

THAT'S LIFE

Why they call it a piggy bank

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CHAOS IN KENYA

Woodmere man gets too close for comfort

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SEIDEMANN FOR PRESIDENT

No, not really

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IN MY VIEW

Why men like to sit in the women's section

An unscientific survey and a suggestion

BY RABBI AVI BILLET

Modern America has a problem with Orthodox synagogues; specifically with the dividing wall we call a mechitza. Whether it is a question of discrimination, sexism or elitism, in the words of Tevye from Fiddler on the Roof, "It's our tradition." Of course, there is much more behind the existence of the mechitza than just tradition but, perhaps, that is the easiest way to justify its existence in this short essay.

When a shul is well attended on Shabbat or a holiday, both sides of the mechitza typically are lacking vacancies. During the week, however, the women's section is usually far less occupied, if any of the weekend regulars are in attendance at all.

The women's section is actually quite a bustling place on a typical weekday morning. Bustling with men, of course."

This disparity is not surprising, either. Women do not have a halachic obligation to be there or they have other responsibilities that preclude their coming to daily morning services. The fact remains, however, that the women's

section is actually quite a bustling place on a typical weekday morning. Bustling with men, of course. In some shuls this is not the case, either because the morning minyan takes place in a room that does not have a women's section (which is perhaps insensitive to women who do wish to come) or because a sign gently states, "Men, please do not sit in the women's section even if there are no women present."

Who are these men who prefer to sit in the women's section? And what is the attraction to the women's section when there are so many vacant seats in the men's section?

Taking the liberty of unofficially polling some men who frequent the women's section, I have found a few run-

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Three-peat for Hurricanes



The HANC Hurricanes won their third consecutive Scott Satran Memorial Basketball tournament, hosted by HAFTR, last week. The team went 4-0 on their way to the championship, defeating rivals such as Rambam, RTMA, Magen David and HAFTR. For in-depth coverage of the tournament, see page 11.

From early warning to no warning

What killed an effort against unsupervised student vacations

BY MAYER FERTIG

It might have been an unprecedented display of communal cooperation and, some might say, common sense. The

principals of virtually every Orthodox school in the Five Towns and Far Rockaway agreed to sign a bluntly worded letter to parents cautioning about what their children might be up to on unsuper-

vised vacations during the winter break.

The letter hasn't shown up in the mail yet, or in students' backpacks, and probably

See WARNING, Page 6

An urgent letter to the parents of our community

Dear Parents,

We would like to share with you a mutual concern. It has become a practice for some of our teen-age boys and girls to vacation on their own during winter breaks from school in minimally supervised or unsupervised locations, and permitting themselves to throw off the restraints of normally acceptable Torah behavior. The reports we have received about the irresponsible fashion in which they handle their freedom while at these places are of deep and troubling concern. Aside from the fact that there are frequent lapses in their observance of basic elementary Halacha, there

have been reports of inappropriate and self-destructive behavior that would be considered unacceptable by any standard. On occasion, the consequences for these youngsters have been no less than horrific.

Parents have an obligation to use every measure at their disposal to prevent their own children from being exposed to situations in which the youngsters' peers are engaging in unwholesome and wanton activities for which they may have cause to deeply regret later in life. Direct personal parental supervision is a must. It is often quite difficult for anyone to know in advance whether chil-

dren's friends or friends of friends can be trusted to behave in a responsible fashion. Additionally, programs presented as being run by youth organizations or schools may, in fact, be run by private individuals who are making unsubstantiated claims.

We believe it is our responsibility to bring this threat to our children to your attention to prevent even one talmid or talmidah from making a mistake that will have serious implications for his/her future.

May we all be privileged to see true nachas from all our children.

Control issue leads KAJ to can Rubashkin

Aaron's Best and Supreme Kosher labels to be combined

BY MAYER FERTIG

Khal Adath Jeshurun (KAJ) fired AgriProcessors, the world's largest producer of kosher meat and poultry, as a client last week, announcing that it would withdraw its kosher certification as of April 16.

The rabbinate of the venerable German-Jewish community based in upper Manhattan, and a second well-known kosher certifier, Rabbi Menachem Meir Weissmandl, of Nitra-Monsey, were unable to find common ground on issues of kashruth control in the company's plants. AgriProcessors' founder Aron Abraham Rubashkin, Dr. Eric Erlbach, the president of KAJ, and Rabbi Weissmandl, each confirmed that version of events in separate telephone interviews on Monday with The Jewish Star.

"We tried to reach some kind of an understanding which would have given us control over the Aaron's part of the shechitah, not the Supreme, which is Rabbi Weissmandl, but we were unable to reach any kind of agreement," Dr. Erlbach said.

In paid advertisements and prepared press releases, AgriProcessors, of Postville, Iowa, which produces kosher meat and poultry under the Rubashkin's Aaron's Best and Supreme Kosher brands, among others, had said that the company was consolidating its kashruth certifications for "marketing reasons."

KAJ, together with the Orthodox Union, certifies the Rubashkin's Aaron's Best brand. Supreme Kosher carries the Nitra-Monsey hechsher. All meat and poultry slaughtered in AgriProcessor plants, in Iowa, Nebraska, Chicago, or elsewhere, on or after April 16, 2008, is to carry that hechsher. Rabbi Weissmandl said the two brands would be consolidated and a joint label, Aaron's Best/Supreme Kosher, phased in by mid-April.

"The [KAJ] demands were unacceptable," said Rubashkin, who founded the company in 1953. "So what should I do? They had an understanding with Rav Weissmandl and they worked together. They had a disagreement about some gelatin or casings, but it had nothing to do with us."

"They were going to produce casings in an outside plant and our rabbonim felt that they would be unwilling to give a hashgacha on that product and Rabbi Weissmandl was," Erlbach said. "I'm not in a position to tell you who was right, but even if Rabbi Weissmandl was right it was an indication that we were not in a position to control what was going on."

The disagreement over the casings boiled down to money, Rabbi Weissmandl suggested; a \$35,000 annual kashruth fee versus considerably lower costs for the original product, also produced outside the plant, he said, under less reliable supervision. A minor issue, he emphasized, in any event.

"The basic demand was that they wanted a rabbi in place who reports only to KAJ," Weissmandl said. "[It's]

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Shabbat

Candlelighting: 4:29 p.m. ■ Shabbat ends: 5:34 p.m.
Torah reading: Parshat Bo



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OBITUARY

Cy Leslie, founder of the JCC of the Greater Five Towns

STAFF REPORT

Cy Leslie, a pioneer of the recording and home video industries, and founder of the JCC of the Greater Five Towns, died Sunday at St. Francis Hospital in Roslyn, after suffering a heart attack. He was in his 80's and lived in Lawrence.

Leslie grew up in the Bronx, where the local Y was described as an anchor of his youth. After serving in the U.S. Army during World War II he became an electrical engineer.

Over the course of more than three decades, Leslie was a pioneer in the fields of recorded music re-issues and distributions, and in the development of the home video industry. In 1953 he founded Pickwick International and, during 25 years as its chairman, grew the company into a worldwide recording, distribution and retailing organization. He sold Pickwick in 1979, after which he was named President of CBS Video Enterprises. He later founded and chaired the MGM/UA Home Entertainment Group until its sale in 1987. During his years with MGM he oversaw its expansion into pay TV, licensing and other new distribution channels derived from the film industry.

Leslie, who never really retired, has been honored both by the music and the video industries as their Man of the Year and as one of the 20th Century's most influential leaders of the home video era.

A dedicated philanthropist, he served on the boards of many public, private and non-for-profit organizations. Most



Cy Leslie

recently, he served as Vice Chairman of the Songwriters' Hall of Fame, President of the Friars Foundation and Board member of the New York Council for the Humanities as well as the music industry's TJ Martell Foundation.

But of all his many philanthropic endeavors, closest to his heart was the Jewish Community Center of the Greater Five Towns, which he founded in 1980.

Those who knew him said he could envision no greater contribution than to build a center for adults and children that would provide a rich array of cultural, educational, social and recreational programs. Today, the "5 Towns Y" — The JCC of the Greater Five Towns — is a center of community life for many.

Leslie is survived by his wife, Barbara, their three daughters Helen, Jayne and Carol and four grandchildren.

EDITED BY MIRIAM L. WALLACH

Dear That's Life,

Last Friday night we were discussing the parsha at our Shabbos table. We were trying to figure out why Pharaoh would not let the Jews go. Then I realized he must have been in deNile.

I guess being in denial is nothing new!

LINDA BERNSTEIN
Cedarhurst

Dear That's Life,

My four-year-old son Jacob always makes the most interesting and intelligent observations. The other day I was trying to explain to him the difference between a piggy bank and a tzedakah box.

"A tzedakah box is a place to put money into so you can give it to someone who needs it. A piggy bank is a place to put money into so you can save it for yourself when you need it."

My son thought about this for a few seconds.

"Mommy, you know why they call it a piggy bank?" he asked. "Because pigs don't share."

That cute little pink ceramic piggy bank will never look the same again.

MICHAEL WEINSTEIN
Woodmere



Dear That's Life,

While I stood in the florist ordering an arrangement for a friend, in walked a young gentleman who by all standards seemed, shall I say, a little unsteady. "Ah," said the woman behind the counter. "You must be the guy — you look a little shell shocked. You're here for a pick-up?"

"Yes," he said, as he approached the counter.

Out from the back came a breath-taking arrangement of long-stemmed red roses, accompanied by two more women who came to get a look at him, and the bouquet was handed to the young man. As we all gushed over them, I looked at him and said, "Mazal tov."

He smiled. "Thank you," he replied. "I guess it's obvious. What else would I be doing with these roses?"

And as we all made small talk, the next question certainly

was inevitable: "So, how are you going to ask her?"

Eagerly awaiting his answer as he checked his watch to countdown (T minus 2:30 hours at that moment), he said, "I think I'm going to take on a helicopter ride around the City." But on the bitter cold night that was last Thursday, that was not going to do.

And so, like clucking hens, four of us started reminiscing about our special moment and throwing out suggestions.

"I wanted my brother-in-law to propose on the top of the Ferris wheel in Toys R' Us in Times Square," I contributed, but that idea didn't please all of the coop members, nor did it seem to be to his liking either.

"What about a horse and buggy ride through Central Park?" someone suggested but, again, the weather was a problem.

"I got engaged under the tree in Rockefeller Center," I said, and he thought maybe ice-skating on the rink there

was an option. "Yes!" someone added. "And then you could put the ring on the ice and say 'Hey, what's that sparkling over there?'" It was at that point that he went pale.

Suggestion after suggestion came flying forward and this soon-to-be-chassan, who was probably not that nervous when he walked into the store, certainly was now, and he seemed to eager to go. He paid for his flowers and right before he left I caught his eye. "No matter what," I said, "she's going to be thrilled." He smiled, said "thanks," and left the store.

I have no idea who the guy was nor do I know who his kallah is, and I certainly was not there when he proposed. No matter how he asked or where he asked, I'm sure it was perfect. For us hens, though, we'll just have to keep guessing and wish them our best.

MLW

Did something funny happen to you? Something outrageous? How about something that "could only happen around here?" Type it up for That's Life, hit send and have a chance to win a great meal at Burgers Bar! Each week the best submission to That's Life will be selected by the editors and awarded a \$25 gift card to Burgers Bar on Central Avenue, one of the area's newest and most popular restaurants.



E-mail submissions to letters@thejewishstar.com, with your name and daytime and evening phone numbers.

All decisions by the editors are final. All submissions become the property of The Jewish Star. Anonymous submissions will not be published.

Burgers Bar is under the supervision of the Vaad Hakashrus of the Five Towns and Far Rockaway.

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GOODBYE HOLLAND

Uncovers a shocking anti-Semitism that still exists in Dutch society, decades after the Holocaust. A terrifying history of collaboration between Dutch citizens and the Nazis, which led to the near-annihilation of a whole country's Jewish population.

MOYL

Emmy Award-winning director explores the tradition of circumcision. The "Microsoft Mohel" travels the globe to perform his task. Explores modern scientific updates to the ancient practice, and confronts the risks associated with this most sensitive of Jewish rituals

ZELIG

Nominated for two Oscars, Woody Allen's mockumentary is "uproariously funny" (N.Y. Times). Allen's a neurotic who mimics the personalities of those he's with; Mia Farrow, his psychiatrist-cum-lover, thinks she's finally met every man she's ever wanted. Newsweek declares, "Pure magic!"

THE TEMPLE MOUNT IS MINE

With stunning visuals, Emmy-winning director Willy Lindwer's exploration of Jerusalem's Temple Mount looks at the site as the source of contemporary religious and political battles. Includes first footage of the Mount since start of the 2nd Intifada.

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Woodmere man sees Kenya election violence firsthand

Return trip to build water tower in Nairobi doesn't go as planned

BY MAYER FERTIG

Daniel Pollack chose Kenya because it's so quiet. Despite pockets of deep poverty, Kenya has long been one of Africa's most stable countries. The 21 year-old from Woodmere went there to help last year, spending a semester doing aid work while many of his Queens College classmates were on foreign sojourns to more hospitable places.

"I guess instead of going to study abroad I thought I would try to make a difference," Pollack said on a cell phone from Nairobi on Erev Shabbos. "Instead of going to a European country or somewhere else I decided to come here."

Pollack, who spent the year after high school at Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh in Jerusalem, went back to Kenya last week to arrange for the construction of a water tower in a slum neighborhood on the outskirts of Nairobi. He and his sister, Jordana, 15, a 10th grader at HAFTR, raised \$6 thousand for that project. This time, Kenya was anything but quiet.

"I was completely shocked when I got here [last] Friday," the day after the election, Pollack said. "People thought it would be hectic on Friday and Saturday, and after the result was announced it would be ok."

But instead the incumbent seemed to snatch victory from the jaws of certain defeat, prompting calls that the election had been stolen. Violence erupted, claiming hundreds of lives. Mobs rampaged through the streets of Kenyan cities swinging machetes; about a hundred miles from Nairobi fifty people burned to death in a church in which they had sought refuge.

Yet, Pollack said, he was not concerned for his safety. "I'm walking in Kabira right now, which is the biggest slum in Kenya, where a lot of the rioting is taking place," he told a reporter

by phone on Friday morning. "It's a tribal conflict and it doesn't involve me. The people know me, and what I'm doing here, and they appreciate that. So as long as there is no actual rioting and the mob mentality doesn't take over, I'm safe."

He said he felt completely safe shaking hands with protestors, something he did shortly before police began lobbing tear gas at the crowd. The protestors were unarmed, he said. "I don't think it was cavalier," said David Pollack, of his son, Daniel's, trip. "I think it was based on his assessment of the situation and based on the relationships he's built with the local police department

and a number of the natives. He's made it very clear to me that they would not have permitted him to enter the area had they thought it was unsafe for him. I think he was acting responsibly and courageously."

During a lull in the violence, Pollack was able to secure a supply of hard-to-find foodstuffs. He arranged a police escort and took the valuable supplies to distribute in Kabira, where violence had forced stores to remain closed.

He regards his aid activities in Kenya as a kiddush Hashem, he said. "Absolutely. There's no anti-Semitism here at all. They're completely accepting. Everyone I know here knows I'm Jewish and they don't care. They just know that I'm here to help."

His father agreed. "Its a good lesson for people [about opportunities to do good] outside our own dalet amos. It's a big kiddush Hashem and we're all very proud of him."

After spending Shabbos in a hotel room Daniel caught a flight to Egypt on Sunday. He plans to spend the next two weeks there touring the pyramids and other antiquities before catching a flight home to JFK and Woodmere.



Daniel Pollack



Photos by Daniel Pollack

Daniel Pollack was a bystander with a camera, standing nearby as police in riot gear prepared to face off with election protestors.



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CONTROL ISSUES LEAD KAJ TO CAN RUBASHKIN

Continued from Page One

completely not practicable with shechitah, with a staff of 70 people, to have two controllers, one working behind the back of the other.” Additionally, he charged, the supervisors the KAJ wanted to put in place at the Postville plant lacked the necessary experience.

A decision was ultimately made to bring in a plant kashruth supervisor from Israel. Rabbi Chaim Leizer Meisels was recruited, at great expense, from a top position with the Edah HaCharedis. Nitra and KAJ signed a contract to jointly pay him, but before that arrangement could take effect the relationship between KAJ and Rubashkin unraveled. Rabbi Weissmandl confirmed that it was the KAJ that decided to pull the plug.

“Definitely, it was not Rubashkin that fired them,” Weissmandl said. “Mr. Rubashkin pays kashrus fees for certifications that he doesn’t have anymore — rabbis who are too old to provide certifications, but he pays them their fees. He’s a very, very loyal person.”

Erlbach, of KAJ, emphasized that there is not, and never was, a problem with the Rubashkin hashgacha, although he demurred when asked if he, personally, would eat the Rubashkin brands after April 16; he cited uncertainty about the nature of the future kashruth supervision. The KAJ community is actively seeking another source of kosher meat, he said.

Efforts to portray the parting of ways as a simple marketing decision by AgriProcessors persisted into Monday when a kashruth industry newsletter, Kosher Today, neglected to mention that it was KAJ’s decision to end the relationship. The editor, Menachem Lubinsky, told The Jewish Star that he had not heard that. He strongly denied that his paid work for Rubashkin, crafting the press release that announced the breakup, had played any role in his editorial decision. The article did not mention his paid role with AgriProcessors, but Lubinsky said he stood by his story as “balanced.” He has written in the past about the “number of hats” he wears as a kashruth industry expert, he said, and “I don’t have to say it every day and every time.”

KAJ’s Erlbach believes his community’s way of doing kashruth business tends not to lend itself to potential conflicts of interest.

“Most hashgachas consist of a slaughterhouse, let’s say, which hires a rabbi to do their certification and that rabbi certifies it for them. They pay that rabbi for it. As a result this is a relationship based on mutual profits. I don’t mean this in a negative way,” he stressed.

“Someone who does this is entitled to be paid. [But] our congregation is different. None of our rabbis who do this get paid [by the client]. They are paid by the congregation and are under no undue pressure, so to say, to help out the owner.



You’re more likely to get a kosher product if the profit motive isn’t there.”

A principal in one of the major Five Towns-area supermarkets, who asked to remain anonymous, said KAJ is a brand name hechsher often sought out by consumers, particularly by consumers of German descent. “Come Pesach time, there are people who are very machmir about their parents’ hashgacha,” he said. “Also, baalei teshuva,” he added. “Someone told them that KAJ is the best hashgacha and that’s what they buy.”

Rabbi Weissmandl spoke admiringly of the KAJ community’s respect for its leaders. “Most of the members of the KAJ board probably disagree with this decision [to end the relationship with Rubashkin],” he said. “[Still,] it’s a known tradition to the German community to give respect to a rabbi till the very end. Whatever a rav says, they raise their hands. There is a level of respect that the KAJ community has for a rabbi — it is probably the only place today where you see that.”

FROM EARLY WARNING TO NO WARNING

Continued from Page One

won’t. The entire effort came apart, a source told *The Jewish Star*, after one principal who had agreed to sign the letter apparently had second thoughts.

When called for comment, the writer of the letter, Rabbi Rephael Skaist, the menahel of the Junior High School Division of Yeshiva Darchei Torah in Far Rockaway, explained, “Once one school pulled out it created a domino effect.”

He prepared the letter from a text originally written for the Yeshiva Elementary and High School Principals’ Council, by Board of Jewish Education administrator Rabbi Ellis Bloch.

“When I put it out there, there were some principals who felt that it would have added force if it were signed by everyone,” Rabbi Bloch said Tuesday morning. “Others — most principals — felt, ‘I can write to my parents on my own.’ They were free to take that letter and use it as they saw fit.”

“Aside from the fact that there are frequent lapses in their observance of basic elementary Halacha,” said the version of the letter agreed-upon by the Five Towns and Far Rockaway educators, “there have been reports of inappropriate and self-destructive behavior that would be considered unacceptable by any standard” [For the full text, without signatures, see accompanying box].

Concerns about unsupervised vacations came to public attention last February with the publication in *The Jewish Week* of an op-ed written by two mothers who flew to Florida for winter break with their teen-aged daughters. It read, in part:

“We were looking forward to an innocent week of fun in the sun. But what we witnessed was anything but innocent. During several late-night walks we saw hundreds of Jewish teenagers in groups large and small roaming Collins Avenue, the boardwalk and several hotels, drinking and smoking, completely entranced with the goal of getting “high” and intoxicated beyond belief.

One yeshiva principal contacted by *The Jewish Star* observed that history was repeating itself.

The girls, aged 15-18, were so scantily clad that bathing suits would have covered up more...The interaction between the girls and boys was grotesque...Nothing was private, no body part untouchable...The angelic-looking girl with the long blond hair in a red hoodie was heard pleading with the boys she was with, “Come on, give me the weed, get me some weed — it’s my birthday!”

“Given the generation that we have, there’s no one to pound the table and say ‘Get [up] and do something,’” said a frustrated Rabbi Skaist. “Every school agrees that it has to be done. But there’s a subgroup that won’t do it. So it doesn’t really amount to much. Maybe they don’t have a problem, maybe they do. The [real] problem is they don’t have a broader vision that these are our children.”

The first school to bail out, the source told *The*

Star, was Yeshiva Siach Yitzchok in Far Rockaway. When asked why, principal Rabbi Dovid Sitnick said, “I think it’s an excellent letter. It’s a very positive letter, well written. For personal reasons I decided not to sign it.” He declined to comment further.

“I contacted the people whom I know more intimately in Far Rockaway. Little by little we got every single school, from HAFTR to Siach,” said Rabbi Skaist. “They all agree that it’s something that’s worthwhile, that must be disseminated. However, to put their own schools as a signatory, that they don’t want to do.”

“It’s a lack of sense,” said Rabbi Skaist. “That’s all it is.”

One yeshiva principal contacted by *The Jewish Star* observed that history was repeating itself. He recalled an unprecedented open letter to parents in Brooklyn written in 1998 by Rabbi Yakov Horowitz of Project Yes, who is also a contributor to *The Jewish Star*. Every yeshiva high school principal in Flatbush and Borough Park had agreed to sign the letter which was intended to alert parents to a developing problem with students holding “open house” parties involving drugs and promiscuity; this at a time when these matters were simply not discussed in polite Orthodox circles. The principal recalled how the effort fell apart when one principal — Rabbi Lipa Margolis, of Yeshiva Torah Temimah — refused to sign it, claiming that he had no such problems in his school.

When contacted, Rabbi Horowitz confirmed that he had written that letter and disseminated it to all relevant yeshiva principals.

Agri loses appeal on collective bargaining

AgriProcessors lost a round in court with the National Labor Relations Board. A federal appeals court ruled that AgriProcessors must engage in collective bargaining, in good faith, with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union.

AgriProcessors employees voted to join the union in 2005, but the company refused to recognize the vote after, it said, it discovered that

many of the employees who voted for the union were illegal immigrants.

The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia circuit found that undocumented aliens are counted as employees under the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act. The ruling was not unanimous; one member of the three-judge panel issued a dissenting opinion.



Ask For Mario Or Judy At The Fish Counter

New Yeshiva Teenage Shabbos Minyan at 850 Broadway Woodmere, N.Y., led by Rabbi Nachum Dinowitz Davening starts at 9:00am, followed by a full Kiddush. All Teenage Boys are invited.	SALMON FILLET Family Pack \$ 7⁹⁹ _{LB}	TILAPIA FILLET Family Pack \$ 5⁹⁹ _{LB}	Try Our Delicious CHOCOLATE NEW YORK CHEESECAKE Only \$ 16⁹⁹ _{Ea.}
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The Ossie Schonfeld Memorial Toy Fund would like to thank Dr. Neil Goldberg, Director of Lev Leitzan, and the following Yeshivas for sending clowns with us to make our trip so special: Mesivta Ateres Yakov, D.R.S. High School for Boys, North Shore Academy, S.K.A. High School for Girls and Yeshiva of Far Rockaway. We would also like to thank David Weintraub of D.R.S. High School for running their hugely successful raffle to benefit our toy fund. This raffle was done in memory of his mother “Ah”, Naomi Rachel Bat Yakov Chaim. May she be Mayletz Yosher for the entire Family.

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PARSHAT BO

Meltdown of the gods

BY RABBI AVI BILLET

In ancient times, a battle waged between nations was considered to have a parallel battle in the heavens between the gods of the nations.

It should come as no surprise, therefore, that the same image appears numerous times in the Torah's and Midrash's depiction of the events surrounding the ten plagues, as summarized in 12:12 when G-d declares He will carry out judgments against the gods of Egypt.

One who imagines the "gods of Egypt" are primarily idols and carven images will appreciate Targum Yonatan's "translation" in which he describes the judgment as "metal gods melting down, stone gods tumbling and falling apart, earthenware gods broken to bits, and wooden gods burnt to ashes."

Other commentaries present similar ideas of the gods either breaking apart, or being destroyed by the Egyptians (!) after the plague of the first born, in retaliation for not saving their children from the Hebrews' G-d (see Ibn Ezra Hakatzar).

It is Ramban, however, who takes the battlefield to the heavenly sphere when he explains G-d's intention to battle the "sarei ma'alah," Egypt's protective angels, in the heavens.

Perhaps the idea of fighting the Egyptian gods is a theme that can be carried through the entire recording of the plagues.

Yonatan Grossman, one of my teachers in Machon Herzog, suggested that the "ten plagues" actually begin

with their prelude, the changing of Aharon's stick into a tannin, and conclude with the plague of Darkness. His argument for this thesis lies in the traditional division of the plagues, made famous by Rabbi Yehuda as recorded in the Haggadah, D'tza"kh (3) Ada"sh (3) B'achav (4) — though Grossman reads the last mnemonic as "B'ach."

There are patterns in the ten plagues, but none more apparent than when these three mnemonic terms are placed one on top of another (see chart). The plagues in column one share characteristics (e.g. meeting Pharaoh at the river), column two contains the phrase "Bo el Paroh," and column three has the plague come with no warning to the Egyptians. There are many more.

What is most obvious is how column four, which represents the Plague of the Firstborn, is completely out of place, prompting Grossman to say if it doesn't fit in, why count ten from that end, especially when one notes two critical points: 1. While people may have died on account of any of the plagues (Hebrew "makkot" which literally means "to hit"), none of them were designed to kill humans until the Plague of the Firstborns. 2. The Plague of the Firstborn is the culmination of everything - it is G-d showing His absolute upper hand in a different way than anything seen before. (See 11:3, 11:6-10, 12:29-30)

Many commentaries explain Arov, commonly thought to be large wild animals, to be either snakes, scorpions, dung beetles or scarab.

Annoying? Yes. Potentially dangerous? Perhaps. Avoidable? With caution.

The hazards of the hail-storm (Barad), could be avoided merely by staying indoors.

In Egypt, a major goal was for the Egyptians to understand it was the Hebrew G-d who was defeating them, and Moshe was His messenger. This was realized through the mishaps of Pharaoh's necromancers, the nation saying to Pharaoh all along to "Let them go!" and the recognition of Moshe in 11:3 as being a great man.

So how were the plagues a defeat of Egyptian gods?

The Midrash records how the Nile was worshiped. Once it could no longer sustain life (fish died in blood) or was the source for such havoc (frogs), its power was viewed as defeated.

Much of Egypt's economic success came from animals, and animals provided the facial images for many idols. When animals could no longer be controlled, and when they were the cause of such discomfort and destruction, it was viewed as a defeat of the gods (lice, arov (see above), pestilence).

Boils, Hail and Locusts all came from the sky in strong contrast to the generally clear Egyptian sky. Egypt is a land that does not see rain; so any darkening of the sky is a defeat of the weather gods.

Darkness is a clear defeat over the sun god, Ra.

So which is the tenth plague? "Tannin" or Firstborn? In ancient times, the tannin, a reptile figure (usually the crocodile), was a classic

4	3	2	1	0
	כ	צ	ד	ת
	ש	ד	ע	
ב	ח	א	ב	

A structural division of the ten plagues of Egypt.

image of worship amongst pagan societies. Aharon's mastery over it, from his stick changing to one then eating the staffs of the Egyptian sorcerers that had turned into "tanninim," indicates the strength and power of his G-d, even on the most minimal scale.

Compare the ten described to the Plague of the Firstborn. As a "makkah" (non-death-inducing blow) it stands out from the rest. While the "blows" are visible in each of the "makkot" until now, death is not a "visible" hitting: it is an outcome from an invisible force. This is why on the eve of the plague of Firstborn, the Jews needed to take a visible Egyptian god, the sheep, and slaughter it. G-d's act did not indicate the destruction of a single god in the same way the Jews actually slaughtered the sheep for the inaugurating korban pesach.

That the plague of the firstborn, by design, killed human beings is indicative of

how it was different from the other plagues, beyond the scope and magnitude of all of them combined.

Thus the plague was the encore to the magnum opus which destroyed Egypt's will, when G-d proved His power over death and over all the protecting gods of Egypt who could do nothing to save its citizens from the punishment.

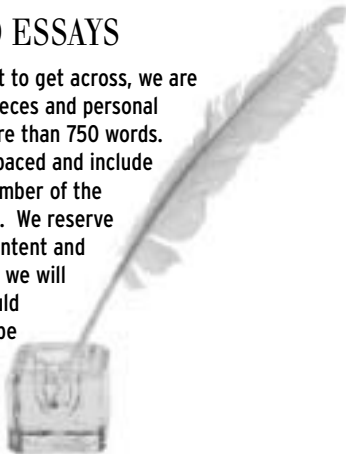
Indeed it defeated the gods above and below in line with the rest of the plagues.

But as a makkah, it stands alone in its message, and therefore falls into an entirely different category. It alone accomplished what all the ten plagues before it could not achieve: Pharaoh's permission granted to allow the Jews to leave Egypt.

Avi Billet is a mohel based in the Five Towns. His webpage is mohelformyson.bravehost.com

OPINIONS AND ESSAYS

If you have something to say or a thought to get across, we are interested in hearing about it. Opinion pieces and personal essays are welcome but should be no more than 750 words. Submissions must be typed and double-spaced and include the name, address and daytime phone number of the writer. Photographs are also encouraged. We reserve the right to edit submissions for style, content and space. Placement cannot be guaranteed; we will notify you in advance of publication, should your piece be chosen. Submissions may be mailed to The Jewish Star, 2 Endo Blvd., Garden City, NY 11530; faxed to (516) 569-4942; or e-mailed to letters@thejewishstar.com



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ON THE
Calendar

Oceanside - The Young Israel of Oceanside will host a Chavurot class on Saturday, January 12 on the topic: "The Internet: Is It Kosher for Shabbos?" This class will be hosted by Rabbi Muskat in a member's home. For more information call Dennis Stamm at (516) 764-1099 or visit www.yioceanside.org.

Cedarhurst - Chabad of the Five Towns presents a community trip to the Ohel - an opportunity to pray at the Lubavitcher Rebbe OB" M's resting place in Queens - for men, women and children on Sunday, January 13. Meet at Chabad of the Five Towns, located at 74 Maple Ave. in Cedarhurst, at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday. For more information, call (516) 295-2478 or visit www.chabad5towns.com.

Cedarhurst - Chabad of the Five Towns will host an Exotic Animal Show presented by the Sunday Circle Respite program for children with special needs on Sunday, January 13 from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Reservations are required. Chabad of the Five Towns is located at 74 Maple Ave. in Cedarhurst. For more information or to RSVP, call Batsheva at (516) 295-2478 ext. 13.



Oceanside - The Young Israel of Oceanside will host a Clown Show with Karl the Clown on Sunday, January 13 at 2:30 p.m. Admission for this event is \$8 per child 2 years and older with a per family maximum of \$24. Snacks will be served. The Young Israel of Oceanside is located at 150 Waukena Ave. in Oceanside. For more information, call (516) 764-1099.



Cedarhurst - The JCC of the Greater Five Towns will host "Sunday Funday" on Sunday, January 13 for families with children with autism. Join the JCC for a movie - "The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything." The fee for this event is \$8 per adult and \$5 per child. The JCC is located at 207 Grove Ave. in Cedarhurst. For more information or to register, call Bracha Arnan or Chana Pfeifer at (516) 569-6733.

Queens - Yeshiva Ketana of Long Island will host its 12th Annual Scholarship Dinner on Sunday, January 13 at the New York Hall of Science. Shai and Esther Sasson, Ephraim and Symi Diamond and Rabbi Shmuel Morgenstern will be honored. The New York Hall of Science is located at 47-01 111th Street in Queens. To place an ad in the dinner journal or for reservations, e-mail dinner08@ykli.org or call (516) 791-2800.

Coaches wanted for 2008
Mid-Island Y JCC Maccabi team

If you love to work with teenagers, have previous coaching experience and are willing to travel next summer, the Mid-Island Y Jewish Community Center wants you! The JCC will be participating in the 2008 JCC Maccabi Games in Detroit, from Aug. 17-22, and needs volunteer coaches and assistant coaches for the following sports: Boys Basketball (ages 13-14), Co-ed Swimming (ages 16 and under) and Girls Softball (ages 16 and under).

The JCC Maccabi Games is an annual, week-long, international, multi-sport, athletic and cultural event that has united Jewish teens since 1982. More than 5,000 Jewish teens ages 13-16 from the United States and around the world participate in spectacular opening and closing ceremonies, Olympic-style competitions and social events.

For more information, call Abbe Sargeant, Delegation Head, at (516)822-3535, ext. 330.

Cedarhurst -The JCC of the Greater Five Towns Adult Disabled Group will host "Belly Dancer, Martha" on Monday, January 14 from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Martha will perform classical belly dancing and provide a lesson for all. Light refreshments will be served. The fee for this event is \$5. The JCC is located at 207 Grove Ave. in Cedarhurst. For more information or to register, call (516) 569-6733, ext. 204 or 213.

Cedarhurst - The JCC of the Greater Five Towns will host a "Dinner with Friends" with lecturer and humorist Irwin Pfeffer on Tuesday, January 15 at 7:00 p.m. This event is for singles 55+. The cost for this event is \$18. Reservations are a must. The JCC is located at 207 Grove Ave. in Cedarhurst. For more information or to register, call Lisa Stern at (516) 569-6733, ext. 209.

Oceanside - The Young Israel of Oceanside will host a Family

Lecture Series on Tuesday, January 15 and Wednesday, January 16 at 8:00 p.m. On January 15, there will be a Taharat Hamishpacha Refresher Course for women and, on January 16, the same course will be given for men by Rabbi Muskat at the Muskat residence. For more information, call (516) 764-1099 or visit www.yioceanside.org.

Syosset - The Conference of Jewish Organizations of Nassau County will host a discussion with Consul General Asaf Shariv of the Consulate General of Israel on Wednesday, January 16 at 7:00 p.m. This program will include a discussion of "Israel Today and Tomorrow," followed by a question and answer period. The program will be held in the atrium auditorium on the lower level of the North Shore Atrium, located at 6900 Jericho Turnpike in Syosset, and is free and open to the community. Seating, however, is limited and reservations are necessary. For more information or to RSVP, call (516) 364-4477 or e-mail

Friedberg JCC looking for
tennis and basketball players

Join teens from all over the world this summer at the 2008 JCC Maccabi games, an Olympic-style event that brings Jewish athletes together to compete and share in our common culture and heritage. The Friedberg JCC, located at 15 Neil Court in Oceanside, is now recruiting athletes for Tennis and Basketball to compete in the 2008 JCC Maccabi Games being held in Detroit from August 15-22. Athletes must be between 13 and 16 years of age.

Basketball tryouts will be held:

- Sunday, January 6 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
- Monday, January 14 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.
- Sunday, January 27 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Please call for details about tennis tryouts.

If you are interested in trying out or for more information, call Joan Goldfaden, Friedberg JCC Delegation Head, at (516) 766-4341, ext. 128.

cojonc@earthlink.net.

Oceanside - The Friedberg JCC will host its Adult Connections Club on Thursday, January 17 from 7:30-9:30 p.m. with literary expert Liz Roper. She will give her list of the best for 2008 in a lecture entitled "Best Sellers and Hot Picks for 2008." The fee is \$10 per person per month. The Friedberg JCC is located at 15 Neil Court in Oceanside. For more information, call Debbie Rosen at (516) 516-766-4341, ext. 129.

Oceanside - The Young Israel of Oceanside will host its annual Tu B'Shevat Seder on Tuesday, January 22 at 8:00 p.m. The shul is located at 150 Waukena Ave. in Oceanside. For more information, call (516) 764-1099.

Rockville Centre - A discussion of New Therapies for Acute Stroke will be the featured presentation at the monthly meeting of the free Stroke

Support Group at Mercy Medical Center on Tuesday, February 5 from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Information on advanced cutting-edge treatments will be provided by Jonathan L. Brisman, M.D., a Mercy neurosurgeon who specializes in cerebrovascular and endovascular surgery. As a state-designated Stroke Center, Mercy Medical Center offers unique expertise in the treatment and post-hospital care of stroke patients. Mercy Medical Center is located at 1000 N Village Ave. in Rockville Centre. For information or to register for Stroke Support Group meetings, call Hope Demertzis at (516) 705-2432.

ONGOING EVENTS

Lawrence - The JCC of the Greater Five Towns will host "Cafe Europa" on Wednesdays from 1-3 p.m. at Congregation Beth Shalom. A special gathering for older adults

See CALENDAR, Page 9

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ON THE
Calendar

Continued from Page Eight

embracing their past with a European flavor. Enjoy meeting new people with a little nosh, Yiddish humor, lectures and more. Congregation Beth Shalom is located at 390 Broadway in Lawrence. For more information, call (516) 569-6733.

Woodmere - Isralight, in conjunction with the Young Israel of Woodmere presents a Torah Conference Call (TCC) Program. This exciting Torah initiative, back for a second year, benefits people who would love an opportunity to learn more Torah but are unable to get out to classes. This program solves the problem by bringing the Torah to the people. Whether you're on the way to work, on your lunch break or at home, you can now simply call in to a conference call shiurim and hear a live class on any of a variety of topics. All classes are free and open to the public. These Torah Conference Call classes began on Sunday, October 28 at 10:00 a.m. and will take place every week.

- Rabbi Binny Freedman, Educational Director of Isralight, will host a class on Sundays from 10:00-10:30 a.m. entitled "Tastings of Torah on the Parsha all the way from Israel."
- Rabbi Zev Meir Friedman, Rosh Yeshiva of Machon HaTorah, will host a class on Mondays from 12:30-1:00 p.m. entitled "Contemporary Hashkafic Topics."
- Rabbi Kalman Topp, Associate Rabbi of the Young Israel of Woodmere, will host a class on Tuesdays from 12:30-1:00 p.m. entitled "Halachic Topics of Daily Life."
- Rabbi David Milston, Director of Overseas Program at Midreshet Harova will host a class on Wednesdays from 8:15-8:45 a.m. entitled "Mesillat Yesharim."

- Rabbi Dr. Aaron Glatt, Assistant to the Rabbi at the Young Israel of Woodmere, will host a class on Wednesdays from 12:30-1:00 p.m. entitled "Halachos of Davening."
 - Rabbi Yisrael Kaminetsky, Menahel of DRS-HALB, will host a class on Thursdays from 12:30-1:00 p.m. entitled "Hashkafa from the Parsha."
- In order to participate: dial (718) 732-6924 or (973) 409-3117, enter the conference ID#: 516 295 0950#, and enter the password: 613613#. For more information, contact the YIW office at (516) 295-0950.

Merrick - The Chabad Center for Jewish Life will host a Jewish Women's Study Circle for consecutive Mondays during three six-week sessions. Session 2 is under way until Jan. 21; Session 3 runs from Feb. 4-March 10. The Chabad Center for Jewish Life is located at 2083 Seneca Gate in Merrick. For more information call Chaya at (516) 833-3057 or e-mail Programs@ChabadJewishLife.org.

Commack - The Suffolk Y JCC is forming a Support Group for spouses, partners and significant others of women with breast and/or ovarian cancer. Come share your experiences, fears, and frustrations in a supportive environment. A Certified Social Worker will lead the group on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 6:45-8:00 p.m. There is no cost to become a part of this support group. Individual counseling is available by appointment. This group is funded through a grant from UJA-Federation.

The Suffolk JCC is located at 74 Hauppauge Road in Commack. For more information, call Lois Gold at (631) 462-9800, ext. 129.

Cedarhurst - The JCC of the Greater Five Towns is hosting a Second Generation Holocaust Survivors group to discuss the legacy left to us and issues affecting our lives today. This group will be held the last Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. The group is designed to help with feelings, experiences and concerns unique to those who have grown up in a family of Holocaust Survivors. The JCC is located at 207 Grove Ave. in Cedarhurst. For more information, call the JCC at (516) 569-6733.

Long Beach - The Long Beach Community is pleased to announce a Gemara Shiur to be held Sunday evenings at 8:30 p.m. at the Long Beach Mesivta. Shiur is to be given by Rabbi Dovid Rothschild, on Arvei Pesachim. Maariv will follow at 9:30 p.m. Please bring the Gemara Pesachim. Shiur to be held in room adjacent to third floor beis medrash. Light snacks available during shiur. Easy parking is available. the Long Beach Mesivta is located at 205 West Beech Street, on the corner of Magnolia Blvd., in Long Beach. For more information, contact Rabbi Rothschild at (516) 255-4746 or Elliot Pasik at

efpasik@aol.com.

WEEKLY EVENTS

Woodmere - Aish Kodesh hosts a Jewish history class for women on Mondays at 10:00 a.m., hosted by Dr. Annette Labovitz. This shiur will uncover the secrets of the past, from the destruction of the second Bais Hamikdash until the present, which are the bridges to our future. Aish Kodesh is located at 894 Woodmere Place in Woodmere. For more information call (516) 374-8596.

Cedarhurst - JCC of the Greater Five Towns hosts programs for children on the Autism Spectrum and their families on Mondays, Tuesdays and select Saturday evenings. These programs include:

- Social Skills Programs on Mondays from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.;
- After-School Recreational Programs on Tuesdays from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.;
- Sibling Support Groups on Tuesdays from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.;
- Grandparent/Parent Support Groups on Tuesdays from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m.; and
- Teen Motza'ei Shabbat will be held twice monthly.

The JCC is located at 207 Grove Ave. in Cedarhurst. For more information call (516) 569-6733.

Cedarhurst - The JCC of the Greater Five Towns is launching a new social day program called "Remember When." This program is especially designed for memory enhancement and socialization. The program runs from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. The cost includes a full range of therapeutic activities, morning beverage, dessert, and a kosher lunch. Round-trip door-to-door handi-

capped accessible transportation is available on a limited basis. Registration is limited to a first come, first served basis to ensure maximum benefits to each participant. The JCC is located at 207 Grove Ave. in Cedarhurst. For more information, call the JCC at (516) 569-6733.

Commack - The Suffolk Y JCC will host a Breast and Ovarian Cancer Support Group on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month from 7:15-8:45 p.m. It is free to the community. Crisis counseling will also be available by appointment at no charge. The Suffolk JCC is located at 74 Hauppauge Road in Commack. For more information call Lois Gold at (631) 462-9800, ext. 129.

Mineola - Rabbi Anchelle Perl hosts a Lunch and Learn program entitled "Staying Ethical: Are there really differences between Jews?" every Wednesday from 12:15-1:15 p.m. Lunch and Learn includes Talmud Study, Life and Death, and Jewish Humor. Congregation Beth Sholom Chabad is located at 261 Willis Ave. in Mineola. For more information, e-mail rabbi@rab-biperl.com.

Cedarhurst - JCC of the Greater Five Towns hosts a Chaverim group

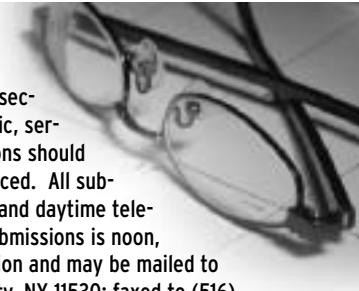
on Thursdays from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. This is a special enrichment program designed to bring Holocaust Survivors together in a heimish atmosphere. The JCC is located at 207 Grove Ave. in Cedarhurst. The fee for this group is \$4. For more information call (516) 569-6733.

Woodmere - JCC of the Greater Five Towns hosts a Come Alive Social Day Program for frail, home-bound seniors offering relief for families on Mondays and Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Congregation Sons of Israel. The program includes door-to-door transportation, kosher lunch and activities. Pre-registration and a fee of \$40 are required to participate. Congregation Sons of Israel is located at 111 Irving Pl. in Woodmere. For more information call Linda Balch or Mary Sheffield at (516) 569-6733, ext. 211 or 219.

Valley Stream - JCC of the Greater Five Towns hosts their L'Chaim Club every Wednesday at Temple Gates of Zion at from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Exercise, lunch and refreshments will be available. Temple Gates of Zion is located at 322 N. Corona Ave. in Valley Stream. For more information call Linda at (516) 569-6733, ext. 211.

CALENDAR POLICY

Notices from the community are printed free of charge in the "On the Calendar" section. Upcoming events sponsored by civic, service, religious and communal organizations should be typed, when possible, and double-spaced. All submissions should include a contact name and daytime telephone number. Deadline for calendar submissions is noon, Wednesday, for the next week's publication and may be mailed to The Jewish Star, 2 Endo Blvd., Garden City, NY 11530; faxed to (516) 569-4942; or e-mailed to jscaleendar@thejewishstar.com.



Super Bowl XLII
Sunday February 3 2008 6pm

Tradition's "Super" Bowl
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New York Giants - 3ft hero overstuffed with corn beef, roast beef, roumanian pastrami and mexican turkey breast topped with lettuce, tomato and vedallia onions served together with hot poppers and buffalo wings (serves 9-12 players) @ \$139.95.

New England Patriots - 3ft hero stuffed with breaded chicken cutlets, french pastrami, fried onions and topped with our homemade russian dressing served together with grilled chicken strips and chicken nuggets topped with our cordean bleu-pastrami stuffed chicken (serves 9-12 players) @ \$159.95.

Indianapolis Colts - Deli sandwiches with your choice of meats together with bbq spare ribs and honey drumettes (serves 9-12 players) @ \$149.95.

Dallas Cowboys - 3ft hero with turkey breast, mexican turkey breast and smoked turkey breast topped with lettuce, tomato and onions served with honey mustard grilled chicken breasts and a caesar salad (serves 9-12 players) @ \$139.95.

San Diego Chargers - Dark meat chicken breast glazed with our own general tso sauce and topped with pepperoni and fried onions on a 3ft hero served with skinless southern fried chicken and hush puppies (serves 9-12 players) @ \$139.95.

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SPORTS

GIRLS JV BASKETBALL RECAP

HAFTR atop
standings after big win

BY ALYSSA GREENBERG

Having never previously faced Heschel, the HAFTR JV Lady Hawks were a bit unsure of what to expect from their opponents. Heschel entered HAFTR's gym showcasing a team consisting of five players who could have easily played the center position, and the rest looked to be capable of playing forward.

Long story, short: the Lady

Hawks had to play a lot bigger than they were. And HAFTR did just that.

From the start of the game until the final buzzer, HAFTR controlled the rhythm and Heschel was unable to keep up with the quicker Hawks team. The Lady Hawks managed to, somehow, out-rebound their much taller opponent, and their defensive effort was outstanding as well. HAFTR's hounding defense caused turnover after

turnover, thereby leading to countless fast-break opportunities at the other end of the floor.

Led by freshman Kayla Levinson, who had 10 points, HAFTR won this one easily by a score of 46-19, advancing to 6-1 on the season.

The Hawks' will have some time off before their next game, on January 31 versus Kushner, which promises to be one of the utmost intensity and competitiveness.

Where the local teams stand

Standings: LI Division				
Boys Varsity Basketball				
Team	W	L	Win %	GB
HANC	10	0	1.000	--
North Shore	8	2	0.800	2
HAFTR	7	3	0.700	3
DRS	5	4	0.556	4.5
Rambam	3	7	0.300	7
Westchester	1	7	0.125	8
TAB	0	7	0.000	8.5
Boys Junior Varsity Basketball				
Team	W	L	Win %	GB
DRS	6	1	0.857	--
HAFTR	5	1	0.833	.5
HANC	4	2	0.667	1.5
North Shore	5	3	0.625	1.5
Rambam	1	7	0.125	5.5
Jewish Inst	0	7	0.000	6

*as of Monday, January 7

Standings: East Division				
Girls Varsity Basketball				
Team	W	L	Win %	GB
HAFTR	6	2	0.750	--
North Shore	5	2	0.714	.5
Ramaz	5	2	0.714	.5
HANC	5	3	0.625	1
Heschel	2	1	0.667	2.5
Flatbush	4	5	0.444	2.5
Westchester	0	4	0.000	4
Central	0	8	0.000	6
Girls Junior Varsity Basketball				
Team	W	L	Win %	GB
HAFTR	6	1	0.857	--
Kushner	5	1	0.833	.5
Maayanot	5	1	0.833	.5
North Shore	6	2	0.750	.5
Frisch	4	1	0.800	1
SAR	3	2	0.600	2
Flatbush	3	5	0.375	3.5
Ramaz	1	4	0.200	4
Heschel	0	4	0.000	4.5
Central	1	7	0.125	5.5
Hillel	0	6	0.000	5.5

*as of Monday, January 7

Gaza backfire: study
finds pullout actually
hurt Israel's image

Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip did not garner the expected international sympathy, a new study found.

According to the study by two political and communications researchers at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel's unilateral 2005 removal of troops and settlers from Gaza and four West Bank communities had the effect of presenting Israel in a more negative light in the Western media.

The researchers reached their conclusion after trolling through thousands of American and British press reports and government statements.

"We found that one of the main reasons for this phenomenon is that Israel continues

to be viewed by the world as a conquering state," said Tamir Sheafer, one of the study's authors. "We also found that the demands from Israel to territorial concessions in the territories not only were not lessened following the disengagement but actually became stronger."

Then-Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon cast the Gaza withdrawal as a stopgap measure in the face of a Palestinian Authority that was unwilling or unable to stop terror.

Sharon, who has been in a coma since a stroke two years ago, also said the pullout "improves our international standing and promotes the chance of peace in our region."

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SPORTS



Photos by Jonah Steinmetz

Ike Levine and Andrew Stein leap for the jump ball thrown by referee, Eddie Satran, father of the late Scott Satran, at the start of the championship game. Steven Ritholtz, who was named the tournament's MVP, eludes Solly Garber of HAFTR with the help of a pick from Levine.



Hurricanes Three-Peat

HANC wins third straight Satran Tournament

BY JONAH STEINMETZ

I would like to exercise my right to brag. In my pre-tournament predictions I prophesied the outcome of all twelve games being played. I was right on all but two, and 10 out of 12 isn't half bad. Although I did miss on two, I'm still proud of myself.

This year's tournament was extremely exciting, especially "Freaky Friday" — the third day of the four-day tournament — which included one upset (Magen David over HAFTR), one near upset (North Shore beat Rambam), and the craziest game I've ever seen (HANC defeated RTMA on a double technical given to the RTMA coach with five seconds left in the game).

HANC 44, HAFTR 40

The HANC Hurricanes got off to a slow start in their attempt to take home their third consecutive Scott Satran Tournament championship. Although the 'Canes were get-

ting a fair share of opportunities, they simply couldn't convert in the early going.

On the other hand, HAFTR's Andrew Stein started off extremely hot. Stein scored the Hawks' first six points on two jumpers and a layup. HAFTR, which plays host to this tournament, used its quick start to take a lead into the first quarter intermission.

The Hurricanes came out looking like a different team in the second quarter and ended the first half with a 21-20 lead. Steven Ritholtz, who ended up with 16 points in the championship game, led HANC on the offensive end while Ike Levine's rebounding prowess helped the 'Canes to gain the lead.

The second half was a seesaw battle throughout. HAFTR, led by Stein and Andrew Oved, ended the third quarter with a two-point lead.

In the fourth quarter, neither team could hold on to the lead. Every time HANC was ahead and tried to pull away, HAFTR got right back into it —

and vice versa.

With about three minutes remaining and the Hawks down by two, Oved made a huge three pointer to give HAFTR the lead. However, this would be the Hawks' last lead of the game. Only 15 seconds later, Levine finished a nice alley-oop to give the Hurricanes the lead for good.

HANC grinded it out down the stretch to win its third consecutive Scott Satran Memorial Basketball Tournament championship by a score of 44-40.

Wednesday, January 2

- HAFTR defeats North Shore
- Magen David defeats RTMA
- HANC defeats Rambam

Thursday, January 3

- HAFTR defeats Rambam
- HANC defeats Magen David
- RTMA defeats North Shore

Friday, January 4

- North Shore defeats Rambam
- Magen David defeats HAFTR
- HANC defeats RTMA

Saturday, January 5

- Consolation Games:**
- North Shore defeats Magen David
 - RTMA defeats Rambam
- Championship Game:**
HANC defeats HAFTR

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SPORTS

VARSITY HOCKEY REPORT

Machon matchup ends in tie

Rambam clinches playoff spot in process

BY JARED WIESEL

The Rambam Ravens came into this game on a six-game winning streak, but to keep it going they would have to beat a very good HAFTR Flames team. This was a highly anticipated game and you could see that by the large crowd that packed the Rambam gym to cheer on their team. When you walked into the gym you could feel the electric atmosphere, and you knew this was going to be a great game. The game was a physical one right from the moment the referee dropped the puck at center court as both teams continually battled in the corners and jostling for position in front of

the goal. The Flames struck first midway through the first period, but less than a minute later the Ravens tied the score at one. This was a theme of the game, as the first period ended in a 1-1 tie. The second period mirrored the first as HAFTR regained the lead at 2-1. But once again, the Ravens responded just a few minutes later when captain Dovi Hochbaum scored his second goal of the game. The Ravens then scored two more unanswered goals and all of a sudden, the momentum seemed to swing in Rambam's favor. The second period came to a close with Rambam up, 4-2. Both teams opened the third period determined to get



the win, HAFTR continuously took shots at Rambam goalie Avi Herschman. Herschman though, stopped shot after shot and through the first six minutes of the period the Ravens still led by two. At the six minute mark of the third period,

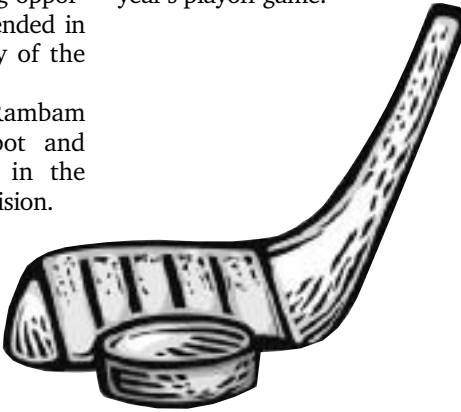
the teams switched sides and when play resumed it seemed like a different HAFTR team had taken the court. The team's passes were more crisp, they were running harder and, finally, all the Flames' hard work paid off when Duvi Goldoffsky poked home a rebound past Herschman to make it pull HAFTR within one. Moments later, HAFTR captain Josh Brooks scored his second of the game to tie the score at four. Then with just over a minute to go, Brooks scored again and just like that the Flames looked to be on their way to victory. The Rambam fans were silent while chants of "Let's go Flames" could be heard throughout the gym.

With just under 30 seconds remaining in the game, though, the Ravens went on a much-needed power play. There would be a face off in the HAFTR zone and the Ravens pulled their goalie in favor of the extra man — they now had a 5-on-3 advantage. Right off the face off, Sholom Hammer took a slap shot that flew past HAFTR goalie Sammy Gelnick and the gym erupted. The Ravens' fans were screaming with joy while the Flames' fans were in a state of shock and disbelief. The third period came to a close in a 5-5 tie and the game went to overtime. In the overtime, both teams' defenses stepped up giving their opponent few chances to score. Both goalies stood tall in net on the few scoring opportunities and the game ended in a 5-5 tie to the dismay of the fans. With the tie, Rambam clinched a playoff spot and secured second place in the Queens/Long Island Division. HAFTR also improved its standing and looks to be primed for a playoff run. The next time these teams meet could be in the

MYHSHL playoffs and if that game is anything like this one, you won't want to miss it!

HANC Cavaliers 9, MAYHS Jaguars 0:

The HANC Cavaliers defeated the MAYHS Jaguars, 9-0, on Sunday to improve to 4-4 on the season. The Cavs' Nafi Orlofsky scored four goals to lead the way and Zach Daitch added two goals of his own. HANC came out a little sluggish, but Orlofsky scored two late goals in the first to give HANC a 2-0 lead after one. Daitch scored 28 seconds into the second and the rout was on. HANC led 6-0 after two periods and added three more in the third. HANC faced MTA on Tuesday night after press time in a rematch of last year's playoff game.



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BY ARI MIRZOEFF

Coming into the Motzei Shabbos matchup between HALB and HANC, both teams combined for one loss. While the Lions were a perfect 4-0, the 'Canes had only one blemish on their season. Both teams needed this game to prove who the top dog was in league play thus far. In the first four minutes, both teams had great chances to score, but none could connect. However, a little over five minutes into the first, HALB captain Avery Englander scored on a Sidney Crosby-like move to give his team an early lead. With around two minutes to go in the first, Englander added another goal giving HALB a 2-0 lead going into the first intermission. Around the 10-minute mark

of the second period, HALB's David Green found line-mate Yaakov Abittan with a gorgeous pass, which the 7th grade scoring sensation put home. Around three minutes later, Abittan struck again, going five-hole on the HANC goalie, to give his team a commanding 4-0 lead. Englander added another goal in the third period to complete the hat trick and give his team a 5-0 win. HALB goalie Efram Rosenberg stepped up, making several tremendous saves down the stretch to conserve the shutout. In addition, Michael Fruchter and Judah Klein played their best games of the season, both getting a tremendous amount of workload on defense. All in all, this was a great team effort for the Lions who improved their record to 5-0.

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EYE ON ALBANY

Is conventional wisdom wise?



Michael Fragin

The winners in the Iowa caucuses last week should not have been a huge surprise. It had become increasingly clear that Obama and Huckabee, for different reasons, were riding a wave of voter discontent with the political establishment.

The conventional wisdom, which is not necessarily the wisdom of the voters, is a double-edged sword. It is great for raising money but once it is in your favor a candidate must live up to expectations. Much like a company that announces strong quarterly earnings — only to watch its stock get hammered because the earnings are merely in line or slightly short of expectations - the frontrunners are under tremendous pressure to meet or beat their numbers in every contest.

Clinton and Romney were viewed as the candidates of the establishment, at least in Iowa. Hillary had the endorsement of Iowa Governor and one-time presidential candidate Tom Vilsack. Both underperformed on the expectations side.

The New Hampshire Primary, which took place this week after The Star's printing deadline, was expected to shore up Obama as the man to beat on the Democratic side, and to give John McCain the edge as the

moderate maverick candidate who can attract independents for the Republicans. Both of these developments are very bad news for our hometown heroes Hillary and Rudy.

Rudy finished sixth in Iowa behind his nemesis Ron Paul and is in danger of finishing behind him in New Hampshire. A candidate with national appeal should not be finishing behind those seen as not even viable. To soften the blow, Giuliani has pretended that he did not compete in either state. Truth is that he spent time and money in both, running radio ads in Iowa and spending several million dollars on TV in New Hampshire. What presents a challenge for him is that many voters and supporters in other states may start to look at his minor candidate-type numbers, and turn their attention elsewhere, particularly given Rudy's heavy baggage of personal and ethical lapses.

Clinton is struggling with an identity — does her campaign represent a fresh start or the restoration of the Bill Clinton dynasty? Looking at former Secretary of State Madeline Albright behind her on the stage last Thursday night in Iowa, covering the flank opposite Bill, I couldn't help but wonder if she wasn't trying to tell voters that a

vote for her is a vote to bring back the entire Clinton 42 team. Keep in mind that Bill did not win Iowa in 1992.

The structure of this front-loaded primary season was supposed to favor Clinton and Giuliani. The ability to wage a national campaign, in large states on both coasts, was said to favor those with strong name recognition and large war chests. We are now seeing that no amount of money can replace the validation of a win or two.

Michael Fragin is a veteran of many political campaigns, at all levels of government, who served in the administrations of Governors Pataki and Spitzer. He is now in the private sector. He lives in Lawrence.

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Why men like to sit in the women's section

Continued from Page One

ning trends among those who prefer not to take the few extra steps into the men's section.

Arriving late. People who come late to davening sometimes feel embarrassed about entering the shul proper because the attention they inevitably attract makes them feel uncomfortable. Sitting in the women's section, of course, alleviates this problem.

Not being a member of the shul. As membership has its privileges, some people feel uncomfortable taking one of the empty seats in the men's section, as it is depriving a paying member from sitting in the seat of his choice. Of course, sitting in the women's section denies card-carrying women the opportunity to even enter the sanctuary, but this is much less of a problem. Going out on a limb, I think most members who do get uptight about these things have a bigger problem with guests getting an aliyah (which is a discussion by itself) than with guests sitting in the men's section.

Wanting more space to spread out. This goes back to the country club mentality; one needs to relax in shul and spread out as much as possible. Since only a few people pray in the women's section, and many more opt for the men's section, the people in the women's section can feel more comfortable with complete rows of seats to themselves, while the men in the men's section will feel cramped by having only one or two seats for their person and tallis bag. Last I checked most people, especially when sitting, do not physically need more than one seat to contain their bodies.

Not my crowd. Whether it is yeshivish people in a more modern shul or jeans-wearers in a more heimishe shul, some people choose not to mix with the general populace. Often it is yeshiva students used to davening in yeshiva who find themselves in the most uncomfortable

position of davening in a "shul" attended by people who actually "work."

A few months ago I attended a Sunday morning minyan in the beautiful upstairs Bais Medrash in the Young Israel of Lawrence Cedarhurst. The women's section there is L-shaped and a young woman chose to sit at the front of the women's section (the top of the "L") for the morning services. Not noticing her because of the unique configuration of the women's section, a number of young men proceeded to continue their morning custom of sitting in the back of the women's section.

Thankfully an upstanding member approached the young men and suggested they join the men in the men's section.

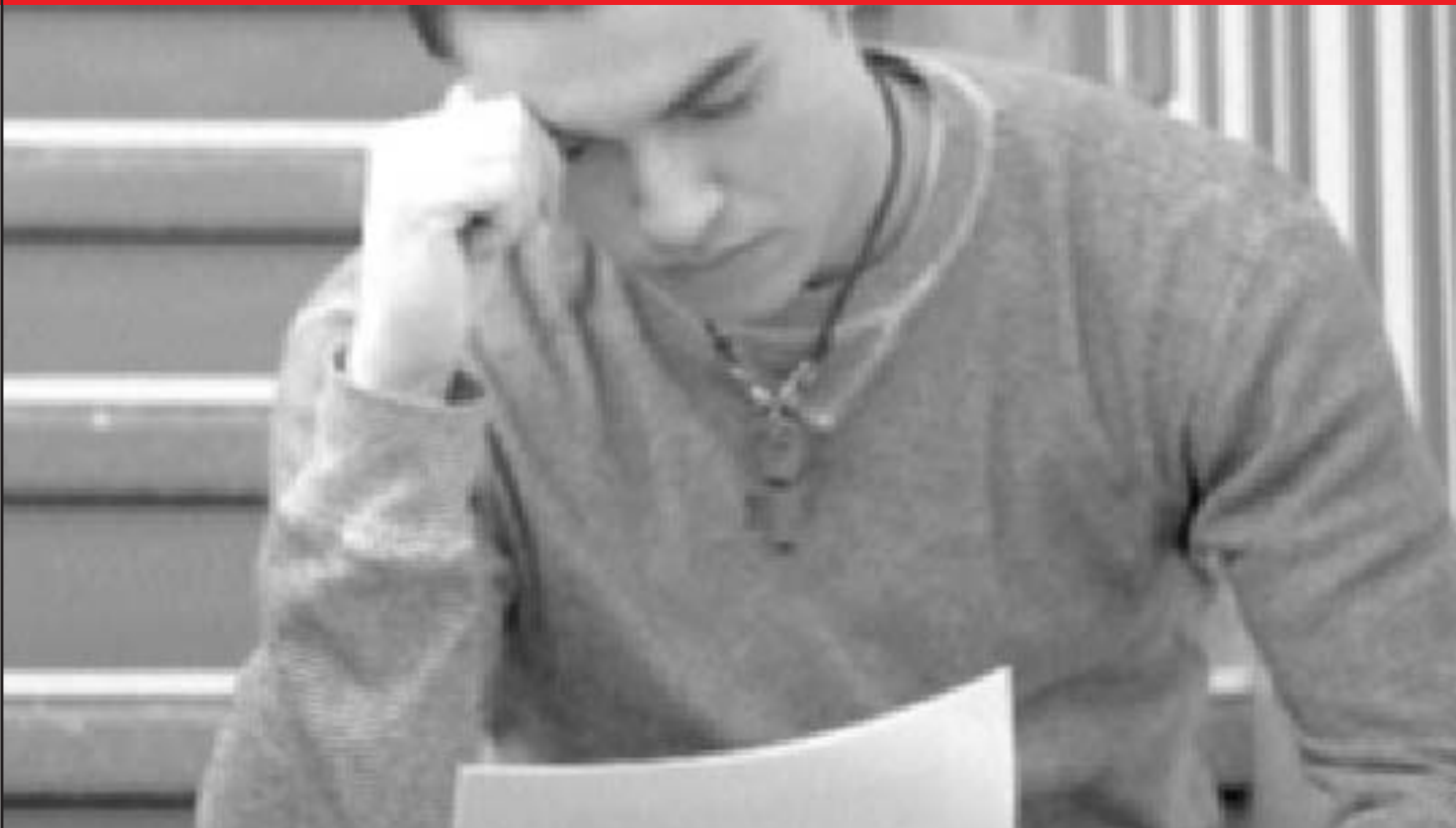
What irony! There is a woman sitting in the women's section, and these guys choose not to even check, to give the young woman the dignity of sitting in the area which is designated for her use. Not that she was the type to roam around and need all the space, but the purpose of the mechitza is separation, for reasons which are beyond the scope of this essay. So separate! And not just when there is a woman there, but even when there are no women there.

Is there a solution? Perhaps a change in mindset. Men should make the conscious decision to sit only in the men's section.

If you come early or right on time, move towards the front so later arrivals will have plenty of room.

As people come in, they should fill the room from the front working their way back. This will leave room for more people and no one need feel uncomfortable trying to squeeze into an empty seat in the front, or by sitting in a section never intended for males in the first place. And who knows? Maybe some women will come to shul and won't have to wait uncomfortably in the hallway until someone has the gumption to tell the men to clear out.

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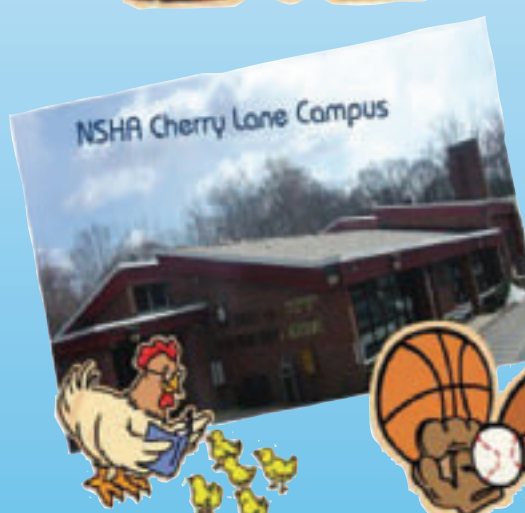


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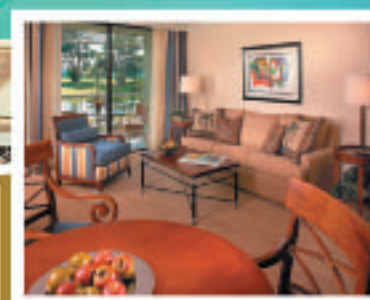
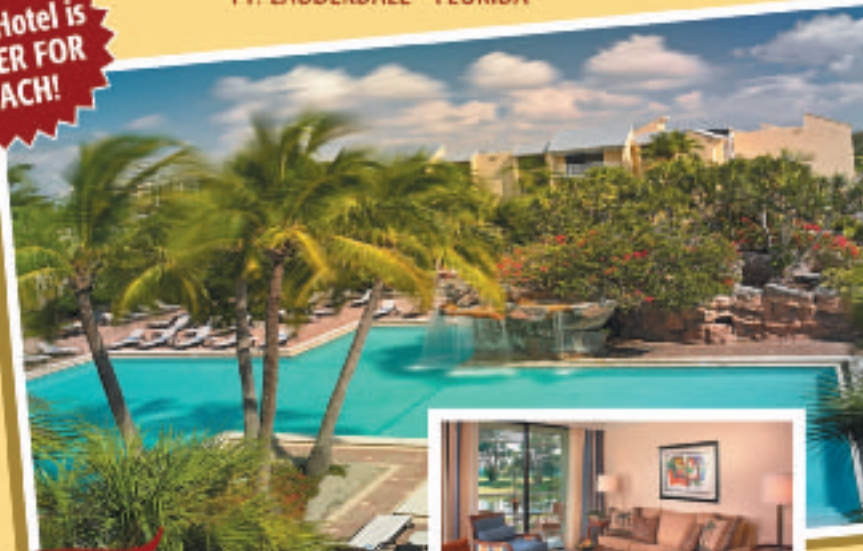
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Hyatt Regency Bonaventure

& THE ELIZABETH ARDEN RED DOOR SPA

FT. LAUDERDALE • FLORIDA

Entire Hotel is
KOSHER FOR
PESACH!



The beauty of the totally renovated and redecorated hotel envelops you as you arrive at the all new

Hyatt Regency Bonaventure. The elegantly appointed, lavish guest rooms and suites have wonderful views of the golf course fairways, the waterway or the freshwater pool with its cascading waterfall. The new and inviting red doors open onto the fabulous Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spa Atrium where you are immediately swathed in a feeling of tranquility and well on your way to rejuvenation and relaxation. The rain forest and natural flora and fauna provide a splendor and tranquility which will enhance your Passover experience.

HOTEL FEATURES

WORLD FAMOUS RED DOOR SPA • 31 Treatment Rooms • Whirlpool, Sauna, Steam Rooms
• Soothing Splendor of Spa Services • Complimentary Unlimited Entrance

WORLD CLASS SPORTS FACILITIES

• 2 Championship Golf Courses • 24-court, lighted Tennis Complex • Jogging/Walking Nature Trails

LUXURIOUS "LASKO" TEA ROOM • All-you-can-eat Barbeques • Midnight Dessert Extravaganza

NEARBY ACTIVITIES • Fort Lauderdale Beach & Downtown • Indian Village and Air Boating • Jai Alai, Bowling, Recreation Facilities • Sawgrass Mills Outlets, Galleria and Fashion Mills

EXTRAORDINARY DAYCAMP & BABYSITTING PROGRAMS • SEPARATE SWIM HOURS AVAILABLE

Lasko Family Kosher Tours

For Reservations & Information Call: 800-532-9119

www.laskotours.com • In Florida Call: 954-894-6000 • e-mail: laskotours@aol.com