented her workshop to over 1,000 women all over the world.

One exercise that is done in the workshop is teaching the women to use the tool Rigler calls "spiritual GPS." She explains, "Just as a GPS device gets you where you have to go, the Spiritual GPS teaches women to identify where they have to go spiritually. When a woman is feeling down or bummed out, she learns how to use the spiritual GPS to get to a place of connection with her husband."

In her scenario, a husband lashes out at his wife after he sees a credit card bill with an expensive dress and during a down-time in his business. While the wife now feels justifiably hurt, resentful and angry because of the verbal attack, Rigler explains that she can use her Spiritual GPS — she can either stay in that mood, feeling miserable, or she can choose to get out of it, even if she's the one who is "right."

In the past year, Rigler has presented her workshop to over 1,000 women all over the world. She has traveled with her props all over the United States, from Palo Alto, California in the Northwest down to Miami in the Southeast. She has given the workshop twice in South Africa and many times in Israel, where she lives. "You can't squeeze this information into a book — it's too multidimensional."

Leah, who is originally from Poland but made Aliyah to Israel from the United States in the nineties, attended Rigler's workshop in Jerusalem. She is 59 years old and has been married for 9 years. "Having married late in life, I am well aware of being set in my ways and wanting things my way. I am always working on being a better wife. The workshop made me aware of my own selfishness and how I contribute to the negativity in my marriage." Leah participates in the online Keshet Wife Club as well. "I like the weekly reminders to stay the course. It is easy to be inspired and then forget about it, but the constant reminders are extremely helpful in this regard."



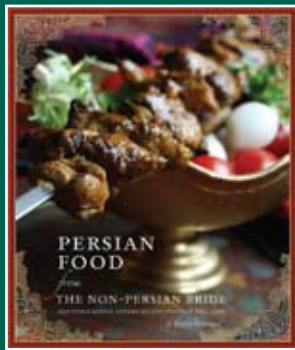
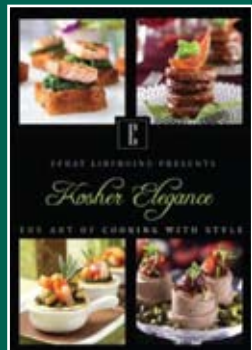
Sara Yoheved Rigler, teaching a class.

Robin, who has been married for 21 years and has 4 children, attended the Keshet Wife workshop in Phoenix, Arizona. She really enjoyed the workshop and feels that it has made a definite difference in her life. She has used the tools taught by Rigler, not only in her marriage but also to help with relationships with other people in her life. "It is practical and straight forward. I don't need a lot of fluff — I like meat and potatoes and she delivers!" Robin recommends that anyone who has the opportunity should attend the workshop. "Mrs. Rigler has several role modeling skits in her workshop that we can all relate to. Everyone can benefit from the Keshet Wife model."

Cindy Landesman, Director of the Women's Division at the Phoenix Community Kollel, one of the organizers of the workshop in Phoenix, explained how Rigler gives women many tools to use to build communication skills in their marriage. "Mrs. Rigler provides many different options and each woman can find and choose the tools that work best for her in her marriage."

Robin from Phoenix adds, "Who doesn't want to actualize their potential and have the best and sweetest relationship in the world with their husbands, children, and community? Judaism is about connection, not estrangement — this concept is a fundamental life principle."

For more information about the Keshet Wife program or about bringing Sara Yoheved Rigler to your community, visit www.keshetwife.com.



KOSHER ELEGANCE by EFRAT LIBFROIND and PERSIAN FOOD for the NON-PERSIAN BRIDE by REYNA SIMNEGAR

Two Exceptional New Cookbooks

Two exceptional new cookbooks have recently arrived on the kosher scene. Kosher Elegance, by Efrat Libfroind, is a stunningly beautiful book with recipes equally as delicious. Persian Food for the Non-Persian Bride, by Reyna Simnegar, is an exotic opportunity to enjoy delicacies from a far-off culture.

In this issue, we offer several recipes perfect for the High Holidays. From Kosher Elegance, there is chicken drumsticks stuffed with pomegranate honey sauce and a truly elegant dessert, chocolate coated pistachio gelato. From Persian Food for the Non-Persian Bride comes two staples that you will want to use again and again: Moroccan Salmon and Tabouleh Salad.

Enjoy!



chicken drumsticks stuffed with pomegranate-honey sauce

When I called my butcher and asked him to prepare chicken drumsticks for stuffing, I warned him that they had better be photogenic – the chickens would be showcased in this book. I usually receive my order the same day, but this time the delivery arrived the following day. When I opened the package, I instantly understood why. My butcher had taken my request quite seriously and prepared each and every drumstick with utmost care. I quickly called him to express my appreciation, and I told him that from now on I would settle for nothing less...

10 boneless chicken drumsticks

Stuffing:

2 onions
4 tablespoons oil
1 cup uncooked rice
1 teaspoon salt
1 pinch black pepper
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1 cup boiling water
1/4 cup toasted pine nuts
4 slices turkey roll, cut into small cubes

Sauce:

4 tablespoons oil
3 cloves garlic, crushed
3 tablespoons soy sauce
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1 pinch black pepper
1 pinch salt
3 tablespoons pomegranate juice concentrate
3 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons chili sauce

Stuffing:

Dice onions and sauté in oil until golden. Add the rice, salt, pepper, and paprika and fry for 1 minute. Add boiling water and cook uncovered on a medium flame until water is completely absorbed. Add pine nuts and turkey roll and cook for 2 minutes. Cool slightly. Fill the hollow of the drumsticks with stuffing and place in a baking pan, packing the drumsticks tightly.

Sauce:

Mix all sauce ingredients and pour over drumsticks. Cover pan and bake for 1 hour at 400° F. Uncover, lower temperature to 350° F, and bake for another 15 minutes until chicken has a deep, rich color.

Tip:

You can also use this stuffing for thighs, stuffing it between the skin and the meat, but the chicken will take longer to bake.

Serves 10



chocolate-coated pistachio gelato

If you're wondering how I decorated this dessert, I made thin caramel threads that I created in my kitchen completely by accident while making pistachio nuts dipped in caramel. As soon as I saw them I realized that I had chanced upon a wonderful decoration that's so easy to prepare, it practically makes itself.

Pistachio cream:	Coating:
2 cups soy milk	5 ounces bittersweet chocolate
3 egg yolks	1/2 cup Rich's RichWhip
4 tablespoons sugar	2 tablespoons corn syrup
2 tablespoons cornstarch	
3 1/2 ounces pareve white chocolate	Decorative ornament:
2 8-ounce containers Rich's RichWhip	3 1/2 ounces (about 7 tablespoons) sugar
1 1/2 cup unsalted roasted pistachio nuts, finely chopped	1 1/2 ounces (about 3 tablespoons) corn syrup
1 8 x 11 inch acetate sheet	1/2 ounce (about 3 teaspoons) water
	green food coloring (optional)
	12 raw pistachio nuts or almonds

Pistachio cream: Heat soy milk in a small pot until almost boiling. Beat egg yolks, sugar, and cornstarch in a separate bowl with a whisk. When the milk starts to bubble, pour it into the yolk mixture, mixing the entire time. Return the mixture to the pot and cook until thickened, stirring constantly.

When mixture thickens, remove pot from fire, add white chocolate, and mix. Cool completely. Beat RichWhip on low speed, and while whipping, add the cooled mixture and pistachio nuts. Pour the whip into 2 inch individual molds (silicone or metal) or into an 8½ inch food ring. For easy removal, line the inside of the ring with acetate strips 2 inch high. Freeze for six hours.

Coating: Melt chocolate in microwave or double boiler Add the RichWhip to the melted chocolate, stirring constantly. If the mixture hardens a bit, reheat it until it attains a smooth, liquid consistency. Heat corn syrup and add to chocolate mixture.

Remove gelato from freezer and release from ring, leaving the acetate strips intact. Pour hot coating over the dessert and tilt a bit to coat evenly. Wait one minute and remove acetate strips.

Decorative ornament: Put sugar, corn syrup, and water in a small pot and cook on a medium flame for about 15 minutes until mixture turns a pale caramel color. Remove from stove. Add the green food coloring, if desired. Stick a toothpick in each pistachio nut. Dip a speared pistachio. In the mixture, lift it out, and hold it by the toothpick over a sheet of parchment paper at a distance from the paper to allow the caramel to drip down and harden. The caramel will form thin threads on the parchment paper. Continue the process with the remaining pistachio nuts until you have a stack of threads on the paper. Pile the threads atop the dessert and decorate with pistachio nuts.

The caramel threads are fragile and may melt. They last up to a week stored in an airtight container at room temperature.

Serves 6 or makes one 8½ inch round cake



moroccan salmon

Persian Food for the Non-Persian Bride

What happens (for the most part) when an Ashkenazi woman marries a Sephardic man? She will have to adopt a lot of the Sephardic cuisine staples that her husband adores.... Suddenly, she will hardly remember the taste of sweet kugel, gefilte fish, and certainly chopped liver.

What happens when a Sephardic woman marries an Ashkenazi man? Her entire new Ashkenazi community starts worshipping her food!! This is what happened when my dear Moroccan friend Michal Bessler married her Ashkenazi bashert!

When I asked her for this recipe she just said, "Not a problem-so many people have asked me for this recipe (which she inherited from her dear mother) that I have it all typed and ready in my computer!!"

- 4 cups water
- 3 large carrots, cut into 1/4-inch rounds or strips
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 red, sweet pepper, sliced
- 1 green/red hot pepper (optional)
- 1 tablespoon chicken consommé powder (parve)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons sweet paprika, divided (optional: substitute 1 tablespoon sweet paprika with 1 tablespoon hot paprika)
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 pounds skinless salmon fillet
- 1 cup chopped cilantro (1 bunch, stems discarded)

In a large deep skillet, bring water, carrots, garlic, and pepper to a boil, covered, over high heat. Uncover and add the consommé powder, salt and 1 tablespoon paprika. Stir and replace cover. Reduce heat to medium/low and simmer for 20 minutes or until carrots are tender.

In the meantime, slice salmon into 5-ounce fillets. Combine olive oil and remaining tablespoon paprika. Let the paprika settle to the bottom of the cup.

When the carrots are tender, place the fish in a single layer on the simmering sauce. Drizzle the seasoned oil and paprika onto the fish; sprinkle with cilantro.

Return to boil over medium/high heat. Simmer over low heat, covered, for 40 minutes. Baste fish occasionally with sauce.

Yield: 8 servings

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tabouleh salad

I always bought this salad already made – until I learned to make it myself! It is a great make-ahead salad that everyone will love. Bulgur requires little cooking, because it is actually whole wheat that has been soaked, steamed, dried, and crushed for your convenience. That is the reason why bulgur, compared to whole wheat, has a nutty flavor and is easier to cook.

Salad:

- 1 cup medium bulgur
- 2 cups warm water
- 5 garlic cloves, pressed
- 3 bunches scallions, including the green parts, sliced (about 21 scallions)
- 1 cup chopped flat parsley (about 1 bunch, without stems)
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh mint (about 1/2-bunch without stems)
- 2 large tomatoes, diced

Dressing:

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon hot paprika
- 1/2 cup lime juice (or the juice of 3 limes)
- 1 tablespoon cumin (optional)

Place bulgur into a medium bowl, cover with warm water, and soak for 15 minutes.

In the meantime, wash and chop vegetables and mix together in a large bowl.

Drain the bulgur.

Combine all dressing ingredients and add to vegetables along with the drained bulgur. Toss well and serve on lettuce or in endive leaves for "endive tabouleh boats."

Yield: 8 cups

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The God of Large and Small My Day in Traffic Court

by Rabbi Yaakov Salomon

I was driving northbound on Hamilton Ave. en route to the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel. I've taken the route hundreds of times. But instead of veering left into the lane for the tunnel, I decided to swerve right — into the lane headed for the Brooklyn Bridge. And there he was.

"Okay buddy, pull over here," he seemed to be saying with his dramatic hand movements. He was short for a cop; a bit stocky, and very animated. "License, registration and insurance card," he demanded.

I do not enjoy being pulled over by a law enforcement officer. It falls somewhere between toenail fungus and sea sickness on my "Must Experience" list. I'm not sure if I attempted some lame, incoherent muttering explaining why I crossed that dreaded SOLID WHITE LINE, but I am sure that it made no impact on Officer Stankowski.

"The instructions are on the back," he kindly informed me while handing me the yellow summons. "Have a nice day."



During the five minutes or so that he took to write the ticket, I got out of the car and took pictures of the pavement markings and signs posted in the crime scene area. It was something I had seen others do, but never done before myself. I had no idea why I was doing it, but it seemed like my only way to express my innocence to Stankowski.

I got out of the car and took pictures of the crime scene area. I had no idea why I was doing it.

"If I'm taking pictures, then I MUST not be guilty." Don't worry. It made no sense to me either.

In the ensuing months I made the usual inquiries of friends, some of them attorneys, to help craft and strategize my approach to the infraction. One avenue was clearly consensual: "Push this off as long as you can. You never know what could happen."

- Police officers move out of town, get transferred, or run for District Attorney or other such positions all the time.
- Maybe the law will change.
- Nuclear war could beckon.

Dutifully, I cooperated. Nearly a full year went past, but, my luck, the World remained at relative peace. That meant that April 8th was D-Day.

My Secret Weapon

The sun shone brightly that Friday morning. I trimmed the beard and chose a dark tie. Stomach in flutters, I skipped breakfast. I drove (very carefully) to the courthouse and saw my name on the hearing ledger taped to the wall next to Room 5. The paint was peeling. There was no smell. I was early. I'm never early.

I guess a lot of people were early, as most of the seats were already occupied by my fellow defendants. They peered at me as I walked in. They knew I was innocent, as much as I knew the same about them. It's like a club, these hearing rooms, with new members joining every few hours. "It's us against the cops. How dare they pronounce us guilty until proven innocent! It's anti-American. We will band together and we WILL defeat them!"

Right.

In walked the enemy. A group of six or seven uniformed officers in full regalia — as if they were actually setting out to real combat. It seemed unfair. Stankowski, in knee-high boots, oversized revolver, gleaming badges and medals, and perfectly pressed slacks versus Salomon...in the dark tie.

But unbeknownst to the prosecution, Salomon had brought a secret weapon— a manila envelope containing copies of Section 3A.01 of the MUTCD. Not familiar with the Manual on Uniform Traffic



Control Devices? Neither was I, until my research uncovered that the "Bible" of Traffic Law indicated that (read carefully), "A SOLID line usually indicates that crossing the line is discouraged. It goes on to explain that there are actually different widths of solid lines that suggest different levels of restriction. And, according to the pictures that I (so brilliantly) took, that solid line that I crossed could have been construed as very crossable, thank you.

The first case involved a woman charged with driving while talking on her cell phone. She totally denied it — patently and emphatically. It was basically her word against the cop.

"Guilty as charged!" bellowed the judge. "One hundred and forty dollars plus two points on your license. No appeals allowed. See the clerk. Next!" A pall fell over the gallery. The club members were distraught. How was that justified?

The next brother was called. Unsafe lane change was his alleged violation. The arguments were

spirited on both sides, with my new comrade making a strong case for how the traffic pattern demanded that he switch lanes at that time.

Stankowski, in knee-high boots, oversized revolver, gleaming badges and medals, and perfectly pressed slacks versus Salomon...in the dark tie.

"Guilty as charged!" bellowed the judge. "One hundred and forty dollars plus two points on your license. No appeals allowed. See the clerk. Next!" At this point I was happy that I had skipped breakfast, as a dour sensation of sudden nausea invaded my digestive tract. I held on to my manila envelope extra tight, but began to question its potential influence.

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Tehilla's Story Inspires Bar

Tehilla is a counselor with Jewish Spirit who recently taught a class about loving your neighbor as yourself, using a story from her own life. One day, when her bus arrived, she noticed that the seats and much of the standing room appeared full. Although a few people were able to press their way on, she was one of those who did not fit. As the bus pulled away, she noticed that the back of the bus was almost empty. How disappointing, Tehilla mused aloud. Had some of those people simply moved back, there would have been plenty of room for everyone to get on the bus. What if it had been raining or the summer sun was out in force? How could those few passengers be so insensitive to the others waiting to board? Tehilla used this experience to teach her students about the mitzvah we all have to care for one another.



A few months later, Bar - a teenager in Tehilla's group - came up to tell her how she had changed her life. Tehilla's bus stop story had been echoing in Bar's head all these months and had completely redefined how she looked at her interactions with others. In every situation, Bar now finds herself seeking ways to improve the situation for others around her.

As a personification of just how Jewish Spirit works and how it inspires spiritual awakenings, while the program offered her the inspiration, it was Bar who clearly grabbed it and made it her very own.

For more information, please contact Pinchas Avruch in our US office at 954-483-7310 or pavruch@ruachyehudit.org or visit www.ruachyehudit.org.

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Two more sisters followed — both with cell phone violations issued by different officers. The verdicts were of similar ilk. They shuffled out of the courtroom pale, with heads bowed and wallets opened. (One of the sisters also had a manila envelope.)

I started feeling a bit light-headed and a slight quiver emerged on my bottom lip.

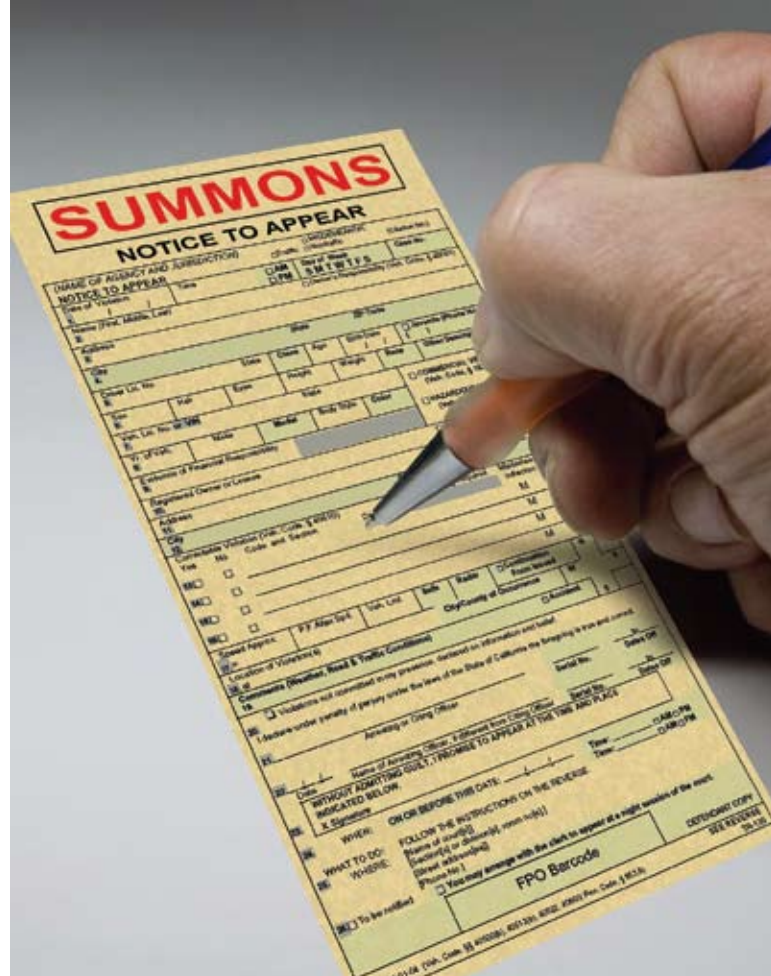
Wow, I thought, I am really nervous about this thing. How absurd is that?

I found myself in touch with my deepening tension and anxiety and I began to feel...well... embarrassed.

What's the big deal? It's only a traffic ticket! And just because you already have two points on your license, that's a reason to panic? Nausea? Quiver? IT'S ONLY TRAFFIC COURT, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE!

And then, instinctively, I actually began to pray — yes...pray. I said some Psalms by heart and spoke to God — asking for his intervention. Stankowski — even in his boots — was no match for the Almighty, I reasoned.

The gallery was slowly starting to empty. The next victim...er...accused, was an older gentleman. He looked so sweet and yes, innocent. I couldn't hear too many of the details, but one part came through loud and clear.



This is what you pray for? This? Do you think God has time for such trivialities? World hunger, terrorism, apostasy, apathy, disease, abuse are all rampant. And you're worried about two points on your license and a few dollars? What has gotten into you??

Stankowski — even in his boots — was no match for the Almighty.

"Guilty as charged! One hundred and forty dollars plus two points on your license. No appeals allowed. See the clerk. Next!"

That thud you heard was the lump that egressed in my larynx.

Now I was sweating and intensifying my prayers. It was clear to me that without some kind of supernal assistance I would be on line at the cashier in just a few minutes. But as my entreaties were compounding, so too was my shame.

What kind of self-respecting person would feel compelled by terror in Traffic Court to pray to God for salvation? But, on the other hand, just as there is no such thing as "too big" for God, there is no concept of "too small" either. It's not as if God is too tied up with the really important stuff, so He can't attend to the trifle details of our lives. That would imply human-like restriction to the All Powerful.

The same way we make a blessing on a 32 oz. filet mignon, we also recite a blessing before a tiny cup of water. In fact, it is actually the very same blessing that we make on both. My praying to Him when serious illness

On the way out, I did three things. First, I glanced over at the remaining fraternity members and smiled. They gave me lots of thumbs up and lots of smiles.

crosses my earshot in no way precludes my praying when Stankowski looms before me.

Armed with my new artillery, I clutched that manila envelope ever so snugly, closed my eyes, and freely asked God for help.

Seconds later we stood before the judge. A surprising calm descended. The nausea was gone. My voice trembled just a bit when I pleaded, "Not guilty," but I felt ready to accept His decision. I looked to my right. There stood Stankowski. He was ruffling through his papers.



The judge asked if he was ready to proceed. Stankowski continued to ruffle. Now his feet were shuffling too. I thought I detected a bead of sweat or perhaps a hair skid out of place.

"Officer Stankowski – are you ready to proceed?"

Silence. Now he was shaking his head. A couple of summonses fell to the floor. He bent down to retrieve them.

"Your honor, I...er...I cannot seem to locate the ticket or my notes on this case.

I thought my legs were going to leave their sockets.

"If you cannot proceed, I will have no choice but to dismiss these charges."

Stankowski was done and he knew it. He pretended to continue his search for the missing documents, but it was to no avail.

"I'm sorry. I cannot find anything on this violation."

"All right then. Let the record state that I am entering a verdict of 'Not guilty.' No points or fine are assessed. You are free to go."

I thanked the judge and wobbled away.

On the way out, I did three things. First, I glanced over at the remaining fraternity members and smiled. They gave me lots of thumbs up and lots of smiles. One brother pointed to heaven...really.

Second, I said a prayer of thanks. I apologized for my overreaction, but acknowledged that He is truly the God of large and small.

And finally, I tossed that manila envelope in the trash bin.

Head for the Sukkah

by Dovid Goldman

One of the most underrated inventions in human history, in terms of its impact on society, is the light bulb. I'm not talking about the small kind that replaced candles in lighting up people's homes. Those bulbs were primarily a matter of convenience — in terms of cost, safety and added light. It was the big kind of bulbs, the ones that light up the outdoors, that changed the world perhaps more than any other device produced by mankind.

Before cities were flooded with outdoor lighting, there used to be such a thing as the end of the day. Every single evening — early in the winter and late in summer — the sun would set, it would get dark outside, and everyone would go home — and stay home. For the several hours until bedtime every night, they would do nothing that could not be done by the light of a candle.

In those times, life had two completely different modes of existence — daytime, when people engaged the world and society, and nighttime, when they retreated to their own, intimate space with the precious opportunity to just be themselves. To go out at night was fraught with peril — not only because you could hardly see anything without a bright moon but because the cover of night protected those who were up to no good. Nature provided a mandatory curfew: every night you must go home, spend quiet time with those who know you well, read, think, talk — what else could they do?

The arrival of outdoor lighting, and later television and other in-home displays and distractions,

spelled the end of the peaceful, daily cycle of setting out in the morning and returning to yourself in the evening. The life we know is one of endless daytime with no respite. We can all stay out as long as we need to without a second thought — and, essentially, we never come "home."

Jewish families have Shabbat, which is designed to turn everything off and keep us together. It is a time to disengage from the world and to focus inward. It is a protected "space" in the dimension of time that we return to not every evening but at least every week.

There is a physical space that is designed to replicate the closeness imposed by the dark of night — the sukkah.

But there is also a physical space designed to replicate the closeness imposed by the dark of night — the sukkah. Four days after Yom Kippur, at the height of our year's purity, we leave the strength of our homes for one week to dwell in the semi-outdoors of the sukkah. The central characteristic of the sukkah is that it must protect us from the outdoors in a manner that does not allow us to forget about it. The roof must provide a majority of shade but not total shade and it must be made of natural vegetation that is not solid.

In Jewish thought, the sukkah represents a personal, protected space God provides for us to be ourselves. There's lots of noise out there in the world, shiny lights and constant movement. It is a demanding world that does not care about us or our families. "Keep up or drop out," it says. But at least it used to recede at night so we could hear ourselves think — and, once our eyes would adjust to the dark, see what all our hard work was all about.

Interestingly, the Hebrew word "sukkah" has the same letters as one of the words for vision, a word that implies more than just sight: the word "socheh." Like nighttime, the sukkah provides a space that is utterly separate from the imposing demands of nature and society. It grants us a rare, inner vision that puts life into perspective. But it is different in a way as well.

The sukkah, as we said, must let the world in just as it keeps it out — it must provide mostly shade but not all shade. The symbolism is powerful: We must be in the world but at the same time we can be ourselves. This is an ideal not easily achieved but it is one that *cannot* be achieved in a world of endless days. Dwelling in the sukkah should be an annual reminder of what life is supposed to be, especially in our night-deprived lives: Don't forget to be yourself.

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