


**IN THE NEWS**
**Report: Columbia  
profs not anti-Israel**

There was little intimidation of pro-Israel students at Columbia University, a university committee concluded.

Some Jewish students criticized the results of the report, released Thursday, as biased.

"We're ashamed that Columbia would undertake such a blatant whitewash," said Ariel Beery, one of the co-founders of Columbians for Academic Freedom, a pro-Israel group.

"They were more concerned with solving the problem that's posed to the university's image than addressing the injustices that were done to students."

**Breakthrough  
on conversions**

A landmark High Court ruling called on Israel to fully recognize some non-Orthodox converts to Judaism.

The High Court of Justice on Thursday found in favor of a petition demanding that "leaping converts," who study in Reform or Conservative academies in Israel and complete their conversions abroad, be considered Jews.

**Mofaz: Iran  
won't meet deadline**

Israel does not believe Iran will meet European demands to end uranium enrichment.

European Union negotiators have given Iran until June to show that it has stopped enriching uranium.

Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, in Washington to meet with top Bush administration officials Wednesday, said he did not believe Iran would meet the deadline.

Among other reasons, he said, is that the deadline comes as Iran goes to elections, and Iran's rulers do not want to appear weak.

"I expect the next step will be to bring the matter to the U.N. Security Council," Mofaz said, where sanctions may be considered.

■ **MORE NEWS, Pg. 8**

# WORLD REPORT

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Brian Hendler

**SHARON VICTORIOUS IN BUDGET VOTE**

Israeli Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, center, and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon cast their votes for the 2005 budget at the Knesset on Tuesday. Passage of the budget was a victory for Sharon, removing the last major legislative obstacle to his plan to withdraw from the Gaza Strip and part of the West Bank this summer.

## Engaging the next generation: Rich young Jews talk about giving

By RACHEL POMERANCE

**N**EW YORK (JTA) — Throughout high school, Alvin lived an unusual lie.

Offended by what he remembers as the "conspicuous consumption" of his peers at Choate, the Connecticut prep school, he tried to hide his family's wealth.

He claimed he was on financial aid, hung out with the kids of faculty members and prayed no one would realize that a school scholarship in his family name was named after a member of his own family.

**FOCUS  
ON  
ISSUES**

When he revealed his secret to a crush, she was shocked — and he was thrilled. "I can honestly tell you that was one of my happiest days of my high school career," said Alvin, now 22, a junior at New York University.

When Alvin, who asked that his last name not be used, joined a peer group for young Jews on or soon to join the boards of their family foundations two years ago, it was as much group therapy as a chance to conceive his own philanthropic vision.

"I can't tell you how many different ver-

*Continued on page 2*

## ■ Young Jewish philanthropists talk about giving to Jewish causes

*Continued from page 1*

sions of the same story that we would all tell as a group about the guilt about coming from wealth," he said.

The group, called Grand Street, is a 2-year-old project of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies. Each year, it hosts a retreat and maintains an ongoing peer network for about a dozen 18- to 28-year-olds as they consider how to further their own Jewish values through their families' foundations.

The public emergence of the Grand Street program comes as a study by the Boston College Social Welfare Institute estimates that \$41 trillion will be transferred from the oldest to the youngest generations of family foundations by the year 2052.

Jewish family foundations make up a big chunk of that wealth. There are more than 8,000 family foundations that list Jewish giving as part of their mission, according to Mark Charendoff, president of the Jewish Funders Network. Together those foundations account for some \$3 billion in annual giving.

Engaging young Jewish philanthropists and transferring the wealth of family foundations will be key topics this week at the international conference of the Jewish Funders Network. The conference, scheduled for April 3 to 5 in Baltimore, is considered a forum for some of the most innovative thinking in Jewish philanthropy.

These young philanthropists are a part of the next generation "that will potentially

have enormous leverage over the resources that become available either to the general community or the Jewish community or both," said Jeffrey Solomon, president of Bronfman Philanthropies.

Some heirs to great fortunes have found it easy to follow in their parents' Jewish footsteps. For others, it's been a journey.

Adam Bronfman, the son of Edgar Bronfman, Sr., a towering figure in the world of Jewish philanthropy, is poised to one day take over the Samuel Bronfman Foundation, where he is currently managing director.

He credits his commitment to Jewish philanthropy to his father, who, he says, encouraged his self-exploration. But his decision to become personally involved in Jewish philanthropy came when he had children. "It was pretty clear as a Jew the appropriate place for me to go was to my heritage."

The Samuel Bronfman Foundation funds such projects as Hillel, birthright israel and MyJewishLearning.com, an educational Web site.

Stacy Schusterman, the daughter of Lynn and the late Charles Schusterman and the treasurer of their Tulsa, Okla.-based foundation, said she acquired many of her Jewish values from her parents.

"My dad and I spent time talking about how Jews have made many positive contributions to the world," said Schusterman, who is expected to take over the foundation some day.

For some heirs, finding their Jewish niche has been more of a challenge.

Grand Street, whose organizers will present their concept at the funders' conference, is one of a very few programs that helps young Jewish philanthropists explore their values and commitments.

Another such program is the Younger Funders Initiative, a 6-year-old program of the Jewish Funders Network, which has worked with hundreds of young Jews

to help them clarify their Jewish commitment to philanthropy.

Charendoff, of the Funders Network, said young Jews are "much more likely to give to any cause that they feel is effective and any cause that they have a relationship with, but whether those causes are Jewish per se or not is less likely to be a determinant."

Younger Jews have less allegiance to traditional Jewish institutions than their parents, according to experts in the field.

Young Jewish philanthropists once were groomed by federations, but those institutions are less powerful in today's assimilated world than they used to be, said Michael Steinhardt, a major philanthropist to Jewish causes.

Jews, wealthy or not, will donate to interests that resonate with them, he said. Younger Jews must be exposed to Jewish education and visits to Israel to create such a bond.

Young funders are more interested in finding meaning in new entrepreneurial ventures. And they want a say in where their dollars are spent — they are not satisfied by simply handing over authority to a Jewish organization or federation.

In that sense, the Jewish family foundations, which set their own agendas, are a natural fit for the philanthropic sensibilities of young Jews.

"The days when one simply wrote the check to the Jewish federation and let them disperse it are past, and I think the role models for these young people are the family foundations," said Jonathan Sarna, who holds a chair in American Jewish history at Brandeis University.

Scott Belsky, a 25-year-old professional at Goldman Sachs, said the Grand Street program has helped him make a greater impact on the board of the Stanley H. Kaplan Family foundation, named for his grandfather, the test preparation guru.

Through Grand Street, he said, "the conversations we're having are making us understand each other more and ourselves more, and that's something we leverage in our foundations."

**'The days when one simply wrote the check to the Jewish federation and let them disperse it are past, and I think the role models for these young people are the family foundations.'**

**Jonathan Sarna**

Professor of American Jewish history, Brandeis University

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# Spats over settlements show areas of tension

By LESLIE SUSSER

JERUSALEM (JTA) — On the surface, it seems that the recent public quarrel between Israel and the Bush administration over Jewish settlement blocs in the West Bank could have been put off until Israelis and Palestinians get around to negotiating permanent borders.

But underlying the exchanges are significant differences between Israel and the United States over what a final Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement might look like, and how to get there. These differences could come to the fore immediately after Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and part of the West Bank this summer.

While the Americans stress the need for a "contiguous and viable" Palestinian state, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is concerned about retaining as many West Bank settlements as possible, consolidating Israel's hold over Jerusalem and ensuring Israeli security, even if this comes at the expense of the contiguity of Palestinian territory.

Where the Americans see the "road map" peace plan as the way toward a final Israeli-Palestinian peace deal, Sharon believes in the plan's interim phases as a way to stabilize the situation, but not in its prescription for quick movement to final peace talks.

Given the gaps between Israeli and Palestinian positions on the most contentious issues, Sharon doesn't believe a final peace agreement will be possible for quite some time. Until then, he believes, Israel should try to engineer the permanent borders it desires by creating facts on the ground.

Planned construction between Jerusalem and Ma'aleh Adumim, an area known to municipal planners as "E-1," is part of this concept.

Sharon is convinced that Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas will not be able to negotiate a final deal that includes agreement on the issues of refugees and Jerusalem, and that any attempt to do so will blow up the way the Camp David summit did five years ago.

Sharon therefore hopes that unilateral Israeli moves, like the disengagement from Gaza and the northern West Bank, are the best way to strengthen Israel's hold on the large West Bank settlement blocs that virtually every Israeli party

agrees the Jewish state must retain under any peace deal.

President Bush and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently used identical phrasing: "A state of scattered territories will not work," they declared.

Sharon, in contrast, believes that tunnels, bridges and bypass roads can connect Palestinian parts of the West Bank that don't have direct territorial contiguity.

The area known as E-1 stretches for about five miles east from Jerusalem to Ma'aleh Adumim, a West Bank bedroom community of 40,000 residents. Designated for settlement under the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's Labor government in 1994, the area was left undeveloped because of opposition from successive U.S. administrations.

If it is built up, E-1 would cut off Arab areas in eastern Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank and drive a wedge between Palestinian towns and cities north and south of Jerusalem, for example between Bethlehem and Ramallah.

Palestinians and left-wing Israeli critics say the plan will leave the Palestinians with noncontiguous territory and will prevent the emergence of a viable Palestinian state, an argument the Bush administration tends to accept.

Meanwhile, rampant Palestinian building, spilling out of neighborhoods in the area and along the road from Jerusalem to Ma'aleh Adumim, is creating a competing set of facts on the ground. If Israel doesn't proceed immediately with plans to develop E-1, former Prime Minister Ehud Barak warned recently in the Jerusalem Post, the Palestinians will have separated Jerusalem from its Jewish hinterland.

The controversy was triggered by revelations last week that Israel plans to build 3,500 homes in Ma'aleh Adumim. Sharon was adamant: Israel, he said, intends to build in the settlements it hopes to retain and to route the West Bank security fence in such a way as to keep them on the Israeli side of the barrier.

In building support for his controversial Gaza withdrawal, Sharon has staked his political future on an April 2004 letter from Bush backing border modifications based on "existing major Israeli population centers" in the West Bank.

That will present Bush with a dilemma: If he gives Sharon the public assurances he wants, he will damage Abbas' standing. If he doesn't back Sharon, he'll give the Israeli right ammunition against the prime minister and the Gaza withdrawal.

In both cases, the potential for strains in the Israel-U.S. relationship after disengagement is high.

**'A state of scattered territories will not work.'**  
President Bush and Condoleezza Rice

NEWS ANALYSIS



Brian Hendler

A new neighborhood was built in the West Bank's largest Jewish settlement, Ma'aleh Adumim, near Jerusalem.

# Russian chief rabbi insults Reform Judaism

By LEV KRICHEVSKY

MOSCOW (JTA)—An article in Chabad's main Russian-language magazine blasting Reform Judaism has outraged Reform leaders in Russia and the United States.

Reform Judaism "embodies an approach toward things that is opposite to the approach of the Torah," Rabbi Berel Lazar, the leading Chabad official in the former Soviet Union and one of Russia's two chief rabbis, wrote in the February issue of *Lechaim*.

Tension between Chabad and the Reform movement has been simmering in the former Soviet Union, but Lazar's broadside has intensified the conflict and put it squarely in the public eye.

Leaders of the Union for Reform Judaism, as the movement is known in the United States, and of the World Union for Progressive Judaism called Lazar's attack on Reform Jews deplorable.

"Rabbi Lazar cannot request American Jewish support for his work and profess to speak in the name of all Russian Jews while simultaneously proclaiming that Reform Judaism is not Judaism and Reform rabbis are not rabbis," said Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism.

*Lechaim* is a monthly magazine published by the Federation of Jewish Communities, a Chabad-led umbrella group and the largest Jewish organization in the area. The magazine, which is free and distributed across the former Soviet Union, is one of the largest Jewish-interest monthlies in the area.



Sue Fishkoff

Rabbi Berel Lazar of Chabad, one of Russia's chief rabbis.

The article, "Do Not Bargain with God, Gentlemen," attracted the attention of Reform leaders in Russia this month. Reform leaders in the United States, Israel and around the world joined in the denunciation.

"'Reform Judaism' cannot be seriously called a religion!" Lazar wrote. "'Reformed Judaism' is just a code of rules created by the people for their own worldly comfort. There is no God there."

Reform Judaism is "an interest club," the article continued, and "I feel strange when a director of the club is all of a sudden called a 'rabbi.'"

Though they were not surprised to find criticism of their movement in a Chasidic publication, Reform leaders were worried about Lazar's article, given its author's prominence.

Lazar argues that over the past 100 years Reform Judaism developed primarily in the United States and therefore reflects American values, which grow out of a secular society. Those values make it hard for Jews to fully observe the Torah's commandments, he writes, and he hopes that the Reform movement's expansion in Russia fails.

Russian Reform leaders say Lazar is wrong about their movement being unsuccessful in Russia.

Rabbi Grigory Kotlyar, head of the Union of Religious Congregations of Modern Judaism in Russia, the central body of the Reform movement, told JTA that the movement has about 35 active congregations in Russia, about 40 in Ukraine and about 20 in Belarus.

Kotlyar said Lazar might have been motivated in part because Chabad fears the Reform movement will gain new momentum in Russia in response to the World Union for Progressive Judaism's global forum, slated for this summer in Moscow. It is believed to be the first time Reform Jewish leaders from around the

world will meet in the former Soviet Union.

In a letter to Lazar signed by five Reform rabbis, Russian Reform leaders noted that

their movement was not born in the United States. In fact, they wrote, the movement's Russian roots are almost as deep as those of the Lubavitch movement: The first Reform congregations opened in czarist Russia in the middle of the 19th century.

The Reform leaders also said it was regrettable for one Jewish

group to attack another publicly, given growing anti-Semitism in Russia.

Leaders of the Union for Reform Judaism and the World Union for Progressive Judaism demanded to know how the leader of a group that claims to represent Russian Jews both domestically and internationally could have written what Lazar wrote.

Lazar's federation has been increasing its fund-raising efforts in the United States, claiming that the money it raises will benefit Jews across the former Soviet Union, Yoffie noted.

But Lazar's *Lechaim* article proved that he doesn't represent all of Russia's Jews, Yoffie said. "He is speaking the language of a Chabad functionary and not of a Russian."

Rabbi Uri Regev, executive director for the World Union for Progressive Judaism, also blasted Lazar's article. "It's regrettable that Chabad — which professes to connect all Jews as they are — so easily returns to its old, hateful bashing of Reform Judaism," Regev said in a statement.

Regev said U.S. partners of Lazar's federation should reconsider their ties to his group if he refuses to re-evaluate his comments. "A movement guided by such views cannot be a partner to pluralistic, inclusive Jewish organizations such as the" Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations "and the American Jewish Congress, who have been approached by Chabad in recent times," Regev wrote. ■

**Rabbi Lazar cannot request American Jewish support for his work and profess to speak in the name of all Russian Jews while simultaneously proclaiming that Reform Judaism is not Judaism and Reform rabbis are not rabbis.'**

**Rabbi Eric Yoffie**

President of the Union for Reform Judaism

**AROUND  
THE  
JEWISH  
WORLD**

# Kyrgyzstan's Jews not threatened but may emigrate

By LEV KRICHEVSKY

MOSCOW (JTA) — Members of the small Jewish community of Kyrgyzstan may emigrate in the wake of the revolution in this Central Asian nation, the community's leader told JTA.

"Many Jews are experiencing a burning desire to leave," Dr. Boris Shapiro, head of the Jewish culture society Menorah, the leading secular community organization, told JTA on Tuesday in a telephone interview from the Kyrgyz capital city of Bishkek.

"No one has left yet, but there will be a wave of emigration," he said.

He added that Jews are worried over possible economic consequences of the revolution that toppled President Askar Akayev last week. Another reason for concern is a rise in radical Islam that may slip into the vacuum created by political and economic turmoil.

Some five million people live in Kyrgyzstan, a former Soviet republic sandwiched between Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and China. Following the nationwide protests and civil unrest, Israeli consular officers arrived to help evacuate the Jewish population if necessary.

"People were lining up, and the Israelis are still busy checking people's papers," Shapiro said. "No one got their visas yet. But people will start leaving soon; this is certain."

Shapiro said there was no immediate threat to the community, though he admitted the situation in Bishkek was "terrifying" on March 24-25 when protesters took over main government buildings in the city and gangs used the chaos to loot stores, markets and businesses.

"The worst seems to be over now," Shapiro said.

In Washington, the leader of a group that monitors Jewish life in the region said his group is working to ensure that the Jewish community is safe.

"Fortunately, the Jews haven't been made a target and don't feel threatened," said Mark Levin, executive director of NCSJ: Advocates on Behalf of Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States & Eurasia. "We're working with the Americans and the Israelis to keep things that way."

Kyrgyzstan is home to some 1,500

Jews, approximately one-fifth of the Jewish community's size at its peak about 15 years ago, before the Soviet Union broke up and Jews started emigrating.

The modern Jewish presence in Kyrgyzstan is a relatively new phenomenon.

While the Jewish presence can be traced to the Middle Ages, the mostly Ashkenazi community of today traces its roots to Stalin-era exiles and World War II-era refugees and evacuees.

Shapiro's story is typical. Now 74, he was born in Ukraine and settled in Kyrgyzstan some 50 years ago, looking for better educational and career opportunities.

Like in many other places on the outskirts of the Soviet empire, state-sponsored anti-Semitism was relatively weak in Kyrgyzstan, and Shapiro managed to build a good career in medicine after graduating

from a medical college in Bishkek.

Shapiro made it to the post of deputy health-care minister in the last years of the Soviet Union. He later served in a similar position with Kyrgyzstan's first post-Soviet government.

He added that many have regained their hopes for law and order now that Feliks Kulov, a longtime opposition politician and former national security minister who was sentenced to a prison term

three years ago, is a key figure in the new government. Kulov was released from jail amid last week's protests.

"He is a charismatic leader and he took the situation in his own hands. He knows how to go about it," Shapiro said.

But Shapiro said the political situation is still tense, with opposition leaders focusing on redistributing the power they took from Akayev and his proteges.

Akayev, a university-trained mathematician and the nation's leader since 1990, is a

former liberal academic-turned-boss of the reform wing of the Communist party under Mikhail Gorbachev. Like many leaders in post-Soviet Central Asia, he extended his term in office and was widely accused by the opposition of authoritarianism, corruption and nepotism.

But Shapiro said the Jewish community felt safe during Akayev's rule.

"Despite all the setbacks of his regime, he was an intellectual, and he always remembered that all his teachers were Jewish," Shapiro said.

Like many of his countrymen, Shapiro believes there will be a period of uncertainty for Kyrgyzstan, and many Jews simply don't want to test their luck during the difficult times ahead.

"We are a small and very poor country that lacks any energy resources of its own. It's difficult to live here," Shapiro said. ■

(JTA Foreign Editor Peter Ephross in New York contributed to this report.)

'Fortunately, the Jews haven't been made a target and don't feel threatened. We're working with the Americans and the Israelis to keep things that way.'

Mark Levin

Executive director of NCSJ

ACROSS  
THE FORMER  
SOVIET UNION

## Safeguarding the Temple Mount

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli police plan to prevent a mass march of far-right Jews on the Temple Mount.

Prompted by a call by the extremist group Revava, or Legion, for Jews to gather at the Jerusalem shrine on April 10, police said Tuesday that anyone who arrives will be turned back, by force if necessary.

Revava is one of several groups spear-

heading pro-settler resistance to the looming withdrawals from the Gaza Strip and northern West Bank.

Security sources said it was feared that the Temple Mount rally, timed for the first day of the Jewish month of Nissan, would spark Muslim rioting at the mosques on the site, and that violence could derail the evacuations. ■

# Israeli, Palestinian doctors save lives together

By DINA KRAFT

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The pair of surgeons — one Israeli, one Palestinian — examines the maze of tubes taped to 10-year-old Mohammed Saleme's chest. They methodically check his heart rate, oxygen levels and breathing.

The young patient's mother, Mariam, stands behind them, next to the heart monitor. Her eyes grow wide as she watches her son's chest slowly rise and fall.

Mohammed is unconscious after some six hours of surgery at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem's Ein Kerem, but he is in "excellent condition," the doctors assure Mariam.

The doctors operated together on Mohammed, fixing the damaged aortic valve with which he was born.

On a piece of notebook paper, Dr. Bisher Marzouqa sketches out a diagram of the procedure for Mariam, a Palestinian Muslim who has brought her son for treatment from the West Bank city of Bethlehem. For her, the surgeons' nationalities don't matter.

"It makes no difference to me if they are Israeli or Palestinian. I'm just thankful to them for all their help," she said.

Marzouqa, a Palestinian from Bethlehem, and Dr. Eli Milgalter, an Israeli from Jerusalem, have operated on 110 Palestinian children from the West Bank and Gaza

Strip who need heart surgery. Their work is funded by a Peres Center for Peace program that is supported by Italian donors.

Hadassah recently was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, in part because of the cooperation and coexistence demonstrated by a staff that is both Jewish and Arab.

"Once you enter the borders of the hospital you feel you have entered a different world, far from the struggles and contradictions of the outside. Everyone here works for human life independent of anything else," said Marzouqa.

Marzouqa has to drive through an Israeli checkpoint every day to reach his job at the hospital. Most days he can pass through within minutes, but there are times, especially when tensions run high because of Israeli military activity in Bethlehem or because of warnings of a terrorist attack, when it can take up to two hours.

Hadassah's two hospital campuses in Jerusalem have treated more terror victims than any other medical center in the world in the four and a half years since the Palestinian intifada began, even when it has meant treating terrorists and their victims in the same room.

Hadassah also has reached out to the Palestinian community by training Palestinian doctors to open their own pediatric oncology ward in a hospital in eastern Jerusalem, training another doctor with an eye toward creating the first pediatric intensive care unit in the West Bank city

of Hebron and hosting a support group for Palestinian and Israeli parents whose children have diabetes.

On March 24, Hadassah dedicated a state-of-the-art center for emergency medicine. The staff drew on its experience to create what is considered one of the world's most advanced centers for treating victims of terror attacks.

Abdel Razzaq Abu Mayaleh is one of the recent additions to the pediatric ICU. He has taken a one-year leave of absence from his

position as head of pediatrics at a Hebron hospital to train with Ido Yatziv, head of Hadassah's pediatric ICU.

Mohtaseb Hospital, where Abu Mayaleh works in Hebron, often is flooded with pediatric patients, but he felt he lacked the knowledge to deal with the most critical cases. He plans to take what he learns at Hadassah to the pediatric hospital the Red Crescent Society is building in Hebron.

Hadassah has shown Abu Mayaleh an entirely different side of Israelis from the one he knew from interactions with soldiers and settlers in Hebron, he said.

"All of us really feel that we are like brothers, like one family, in saving the children without feeling any difference between any race or religion," he said.

Marzouqa said Palestinian patients and their families often approach him to say they have been taken aback by the kindness and professionalism of Hadassah's Israeli medical staff. When they return home, those families bear the message that there is hope for cooperation between the two sides, doctors say.

Instead of despairing at the political situation, the two doctors laugh about the absurdity of it all.

"Here we are about everything connected to doctors, humanity and, most importantly, patient care," Milgalter said. "In this way, everything else falls into place. If politics came into the picture everything would be ruined. We are apolitical, and because of this the hospital is an island of sanity." ■

**'It makes no difference to me if they are Israeli or Palestinian. I'm just thankful to them for all their help.'**

**Mariam Saleme**  
Mother of 10-year-old Mohammed

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES



Brian Hendler

Surgeons Dr. Bisher Marzouqa, left, and Dr. Eli Milgalter check on their patient, Mohammed Saleme, at a Hadassah hospital in Jerusalem in March.



## COMMUNITY

## TRANSITIONS

- Rabbi Harry Danziger was installed as head of the Reform movement's Central Conference of American Rabbis.
- Jay Golan was appointed president of the birthright israel foundation.
- Tim Cohen was named vice president of development for Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life.
- The Orthodox Union appointed Howard Beigelman deputy director of public policy.
- Rabbi Brant Rosen was elected president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association.
- Alessandro Rubin was named the Anti-Defamation League's chairman in Italy.
- Rabbi Isaac Jeret was named president of the Brandeis-Bardin Institute.
- The Jewish National Fund named Ken Mintzer as zone director for the Greater Los Angeles area.
- The Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles named longtime trustee Cathy Siegel Weiss as chairwoman of its board of trustees.
- Roberta Goldberg was appointed Press Ambassadors Chairwoman for The Israel Project's board of directors.

## HONORS

- The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise awarded the first Schusterman Israel Scholar Awards to Ariel Beery of Columbia University, Aaron Bernay of Harvard University, Ofer Sharone of the University of California at Berkeley and Stephanie Wilson of Brandeis University.
- Yeshiva University professor Richard Steiner became only the second non-Israeli member of Israel's Academy of the Hebrew Language in 40 years.
- The United Jewish Communities gave a national award to U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-Md.), the House Democratic whip.
- Adina Shapiro and Ghassan Abdullah, co-directors of the Middle East Children's Association, received Search for Common Ground's award for education.
- Temple Valley Beth Shalom in Encino, Calif., opened the Harold M. Schulweis Institute in the rabbi's honor.
- Barbara Friedman received Cornell University Hillel's first annual Tanner Prize.
- AMIA, Argentina's central Jewish institution, gave its annual award to Alberto Senderey of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.
- The Jewish Women's Archive honored its founder, Barbara Dobkin.
- Yeshiva University's Philip and Sarah Belz School of Music gave awards to Marilyn and Jack Belz, Cantor Sherwood Goffin, Howard Gruenspecht, Cantor Joseph Malovany and Cantor Macy Nulman.

## birthright israel seeks to grow

By CHANAN TIGAY

NEW YORK (JTA) — After a five-year pilot period that was by all accounts an enormous success, the birthright israel program has entered a new phase.

It's working to ensure sustainability, broaden its financial support and accommodate an explosion in the number of young Jewish adults interested in taking part.

This week birthright launched a foundation aimed at expanding the number of philanthropists funding the program, which over the last five years has brought nearly 80,000 Jews who have never been on a peer tour on a free trip to Israel.

On Tuesday, the program was buoyed by news that the government of Israel had earmarked \$10 million for birthright in its 2005 budget. Last year, due to budget restraints, Israel had slashed its contribution to a token amount.

"We need to thank the government of Israel, the people of Israel and particularly the prime minister and Minister Sharansky for their vision in ensuring the viability of the birthright israel program," Marlene Post, an officer and member of the board of directors of the birthright israel foundation, said, referring to Natan Sharansky, Israel's minister for Jerusalem and Diaspora affairs.

The creation of the foundation, based in New York, follows a period of financial uncertainty that had led some to question the program's long-term viability.

When it began, Jewish communities worldwide — largely the North American Jewish federation system — the Israeli government and a group of 14 philanthropists had agreed to divide the funding for the \$210 million program evenly. That would come out to about \$14 million annually for five years from each of the three funding arms.

But in the intervening years, some of these sponsors fell short of their initial commitments. In addition to the cuts by Israel's government, the federations reduced their funding.

According to birthright, the federation system is giving birthright \$5 million for 2005, the Jewish Agency for Israel is giving \$5 million, philanthropists are giving \$13 million and Israel is giving \$10 million.

In addition, Keren Hayesod is giving \$2 million, along with an anonymous \$2 million donation, said Robert Aronson, the CEO of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, who has acted as liaison between birthright and the federations.

"Federation campaigns are not growing by exponential numbers at this point, and of course there are a lot of competing priorities in the federation system," Susan Gelman, chair of the board of directors of the birthright foundation, said.

Although the program's financial picture seems better than at the height of the intifada, it still does not allow birthright to accommodate even half of the young North American Jews who are hoping to participate.

Gideon Mark, international director of marketing and public relations for birthright, said the program is working to try to increase its budget so eligible participants won't be denied spots.

Birthright now has 15,000 participants from North America registered for its spring/summer trips, running from May 14 through June 30, even though there is space for just 6,500. In 2004, 10,523 North Americans took part in the summer trips.

"We're absolutely better off than we were a year ago because a year ago the Israeli government hadn't approved the budget," said Lynn Schusterman, who, along with her late husband, Charles, was one of the founders of birthright.

But Schusterman, who has signed on for another five years of support, worries about the program in the long term.

"Will we be able to sustain it at the numbers that we want — bringing 20,000 young people to Israel?" she said. "Right now we're not able to." ■

The program was buoyed by news that the government of Israel had earmarked \$10 million for birthright in its 2005 budget.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## NORTH AMERICA

### Rabbis press U.S. on torture

Reform rabbis called on the U.S. government to oppose the use of torture.

At a meeting this week in Houston, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the movement's rabbinical arm, passed a resolution calling on the government to ensure that U.S. laws against torture are enforced, and called for an independent commission to investigate reports of U.S. interrogation practices in the war on terrorism.

The resolution also called on the U.S. government to follow a Supreme Court ruling that it's unconstitutional to imprison a person as an "enemy combatant" without a right to a court hearing, and said every person in U.S. custody should be allowed visits by the Red Cross.

### U.S.-Israel dispute over China near end

Israel should wrap up a dispute with the United States over a military sale to China "within months," its defense minister said.

Shaul Mofaz met Wednesday with his U.S. counterpart, Donald Rumsfeld, and discussed Israel's offer to upgrade unmanned aircraft known as Harpys for China.

The United States has wanted Israel to cancel the deal since it was announced in 1999.

Mofaz said he would return to the United States soon and expected a conclusion to the matter then.

### Pressure placed on Canadian envoy

A Canadian lawmaker asked his government to recall its UNESCO ambassador because of his anti-Israel and anti-Semitic comments.

Jason Kenney presented four petitions in the House of Commons this week about Yvon Charbonneau, signed by about 175 residents of Quebec, Ontario and Alberta.

Among other statements, Charbonneau once accused a prominent Montreal Jewish businessman of being an "economic terrorist" and has urged teachers to put up posters referring to the "genocidal war of the Israeli government."

## MIDDLE EAST

### Abbas in the sights?

Mahmoud Abbas is risking his life by not cracking down on terrorists, Israel's defense minister said.

"Terrorism threatens the life" of the Palestinian Authority president, Israel Radio quoted Shaul Mofaz as saying Thursday, after a group of gunmen from Abbas' own Fatah Party fired at Abbas' West Bank headquarters.

"Now is the time for firm action."

No one was hurt in Wednesday night's shooting in Ramallah, which security sources blamed on a wage dispute by Fatah terrorists whom Abbas wants to integrate into the P.A. security forces.

Mofaz met with Bush administration officials this week and complained about Abbas' refusal to crack down on armed groups, as required by the U.S.-led "road map" peace plan.

### Passing over military service?

Leading Israeli rabbis called on troops to go AWOL rather than help evacuate settlements in the Gaza Strip and northern West Bank.

Thursday's open letter, signed by former Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Avraham Shapira and the rabbis of the Yesha settler council, urged army conscripts and reservists not to return to duty after the Passover holiday.

It was the latest bid by right-wingers to oppose the withdraw-

als scheduled for this summer, which will require massive military deployment.

The Justice Ministry said an investigation was under way to determine if the letter constituted sedition.

### Cafe bombers jailed

Israel handed down 205-year prison sentences to two Palestinians who organized a Jerusalem suicide bombing.

Jerusalem District Court jailed the two Hamas terrorists Thursday for seven life terms plus 30 years after they confessed to helping the bomber who struck at Cafe Hillel in September 2003.

Seven people died in the attack and dozens were wounded.

The convicts, both residents of eastern Jerusalem, expressed no remorse at the hearing.

"You stop killing our kids, and we'll stop killing yours," one of them told reporters.

### Liberte, egalite, boeing

Israeli fans booed the French national anthem during a World Cup qualifying soccer match.

The Israeli response came after French goalie Fabien Barthez criticized Israel and threatened not to attend the match. The match ended in a 1-1 tie.

A statement issued by the umbrella organization of secular French Jewish groups condemned the booning.

"The sport should be maintained as an invitation to mutual respect and friendship," the statement released by CRIF said.

More than 1,000 French Jews flew to Israel earlier this week to watch the match and to build solidarity between the two countries.

### Yassin home to become museum

Hamas is turning the home of its founder, Sheik Ahmed Yassin, who was killed by Israel, into a museum.

The decision comes on the first anniversary of Israel's assassination of Yassin, a blind cleric known for his fiery rhetoric, the Jerusalem Post reported.

## WORLD

### Mayors bash a colleague on hate

The mayors of Los Angeles and Miami criticized London's mayor for his controversial comments on Jews.

Until Ken Livingstone apologizes for his comments, he will not be accepted as an official visitor to the city of Los Angeles, Mayor James Hahn said.

"It is the responsibility of elected officials to set the example and treat others, no matter what their background, with respect," said Miami's mayor, Carlos Alvarez.

Both mayors worked with the Simon Wiesenthal Center in making their statements. In the past few months, Livingstone has compared a Jewish journalist to a Nazi concentration camp guard and called Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon a "war criminal."

### Russian Jews learn antimissionary skills

A two-day seminar in Russia focused on ways to fight missionaries seeking to convert Jews.

Jewish activists and communal workers from nine cities in the Urals region were introduced this week to anti-missionary techniques, which organizers hope will enable Jewish organizations to cope with groups such as Jews for Jesus that are active across the former Soviet Union.

The seminar in Yekaterinburg was co-organized by the Magen League, the leading antimissionary group in Russia, and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.