

Important News from the JEA Summer 2009 Will Look a Little Different

After extensive study, evaluation, and debate, the JEA Board of Directors has voted that the outdoor pool will not be opened for the 2009 summer season. This decision was a very difficult one.

The outdoor pool requires extensive repairs to the deteriorated pool surface as well as a completely new filtration system. Additionally, new drain covers, mandated by the Federal government for all pools, must be custom made for the JEA pool because of the age of the pool and type of drains

in place.

In order to make repairs of the magnitude required to open the pool, significant funds would obviously be needed. Quotes provided to the JEA for the work needed totaled more than \$70,000, and, unfortunately, at this time, the JEA is not in a financial position to fund such an operation. The day to day costs of operating our very large facility, plus numerous recent unbudgeted repairs, have severely taxed our finances. We do not have the needed cash reserves to pay for

capital improvements to the pool.

For members that enjoy a Sunday afternoon poolside, our camp children, and swim team kids, we ask that you understand why this decision was made, and be patient while we use this 2009 calendar year to secure the money needed to put the pool into tip top condition for 2010. Both day camp and swim team will continue this summer, just organized slightly differently to accommodate our children.

Feel free to speak to any of the JEA officers, board members, or staff with

questions regarding this summer's outdoor pool closure. Thank you for your continued support of the JEA.

There will be a Town Hall Meeting open to all JEA members on February 12th at 7pm to discuss the JEA's finances, operations, and future.

JEA Board of Directors,
Marcy Konter, President
Scott Samuels, President Elect
Tony Center, Treasurer

Lights, Cameras, Action: 2009 Savannah Jewish Film Festival Ready to Open 18 films, 11 days, 4 locations!

The 2009 Joan and Murray Gefen Memorial Savannah Jewish Film Festival is right around the corner! Supported by generous grants from the City of Savannah, the Joan and Murray Gefen Memorial Jewish Film Festival Fund, and numerous individual donors (see the partial but growing list at the end of this article), this festival will showcase eighteen films of various genres ranging from documentaries to poignant dramas to laugh-out-loud comedies!

Our dedicated and diligent volunteer committee, led by Beth Vantosh and Miriam Hodesh, and including Lynn Berkowitz, Robyn Joffe, Anita

Karnibad, and Karen McGuffin, has poured much time and energy into making this Film Festival the best one yet. Special thanks go to Susan Boblasky and her creative team at Designation Advertising and Design for helping create our exciting logo. Also, a big thank you goes to SCAD graduate student, Nadav Kessous, who created a truly awesome animated introduction for the Festival that should be up and running on our website by the time you read this! Of course, we cannot forget our web designer, Laura Kellogg, who has spent many hours making sure that www.savj.org has all the information you need about the Festival.

This year our featured films include

The Case for Israel: Democracy's Outpost, a film featuring and inspired by Alan Dershowitz, that talks on the growing criticism of Israel, point-by-point. The program also will include an after-film Q&A with David Naftaly, a Director of The Israel Project, national chairman of the Israel Bonds Presidents Club, member of the Executive Committee of the State of Israel Bonds, Executive Board Member of AIPAC, BBYO, and the University of Maryland Business School Foundation Advisory Board.

Praying with Lior will be featured at the Festival Grand Opening screening. The film has received Best Picture and Audience Awards for best documentary at several Jewish film festivals throughout the U.S. and is about a boy with Down syndrome preparing for his Bar Mitzvah who loves the action of prayer. *Praying with Lior* is co-sponsored with the Kicklighter Academy, a local organization that works with children with developmental disabilities.

We also are proud to present, with funding provided by the City of Savannah, *Encounter Point*, a documentary about bereaved Israeli and Palestinian families who come together to seek a non-violent end to the conflict that surrounds them. Thanks to the grant from the City, this screening at Trustees Theatre will be available to the public free of charge. The Director



and Executive Producer of *Encounter Point*, Ronit Avni, will introduce the film and answer questions after the screening.

Among the other noteworthy films are:

Sixty-Six, a comedy for the family starring Helena Bonham Carter, about a Bar Mitzvah boy in 1966 whose family is seemingly concerned with everything but his big day, whether it's their failing business, their other son, or the World Cup which has taken Britain by storm as their team has qualified;

Black over White, a rollicking documentary about the famous Israeli music group the Idan Raichel Project and about the bands' performance in Ethiopia;

Powder and the Glory tells the story of the two American Jewish entrepreneurs who became the founding 'mothers' of the modern health and beauty industry. These mavericks rebelled against the male establishment



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2009 Federation Campaign Achievement Update

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Hoping That a White Dove With an Olive Branch Will Arrive Soon

Fifteen seconds. That is the time a child in Sderot, a small town in Israel's southern frontier bordering with the Gaza Strip, has to find shelter. Fifteen seconds starting from when he hears the siren of the "Red Color" Early Alert System and ending when he hears the blast of a rocket potentially straight to his home. The rocket has no name or address on it, it may hit an open field or it may hit a home or even a kindergarten and also kill people.

Adam told me once that all shlichim talk about how in Israel everyone knows each other through somebody. He said that one of the shlichot even wrote her column once about it. It's true. We are a small country, and like in Savannah, you always know someone who knows someone.

After the Hitnatkoot (Disengagement), when Israel left the Gaza Strip, my army group was stationed in Nit-zanim (between Ashdod and Ashkelon). Our goal was to build educational programs for the families, schools, youth and children that left Gush Katif in Gaza and had come to live in communities in this area, from Rishon Letzion to Be'er Sheva. Every week, in the middle of an activity that me and one of my groups were leading, we would hear the "red color" alert. We had to stop everything and find a place to hide. The kids who were trying to

find a way to cope with the situation invented all kinds of games, like "hid-ing" when one of them says red color. They were scared and the anxiety had definitely affected their lives.

Even my cousins who lived in the south of the country in kibbutz Nir Yitchak feels how Hamas rockets are falling further and deeper into Israel every time. Following the situation, many children, young people and adults suffer post traumatic stress syndrome and other effects. Being forced to find a safe place to hide became a regular routine in people's everyday schedules.

Hamas has been declared by most countries and by the UN as a terrorist organization, banned from any contact. As Israel fights to protect its population, it calls for all countries, condemning world terrorists, to stand at its side while it wages this war of defense.

Israel could no longer tolerate the constant and blatant attack on its civilians. However, the goal of Israel is not to retaliate against the Palestinian people or occupy the Gaza strip. The long term goal of Israel's military campaign is to cripple Hamas' terrorist infrastructure. The short term goal is to deal with the immediate threat on the Israeli population posed by the rockets launched day after day by Hamas.

The results of this operation will very much declare what kind of life we will have in Israel, and in the Middle East. Hamas government is a dictator that does not recognize Israel. We want a new reality, one where we have normal lives without consistent battles for security so we can walk together in peace. However, in six months of the latest cease fire with Hamas, they spent the time building 500 new tunnels to transfer and gather ammunitions.

Hamas tries to handicap Israel, which is trying to avoid harming civilians unintentionally. But that is hard to do when the enemy hides themselves in schools and mosques in the heart of the Palestinian civilian population. Israel tries to use technology and careful decisions to limit civilian casualties. But this war is sad, for both sides.

I am hoping that a reasonable agreement for cease fire will be set with the support of the world, and bring quiet days for both sides. The Middle East should be protected from terror organizations.

During the past few days, Ehud Barak, Israeli Minister of Defense, had been preparing for a forty eight-hour cease fire, allowing humanitarian aid for the civilian population of the Gaza Strip, practically viewed by some as being held hostage by Hamas. Witnessing their own people suffering, instead of ceasing the rocket attacks, an act that would immediately allow Israel to institute the cease fire, Hamas has attacked even deeper into Israel by launching long range rockets into Bee'r Sheva, a city populated by more than 200,000. As a result, the forty eight-hour cease fire idea was abandoned. But Israel continues to allow the entry of routine supply trucks into the Gaza strip. In addition, Israel has delivered some 600,000 liters of diesel oil to the power station, for transportation (to be used by the international organizations), as well as cooking gas for homes.

Israel did not choose war willingly. Even now, during the fighting, Israel continues trying to reach a solution by talking with parties from Egypt and France and hopefully others to reach an agreement that will protect the citizens of Israel from any more terror from Hamas.

People in Israel are going through a hard time. Being here in Savannah makes me truly feel that we are not alone. Israel always appreciated the support and the assistance given by the US government. Now I discovered how deep the bond between Israel and the communities here is. You all changed me, and when it is time for me to go back home, I will take

with me all the kindness, love and hope I shared with the Savannah community.

I can't even begin to express the warmth I feel when people are worried, asking me how I am doing; when I go to schools and the kids and the teachers surround me. In Shalom School I cried in the arms of the teachers, the children in Rambam are reading tehilim (prayers) for our soldiers to come back home safe. I love Savannah, and I am committed more than ever to this roll, because you taught me how you are here for me.

I hope the dove of peace will come soon, with an olive branch, and we all have peaceful days. *Shalom Al Israel!*

Maia Koiller



Maia Koiller

Identification Statement

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JEWISH EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE

SPEAKER SERIES

Sunday, February 8th 7:30	Sunday, March 1st 7:30
Michael P. Peters	Yale Roe
<i>Democracy and Empire:</i> <i>Thucydides, "The Peloponnesian Wars"</i> President of St. John's College, Santa Fe, Mr. Peters was the Executive VP of the Council on Foreign Relations in NYC. Before joining the Council on Foreign Relations, Mr. Peters served for over 27 years in the U.S. Army, retiring as a colonel. During this time, among other positions, he served as a platoon leader in Vietnam; an assistant professor of economics at West Point; a Soviet military specialist, including duty as an attaché in Moscow; an executive assistant in the office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and a battalion commander in the Army Special Operations Command with deployments to Panama and Saudi Arabia. He concluded his military career as the Chief of Staff at the United States Military Academy at West Point.	<i>A Yankee in King David's Court</i> Author of "I Followed My Heart to Jerusalem," veteran ABC TV executive and an award-winning producer of film and video documentaries that have appeared on PBS, ABC, A&E and abroad, Roe met and filmed Israel's top leaders of the last generation, such as Ariel Sharon, Shimon Peres, Teddy Kollek and others. Roe's memoir takes the reader on a roller coaster ride of emotions through anecdotes that are terribly funny and others that can break your heart. You will gain new insights into the political issues of Israel's efforts to survive as a Jewish state 'midst the anarchy of a hostile Middle East.



Business as Usual

By Joel A. Greenberg, MD

Another year. Another war. Last time in Lebanon. This time in Gaza. It is the same war, of course. Against the same enemy: the enemy of peace, of tolerance and of hope. And, as always, there will be the inevitable calls for restraint from the same world leaders. The UN will, no doubt, deliberate briefly and then condemn Israel using the same inscrutable logic as the referee who penalizes the player who throws the second punch.

We will hear again about Israel's "disproportionate response" to provocation. No matter that thousands of missiles have been launched from Gaza over the years to land indiscriminately on purely civilian targets in Ashkelon, Ashdod, Sderot and surrounding towns. Apparently that does not matter as long as they land one at a time. One cannot stop terrorists attacks with proportionate tit-for-tat sparing. Terrorists attacked a building complex in one of our cities seven and a half years ago. We did not respond by bombing the biggest building in Afghanistan—we invaded and conquered the country. Years of low level terror is not the same as peace. Neither Israelis nor Palestinians should have to live like that. Kindergarten students in Israel should not have to learn about air raids and bomb shelters. Elementary school children in Gaza should not be used as human shields. How can we expect children who grow up like this to break the cycle of violence and mistrust?

Nothing this deeply rooted is ever black and white. While no action of the Israeli government can ever be objectively compared to Hamas's campaign of suicide bombings and premeditated targeting of innocent civilians, one has to wonder how the expansion of settlements in disputed territory can be perceived by Palestinians as anything but a slap in the face.

Let's not forget that the Mideast does not exist in a vacuum. What does it say to the world when the oil-rich Gulf States refuse to lift a finger to help their Arab brethren? Gaza's nearest Arab neighbor has built an honest-to-goodness border wall! Apparently that is okay for Egypt but not for Israel. What has the now powerful European Union done in the cause of peace? Europe seems driven primarily by a foreign policy based on fear of reprisal. And what about the world's last superpower? We have effectively abdicated our valuable role as an honest broker. Our support of Israel has not

wavered, but has our current policy of non-involvement brought the region any further down the "road map to peace"?

The court of world opinion will side with the Palestinians—as usual. It is easy to understand why. The humanitarian crisis is real, as is the suffering. Israel's gesture of opening a daily "humanitarian corridor" for supplies is frankly remarkable during a war, but is certainly not enough to provide sufficient aid to the civilian population. It is a sad irony that the Hamas tunnels in Southern Gaza can carry only weapons, but not food or medical supplies! BBC floods most of the world with their media feed from Al Jazeera—irritated that those "thoughtless Israelis" won't allow their news teams to wander through a war zone without supervision.

So it is business as usual in the Middle East. What can we do about it? We can pray for Israel's brave soldiers and that somehow leaders might emerge on both sides who can see further than most of us and find an eventual path out of the cycle of attack and retribution. We can call, write or email our representatives and our new President and ask that they continue to support America's only ally in the Middle East and that the US renew its previous role as a peace-broker and partner in a two state solution. We can support UJC's current emergency campaign which has committed ten million dollars so far for counseling, traumatic treatment, relocating children and families and providing aid for communities targeted in southern Israel. We can attend the lectures and films scheduled over the next few weeks to be sure that we, as Jewish Americans, know the facts and the history of the conflict so that we can educate others. We can try to practice in our lives that which we ask of the combatants: showing tolerance, resisting the temptation to make people into pawns to further our own ends and refusing to confuse terrorism with self defense.

Watch for information from Federation regarding the Israel Emergency Campaign and upcoming events sponsored by Federation and the JEA. Stand with Israel, with the cause of peace and the right to live free of terror in one's home. Be unwavering in your solidarity with the people of Israel both publicly and privately. And pray for the peace of Jerusalem.



Dr. Joel Greenberg
President,
Savannah Jewish
Federation

The Greatest Generation

I received a Dvar a few years ago that I have kept in my computer files that included the following idea that made a great impression on me,

"It has been said that people may not always remember what you said or even what you did, but they will always remember the way you made them feel. When we think of those we have loved and admired who have left or passed on, we may be inspired by their example, or feel grateful for the path on which they guided us."

The Savannah Jewish community has been blessed by many individuals who have left us with memories, wonderful feelings, and reminiscences. Equally as important are the institutions they have built, the funds they established, and the hard work they contributed for the benefit of our children and our children's children. They are often called the *Greatest Generation*, the *Depression Generation*, or simply, the *Builders* (in Hebrew, they are called "Bonim") in recognition of their collective ability to overcome, endure, change, and create. This group is characterized by their enduring work ethic, loyalty to the State of Israel, and to their Jewish community. Even today, after decades of contributions, they continue to work tirelessly to provide guidance and financial support to maintain our community.

When I think of these people I am inspired by their drive, their vigor, and their strong sense of what makes up a

Jewish community. They didn't donate their money for the "tax break," they did it and continue to do it because we have a moral and religious obligation to each other....we feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, and protect the vulnerable.

As our community has changed with increased diversity and fewer "Savannah-born" families, now is the time to truly appreciate what these people have built and provided for us—while many of them are still with us. While you may not know the individuals, you know their accomplishments; you know the feelings they have given you. You walk in the buildings they worked to build, you send your children to the schools they established, and you participate in the programs that they developed...many of them, decades old.

As the Greatest Generation ages, leaves our community, whether through relocation or death, we have an obligation to continue the great work that they started. We are faced with many challenges as a community and as a people. It is our honor and our duty to continue what they have started; to continue what they sacrificed for.

I have a feeling that we are up to the task.



Adam Solender

Condolences

We express our sympathy to the families of:

Madeline Sadler Rubin

Who died November 23, 2008.

She is survived by her daughter, Elise (Victor) Shernoff, her son, Abram (Barbara), her sister, Bernice Elman, all from Savannah, eight grandchildren, and fifteen great-grandchildren.

Remembrances may be made to the Jewish Educational Alliance, Congregation Agudath Achim, or Hospice Savannah.

Gertrude Ruth Ginsberg Wohl

Who died December 1, 2008.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Benjamin Wohl. She is survived by her daughter Faith Dessauer.

Dorothy Tross Stapen

Who died December 1, 2008.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Mannie Stapen. She is survived by her son Michael G. Stapen of Savannah and Carmel Sanders of Macon; her daughters, Bonnie (Ivan) Bock of Atlanta; Amy B. Stapen of Atlanta; her brother Robert (Eleanor) Tross of Orlando; grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

Remembrances: Congregation Bnai Brith Jacob, Hadassah, The Cohen Home, Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, or The Carter Martin Foundation.

David Sanborn Black

Who died December 11, 2008.

Surviving are four daughters, Rochelle (Frank) Lawandales, Karen (Kenneth)

Bluestein, Nancy (Eric) Miller, Natalie (Seth) Toporek, one son, Sheldon (Melissa) Black, and twelve grandchildren.

Remembrances: Jewish Family Services.

Elayne Karsman Austin

Who died December 23, 2008.

Surviving are her husband, Thomas M. Austin; daughter, Harriet (Dr. Joseph) Gilmore Shaughnessy and six grandchildren.

Remembrances: Hospice Care of the Low Country, P.O. Box 3827, Bluffton, SC 29910.

Alice Felser

Who died December 31, 2008.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Marty Felser. Surviving are her two sons, Paul and Jeff, both of Savannah, daughter, Felice, of Marietta, and two grandchildren.

Remembrances: Bnai Brith Jacob Synagogue.

Ruth M. Blumberg

Who died January 10, 2009.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Harold Brown "Toots" Blumberg. Surviving are daughters Bonnie (John) Dowdy of Augusta, Georgia, Shelley (Tommy) Sapp, and Ellen (Patrick) Winters, all of Savannah; many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She is also survived by one brother and sister-in-law, Jerome and Muriel Meyer, of Tamarac, Florida.

Remembrances: Congregation Agudath Achim, the American Diabetes Association or the Heart & Sole Association in Augusta.



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Film Festival

and are truly an inspiring rags-to-riches story;
First Basket recollects and documents Jewish men who were stars of the hardwood — that is, the basketball court!

Bye Bye Braverman, an almost forgotten classic comedy from Sidney Lumet starring George Segal.

Toots documents the well-known Manhattan saloonkeeper “Toots” Shor and the famous and infamous New Yorkers who frequented his bar — the place to be seen from 1940 to 1959.

Song of David blends the melodies of the yeshiva world with those of the inner city as a sixteen year old soul-searching yeshiva student tries to find his place in the world.

Yippee takes you on a wild ride from Beverly Hills to the Ukraine with famed Jewish film director Paul Mazursky in his first documentary as he follows an annual Chassidic pilgrimage to Uman, Ukraine and returns with this humorous examination of a “journey to Jewish joy.”

Advice and Dissent is an amusing morality tale about a frustrated businessman who tries to end his hopeless marriage to his wife by asking his local Rabbi (Eli Wallach) to place a curse on her.

The Schwartz Dynasty is a satiric look at the struggle of two women to cut through red tape and take control of their own destiny in a small town in Israel torn apart by religious extremism, petty power struggles, and bigotry.

Surfwise, also sponsored with the Psychotronic Film Society, documents the story of Dorian “Doc” Paskowitz, who in the 1950s left success behind, heading for a life on the beach, taking with him his wife and nine children (he wanted to “repopulate the world

cont. from page 1
with Jews”).

888-Go-Kosher, follows a day in the life of Rabbi Sholtiel Lebovic and his rapid-response kitchen koshering service — who knew? The camera follows as he helps NYC clients go kosher from scratch as he arrives at the scene with his energetic team.

Circumcise Me recounts Yisrael (born Chris) Campbell’s conversion to Judaism not once, but three times – Reform, Conservative and Orthodox – each one requiring a separate circumcision. Ouch!

Making Trouble: Three Generations of Funny Jewish Women, produced by the Jewish Women’s Archive, is a tribute to Molly Picon, Fanny Brice, Sophie Tucker, Joan Rivers, Wendy Wasserstein and Gilda Radner, six hysterical ladies who have made us laugh for decades.

One Day You’ll Understand features veteran French actress Jeanne Moreau in this French film helmed by rising Israeli director Amos Gitai. As the trial of Gestapo head Klaus Barbie plays out in 1987, businessman Victor Bastien finds himself distracted from his work and increasingly obsessed with piecing together his family’s history.

We have a number of special programs for many of these films, so get ready for a full interactive experience when you come to the Festival!

Full Festival Passes are available now! Once again, it pays to be a member. Passes cost \$50 each for JEA members. For non members the cost is \$65 per pass. Individual movies cost as follows: JEA Members: \$7 (Seniors 65+ & Students \$7). For non members, the individual ticket cost is \$9.



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We need volunteers! If you are interested in helping out as an usher, ticket seller, or working concessions, please e-mail volunteerinfo@savj.org or call Karen McGuffin at 598-2794 to volunteer.

Full festival information can be found on www.savj.org, just click on the Savannah Jewish Film Festival logo! Watch your mail for the Festival brochure and the E-news for updates on the Festival.

It’s not too late to show your support for the 2009 Joan and Murray Gefen Memorial Savannah Jewish Film Festival. Corporate and individual sponsorships still are available. The Festival Angel level, \$1,000 includes 8 Full Festival Passes, name and/or logo on website, all advertising materials and (2) 1/4 page or (4) 1/8 page advertisements in the *Savannah Jewish News*; Producers Circle, \$500 includes 4 Full Festival Passes, name and/or logo on the website, all advertising materials and (1) 1/4th page or (2) 1/8th page advertisements in *Savannah Jewish News*; Director’s Circle, \$360 includes four Full Festival passes; name and/or logo on the website, all advertising materials and Actor’s Circle, \$180 includes two Full Festival passes; name and/or logo on the website, all advertising materials. If you’re interested in being a sponsor, contact Ben Kveskin at ben@savj.org or 355.8111.

We are grateful to our sponsors as of this writing:

Producers Circle: Vantosh Realty (Beth Vantosh & Kenneth Richards)

Directors Circle: Lynn & Dick Berkowitz

Actors Circle: Carol & Joel Greenberg; Miriam & Jake Hodesh; Marcy & Jerry Konter; Arlene & Allan Ratner; Susan & John Weiss; Sheree & Larry Zaslavsky

See you at the movies; we’ve already started popping the popcorn!

The Latest on The PJ Library

It’s January, and finally, The PJ Library is beginning regular, monthly delivery to homes in the Savannah area. Each subscribing child aged six months to seven years old will be receiving a free gift of a high-quality and age appropriate Jewish book or CD, selected by foremost children’s book experts. Each book comes with resources to help families make the most of the selection in their homes. These books and music cover a wide array of themes related to Jewish holidays, folktales and Jewish family life.

Since the inception of The PJ Library here, and thanks to the generosity of Jane Slotin, Leon and Nancy Slotin, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and the Savannah Jewish Federation, the Savannah Jewish community has seen more than 110 children already registered.

Now that the books are in our families’ homes, we hope to increase the enrollment numbers even more and continue to spread the word about this wonderful program that helps to create stronger Jewish homes, fosters children’s curiosity about their Jewish heritage and helps families explore their Jewish identity.

Have you signed up your children yet? Please register online at www.savj.org or call Benjamin Kveskin at the Savannah Jewish Federation, 355-8111 (ben@savj.org) to get your child(ren) enrolled.



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Jewish Family Services' Retrospective: 2008

By Larry Dane-Kellogg, Director JFS

2008: What a busy year for Jewish Family Services!

The downward economic trend during the last six months of 2008 solidly gave JFS a record-breaking year for distribution of financial aid. JFS's philosophy is within the philosophy of Maimonides - the highest form of Tzedakah is a hand up, not a handout. We not only provided funds to allow individuals to stay in their own homes with heat on through the winter and helped many others to maintain vital utilities, but also provided financial literacy as well as assisted in securing employment. This was done by helping to develop household budgets, building professional resumes, assisting in job searches, providing work clothes and at times proving transportation to get to and from job sites (this included a car repair or two).

At the same time that JFS was working to keep those able to work active in the work force, it simultaneously tried to help ensure that those of retirement age were enjoying what some call their "golden" years. JFS served over 2,000 hot kosher lunches in 2008 to senior adults. Lunches are provided three days every week (Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday) with an "after lunch" educational, health or cultural program every week

on Thursdays. That's about fifty high-quality programs every year! This includes presentations on art exhibits at the Telfair, Big Band and Folk Music concerts, and monthly updates on events in Israel. JFS' Senior Adult Program also has many other activities such as Movies, Mah Jongg, Bridge, Kibbitzers Kafé, and Scrabble.

Many of the educational classes presented by JFS in 2008 focused on parenting and these will continue in 2009. Other groups and classes included a four-session grief series, fall prevention, fire safety, and an AARP Driving Safety for Senior Adults. If you missed these programs in 2008, please join us in 2009 for the always enriching programs.

I would be remiss if I did not remind you that all of these activities are largely reliant upon generous donations from the community. If you have not made a gift to *Jewish Family Services* or the Savannah Jewish Federation annual campaign yet, please do. It will allow us to maintain the same level of high quality services that have been provided in the past. In other words, *these services depend on you!* Please make your gift by phone (912.355.8111) or online (www.savj.org).

YOU can help make sure that Jewish Family Services can reach out and respond to our community with the support that is so critical at this time.

Shabbaton to Feature Co-Author of Chicken Soup for the Jewish Soul on Jan. 30

Don't miss the opportunity to celebrate Shabbat, learn about Jewish history and enjoy a gourmet kosher meal - all in one very special evening at the JEA!

The 2009 JEA Shabbaton will take place on Friday, January 30, 2009 at 6 pm. This annual educational event will feature guest speaker Rabbi Dov Peretz Elkins, co-author of the *New York Times* bestseller, *Chicken Soup for the Jewish Soul*. Childcare will be provided.

"The Shabbaton has become a much-anticipated tradition at the JEA," said event organizer Cookie Gale. "It's a great opportunity to learn about Jewish history while celebrating Shabbat and sharing a delicious meal together."

Rabbi Dov Peretz Elkins is the author and editor of more than 30 books, including *Hasidic Wisdom*, *Melodies from My Father's House*, *Forty Days of Transformation* and *Teaching People to Love Themselves*. He is also the former spiritual leader of The Jewish Center in Princeton, N.J.

Rabbi Elkins was born in Philadelphia and is a graduate of Gratz College for Hebrew Teachers. He received his B.A. in literature from Temple Univer-

sity and his M.H.L. from the Jewish Theological Seminary. He was ordained as a Rabbi in 1964 and earned his doctorate in counseling and humanistic education in 1976 at Colgate Rochester Divinity School. He also has an honorary Doctor of Divinity from the Jewish Theological Seminary.

"The Shabbaton is an extension of the JEA's ongoing educational mission and offers a great way to learn more about the history of Judaism," said JEA executive director Adam Solender. "We're honored to host Rabbi Elkins and hope that the community will join us for an exciting, informative evening."

The Shabbaton will begin with a Shabbat service at 6 pm. The service will be followed by gourmet kosher dinner at 7 pm.

The cost to attend the 2008 JEA Shabbaton is \$18 person and \$5 for children 12 and under. Free childcare is available at the JEA. For more information, please call 355-8111.



Rabbi Dov Peretz Elkins

Mickve Israel's One-Day Intro to Judaism on Feb. 7

Rabbi Arnold Mark Belzer's annual 12-hour course **Judaism: Are You Curious?** will once again take place at Congregation Mickve Israel on February 7, 2009, from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm. Yes, it is 12 hours! This Sabbath experience includes Sabbath worship, two meals, Havdallah (the service that ends the Sabbath), discussions, lectures, and question and answer periods. This popular and informative class offers a modern perspective on living in today's complicated world and is a complete interactive experience.

The class is open to the entire community — Jews and non-Jews alike — and is for those who wish to know more about Judaism and also for those contemplating conversion to Judaism. You will explore: Jewish spirituality, Jewish values and traditions, Jewish ethics, and Jewish history within the context of human history. You may meet your fellow congregants, your neighbors, and/or strangers who all want to learn more about the Jewish religion and the Jewish people.

Testimonials from previous class members:

I am enlightened with a better understanding of Judaism. I feel closer to the Jewish traditions. I will encourage my husband who is studying to be

a lay minister to come next year.

Informative . . . Inspiring . . . [a] Tour de Force.

Thank you for a wonderful day. I truly enjoyed the day. I learned so much more than I had expected. I especially enjoyed the comparison of the three major religions.

Wonderful program! Such friendly learning. We all need to learn from each other and really know about our love of God and the journey we are on.

This was all I expected, and I learned things about Judaism that I did not know. An inspiring and enjoyable day and night.

I was born Jewish with no real Jewish upbringing. I feel much more connected to my faith now.

I have looked forward to this day for all the past year. I was not disappointed! It was fascinating and you are right; Savannah is a blessed place!

Pre-registration is required and space is limited (last year there were 90 participants). For more information call Congregation Mickve Israel: 912-233-1547.

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The Ground Assault in Gaza, My Son, and JNF

In the shadow of the conflict: An Israeli's Narrative of Israeli-Palestinian Contact

By **Ronnie Porat** LT.
Colonel Res. (IDF)
JNF Israel Special Emis-
sary, Southern & Florida
Zones



Ronnie Porat

While following with tension every piece of information that comes out from the IDF Ground Operation in the Gaza Strip, where my 21 year old son, Omri, is fighting now, I cannot delete from my (good) memory many personal Israeli – Palestinian human episodes that either I or other family members experienced. Those episodes might bring you closer to the complicated Israeli – Palestinian Narrative.

Episode No 1: My father, Avraham Pukatch (83), a Holocaust survivor, came to Israel in April 1947. Every year, during Israeli Yom Atzmaut (Day of Independence) he repeats a story about the day David Ben Gurion declared the Independent State of Israel, May 15, 1948. He could only watch as Abu Daud, an Arab (Palestinian) that lived half a mile from our home in Ayanot (20 KM south of Tel Aviv), abandoned his house, with a fire still burning under a pot with some stuffed vegetables in the kitchen. “*I can still remember the smell*” he says. Abu Daud left his home, with his family and became a refugee in the Gaza Strip. He wired the doorway with explosives before he left.

Episode No 2: Saturday, June 17, 1967, a week after Israel invaded Gaza and completed the great victory of the Six Day War, our family came to visit my father, in Kibutz Erez, at the Border Crossing Point (near Gaza). My dad was part of The (Reserved) Armored Brigade No. 11 that had liberated Gaza. We were flush with victory and relieved at the short duration of the conflict. The Israelis and the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip (and in the West Bank) began a new long way together. In Gaza, my father again met Abu Daud.

Episode No 3: Around 1984, my family visited my father-in-law, the late Brigadier General Avraham Benjamin (Z”L) in Gaza. We came to visit him and had a good Oriental lunch at one of the good Palestinian restaurants in Omar El Muchtar. It is their Main Street, like the Peachtree Street of Gaza.

Episode No 4: A close Palestinian friend of mine, Brigadier General Abu Khaled, Deputy Chief of the Palestinian Civil Police during Arafat’s Regime, came to visit me in my home (Moshav Beit Oved, Israel), during Ramadan of year 1998, and asked me (kindly) to pray (to his god) – facing Mecca – on the living room carpet at my home. I agreed. This was just after my daughter Noa who was 5 years old (and is now 16) ran towards him to get a big hug from “*Abu Khaled*”.

Episode No 5: On December 31, 2008, I made a call from Atlanta to wish a happy new year to my friend Mr. Abd El Samia, a Palestinian businessman who lives in Gaza. This was 5 days after the IDF opened the air incursion. The phone call lasted longer since all of his family insisted on greeting me personally for the New Year. While speaking with them, I could easily hear (through the phone) the blast noise of Israeli aircraft bombing Hamas offices near their home.

These human episodes, described above, are an integral part of the day to day life that we face and experience with our “cousins” the Palestinians. The 1994 *Oslo Agreement* which was signed by our late Prime Minister Rabin and Yasser Arafat, initially established “good” economic relations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA). Within this “Frame Agreement” the two nations maintained – for a little while – normal life. Palestinian workers came early every morning to work in Israel (mostly in agriculture and construction). They picked our famous Jaffa Oranges and built all the houses for a million of

Russian Jews that made Aliya to Israel during the 1990s. We consumed daily their agriculture production (vegetables) while they enjoyed our high quality fruits. The annual trade between Israel and the PA reached billions of Shekels.

“While Omri and thousands of other soldiers are deep inside the Gaza Strip fighting to defend the Negev and all of Israel, I am here in Atlanta trying to boost the Jewish National Fund campaign which is aimed to ensure and build the future of our beloved State of Israel.”

But, for many reasons, the “New Middle East” dream was crushed (by both sides). The second Intifada erupted during the year 2000. Since then, there has been continued bloodshed. The Israeli government, led by former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, decided to implement “The Disengagement Plan” assuming it would bring an end to the bloodshed. During the summer of 2005, twenty one “settlements” of Gush Katif (South Gaza Strip) populated with 10,000 Jewish settlers were displaced, creating a deep dispute within Israel. As a result of The Disengagement Plan, the Israeli – Palestinian – Egyptian border was no longer controlled by the IDF. Palestinian militant movements extended their smuggling activities using the tunnels that were excavated under the Palestinian – Egyptian border.

In January, 2006 Hamas won the democratic general elections in Gaza, and Israel began to “deal” with a very extreme Palestinian partner that does not know the meaning of the word compromise. Since then, the military arm of Hamas equipped itself with upgraded weapons, including upgraded Anti Tank missiles, long range (25 Miles) Grad Rockets and more.

During the year 2001 the first Qas-sam rocket was launched from Gaza into the city of Sderot. Since then, thousands of these Palestinian home made rockets have been launched into the western Negev. The city of Sderot has been under attack for 8 straight years. Israeli social workers estimate that 94% of all school age children there are exhibiting symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Israeli military reaction has been, for many years, very moderate. In the winter of 2008, the IDF began military operations against Hamas. These activities brought the two sides together at which time they agreed, on June 19, 2008, to six months of a “State of Calm”.

The “Calm” was scheduled to end

on December 19, 2008. Hamas began, after 6 relaxed months, to launch Qas-sam rockets into Sderot and extended their attacks intensively to Ashkelon (40 km from Tel Aviv) as well. We, Israel, failed to understand the Palestinian militant groups’ rationale and goals. Prime Minister Olmert as well as Foreign Minister Livni warned Hamas that Israel would respond – aggressively – unless the attacks stopped. In response to the warning, they sent extended range rockets, reaching Ashkelon to the north and Netivot to the East. Israel did not have any other choice but to begin the air incursion on Saturday, December 27, 2008, which has been followed by the ground assault. Many other cities in Israel among them Be’er Sheva, Ashdod, Ofakim, Kiryat Malachy, Kiryat Gat, Gedera and more found themselves under fire.

Now, while writing these words, I am so bothered and worried about my son Omri. He is a fighter in one of the IDF Elite units and is most probably in combat against Hamas militants east of the Jebalia refugee camp in the southeast edge of The City of Gaza. Many families in Israel suffer now from “red eyes” from lack of sleep due to worry. The thoughts, the feelings are beyond our control and there is nothing we can do, but to pray.

While Omri and thousands of other soldiers are deep inside the Gaza Strip fighting to defend the Negev and all of Israel, I am here in Atlanta trying to boost the Jewish National Fund campaign which is aimed to ensure and build the future of our beloved State of Israel.

Our campaign is now focused on building the one and only “Secured Indoor Recreational Site” in Sderot. This is a 5 Million Dollar Project that is being built by JNF from donations for all of the children of Sderot.

In order to secure the future of Israel, JNF is realizing David Ben Gurion’s dream to develop the Negev through its “Blue Print Negev” vision. The Flagship of the operation is the “Be’er Sheva River Park” project that will bring 250,000 new inhabitants to the Capital of the Negev and another 250,000 to new communities surrounding the Negev.

With rockets hitting only 25 kilometers from Tel Aviv and only 8% of the population in the Negev which comprises 60% of the land, this operation is more critical than ever. The time is now.

For more details or to make a donation please contact the JNF office:

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sgreen@jnf.org

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My Thoughts on the War

By Yotam Dor



Yotam Dor

I was born in Tel Aviv, Israel and moved to Toronto, Canada before I turned three. I never served in the army, and to make sure I would never have to I was formally released before I turned sixteen. I am thankful that I am not in Gaza right now, rooting around, going house to house under the cover of darkness. In the beginning, it did not take long for my mind to race as I calculated: who do I know that is in Gaza right now? Who do I know in the range of the Qassam rockets? I have family in the south of Israel, and I have many friends who have been called to service as reservists. No matter how I shape it, I am connected to Israel.

I rarely read anything positive about Israel in the news, other than the odd art exhibition or technological breakthrough. Most of the news I read about Israel is when something terrible happens. With the current news coming out of Gaza I find myself dissecting the news. I stop thinking about how unfortunate it is that people are actually dying, and I think about news bias. I think: is Israel being

portrayed fairly? Don't people know that Hamas is purposely using human shields? Who is gathering these statistics? These types of thoughts are part of a dangerous game that ignores the cost of human lives on both sides of this regrettable battle.

The most disconcerting aspect of the siege in Gaza is the terminology used to define it. Is it a war? If not, what is it? What does Israel expect to get out of this war? I certainly find myself asking a lot of questions that simply cannot be answered by anyone. I certainly know Gaza will not be the same, but neither will the south of Israel.

I want Israel to be judged fairly in the eyes of the world and not without impunity. Seeing as no journalists are allowed to enter Gaza, you and I are reliant on the Israeli Army and first hand accounts out of Gaza. I do not trust either, so until this current crisis is over the verdict awaits. I just hope it ends swiftly.

Editor's Note: Yotam is a 25 year-old student at the Savannah College of Art and Design getting his MFA in film and TV. He is a member of SCAD Hillel, a beneficiary agency of the Savannah Jewish Federation.

A Mother's Prayer for Peace

By Miriam Bigon

My name is Miriam Bigon. I've been living in Savannah for a while due to my husband's job transfer here. When my husband was sent here, I joined him quite joyfully in order to be near him and help him in a foreign country. We have experienced a very pleasant time here until lately, when the State of Israel went on an emergency operation for the salvation of the residents of the southern part of Israel from the constant threat by Hamas terrorists. This terror organization has increased their devastating actions and has been firing short and long rang missiles into civilian locations in order to hit.

I am going through a lot of difficult days and sleepless nights with anxiety for my son and daughters. In Israel I have three children and two granddaughters: my eldest daughter lives in southern Israel with her husband and two small girls, and there is no need to be more specific and describe the amount of shock and anxiousness that my daughter suffered when a GRAD missile landed close to her house after a long time of living in a shelter and hearing sirens and explosions, running into safe rooms. The daily schedule changes, schools close down and they live in fear. Today my daughter is staying in my house which is in central Israel until she can have some more peace around her own house.

My younger daughter lives in north Israel, in a beautiful and pastoral area which is normally very quiet. Only this morning when I listened to the news, I became sad once I heard

that in the north, a missile fell as well. There is no peace either in the north or in the south. The areas of peace and quiet in our small and precious State of Israel have shrunk a lot.

And I, a mother and a grandmother, am here, thousands of miles from my family, with an upset stomach, attached to the TV and internet and very, very anxious. I want to hug, support, cheer up, but I have to compromise with an occasional phone call from my children. It is very hard for me.

My son served in the army as an officer, and participated in both wars in Lebanon. My husband also has a military history and when I gave birth to my eldest daughter, he was not with me because he was called up to fight in the Yom Kippur War.

With every war, we, Israeli mothers, hope for a brighter future for our children and grandchildren. We don't wish for future generations all that we have been through. I know and feel everything that every Israeli woman and mother feels; the fear, the wariness, the anxiety. You fear from a knock on the door- what will today bring? My heart is with every Israeli soldier, with this cautious and careful army. My heart is with the residents of the affected areas. I carry a very big prayer inside of me: come back home in peace, dear children and bring with you the vision for peace. *Shalom al Yisrael.*

Editor's Note: Miriam Bigon came to Savannah in 2006 when her husband, Zeev, was brought here as a shaliach to Gulfstream from his Israeli company. She plays bridge at the JEA most Wednesdays.

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Directors Circle—\$360. Includes 4 Festival passes; name and/or logo on website, all advertising materials
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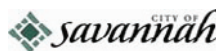
February 25—March 8, 2009

18 Films

11 Days

4 Venues

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All others: \$9 each

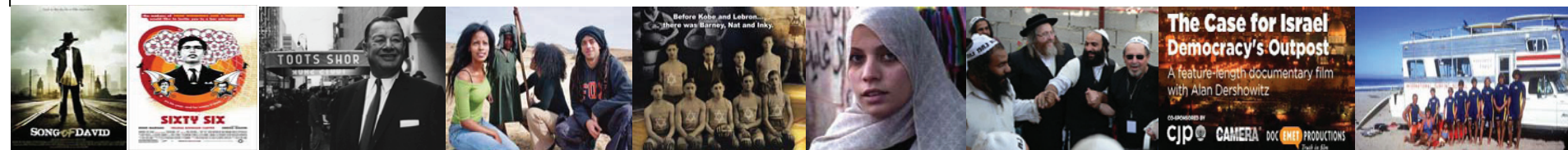
**Membership cards & student IDs required*



Festival Schedule

2/25 7:30	Bye Bye Braverman	JEA
2/26 1:30	Toots	JEA
2/26 7:30	The Case for Israel	JEA
2/28 8:30	Praying With Lior	Trustees
3/1 3:00	Encounter Point	Trustees
3/2 7:30	Song of David	JEA
	Yippee	JEA
3/3 2:00	Powder and the Glory	JEA
3/3 7:30	First Basket	JEA
3/4 2:00	Advice and Dissent	JEA
	The Schwartz Dynasty	JEA
3/4 7:30	Surfwise	JEA
3/5 1:30	First Basket	JEA
3/5 7:30	Black Over White	JEA
3/6 10:00	Toots	JEA
3/6 12:00	The Case for Israel	JEA
3/6 2:00	Song of David	JEA
	Yippee	JEA
3/7 8:30	1-888-Go Kosher	Westin
	Circumcise Me	Westin
3/7 8:30	Making Trouble	JEA
3/8 4:00	Sixty Six	Victory
3/8 7:30	One Day You'll Understand	JEA

See www.savj.org or the story in this issue for more information on the films.



Hadassah Presents Golda's Balcony

By Sue Adler

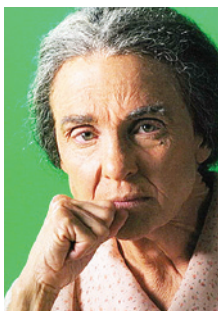
Hadassah's annual benefit program, will take place Sunday, January 25, 2009 at 2:00 pm at the Trustees Theatre, in downtown Savannah. *Golda's Balcony*, starring Valerie Harper as Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, will be the feature film presentation at the event.

Valerie Harper is a four-time Emmy Award winner best known for her performances in the "Mary Tyler Moore Show" and "Rhoda." *Golda's Balcony* recounts the rise of Golda Meir from her modest upbringing in Europe and America to Israel's Prime Minister.

The screenplay was written by Tony Award-winning playwright

William Gibson ("The Miracle Worker"; "Two for the Seesaw"). States *Jewish Week*: "Director Jeremy Kagan transforms an acclaimed one-woman play about Golda Meir into an 'intimate' cinematic experience."

A local team of Hadassah members have been working hard to make this year's event a great one. Working along with chair Janis Javetz the following women are soliciting sponsors and selling tick-



Hadassah Savannah hosts "Golda's Balcony"

ets to the event: Lynne Levine, Katie Eichelbaum, Donna Epstein, June Arkin, Stephanie Zerden, and Gail Kaplan. Cathy Nagelberg is producing the program and Sue Adler will assist with publicity.

Savannah Hadassah President, Sue Ruby, says this film is a "must see"; "I am thrilled that Hadassah Presents is able to bring this fine film to Savannah," exclaimed Mrs. Ruby.

The *New York Times*' Jeannette Catsoulis called the movie "Compelling"; "*Golda's Balcony* allows its star to exercise her considerable comic talent."

This annual event is a fundraising benefit for Hadassah. The women of Hadassah are 300,000 strong throughout the United States and their objectives are to provide a better tomorrow through "healing, action and enlight-

enment" and supports causes important to women and the Jewish people. Hadassah members work hard to enlighten through Jewish educational opportunities and leadership training. Hadassah supports the Hadassah Medical Organization in Israel and health awareness through programs in the United States.

"Please join us Sunday, January 25, 2009, for a wonderful film and to support the important work of Hadassah in our community, in our country and in Israel," invites Sue Ruby.

DVDs of the movie will be on sale for \$10 with all proceeds going to Hadassah. If you are interested in purchasing the DVD or attending the film at the Trustees Theatre, please contact Sue Ruby at iruby64@comcast.net or Janis Javetz at jbjavetz@bellsouth.net.



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2009

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Sunday, February 8, 2009
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Michael P. Peters
Democracy and Empire: Thucydides, "The Peloponnesian Wars"

President of St. John's College, Santa Fe, Mr. Peters was the Exec. VP of the Council on Foreign Relations in NYC. An army veteran of over 27 years, he was a platoon leader in Vietnam; an attaché in Moscow; worked in the office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and was a battalion commander in the Army Special Ops Command in Panama and Saudi Arabia. He concluded his military career as the Chief of Staff at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

Tickets: \$10 at the Door, \$5 for Students,
FREE for Military.

The 2009 Speakers Series is made possible with generous support from the JEA Phillip Hoffman Memorial Fund of the Savannah Jewish Community Foundation, The Savannah Jewish Federation and members of the community.

Take the AARP Driver Safety Program

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8 pm - Rabbi Dov Peretz Elkins

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The Black Heritage Festival's Future of Jazz

Monday, Feb 2nd at 7:00 p.m.

The 2009 Black Heritage Festival
Future of Jazz celebrates
Johnny Mercer!

Featuring the Spelman College Women's
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instrumentalists and vocalists in tribute to
Johnny Mercer and the *African American
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*This is the Black Heritage Festival's 20th
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Jewish Family Services Of Savannah

presents:

Grief: Mending A Broken Heart: Walking The Pathway of Loss
Tuesdays, February 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th—7:00 to 8:30 p.m.**Dr. Owen E Tucker, M. Ed., D. Min.**
Grief Coordinator at Island Hospice

Grief is the natural human response to loss. It is a predictable, universal human experience that crosses all ethnic and religious boundaries. Grief attaches itself to all kinds of loss in varying degrees: the death of a loved one, past or recent; miscarriages; divorce; the long good-bye of Alzheimer's Disease; empty nesters; loss of a limb; and many more. While this series of seminars will focus primarily on loss by death, those experiencing other types of loss will also find it helpful.

We instinctively know grief when we hear it in a person's voice and see it on their face. There are identifiable patterns and processes to grief reactions. Knowledge of these patterns and processes provides us a set of tools to help us move through the everyday ups and downs in a more self-assured manner.

Grief: Healing The Broken Heart offers four weekly sessions of one and one-half hours each. These seminars discuss the patterns and processes that lead to healing from loss and provide opportunity for discussion and interaction by participants.

Normal Grief Reactions: Tuesday, February 3rd, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

The healing of the human spirit, like the healing of the human body, involves typical patterns and process that are natural, normal, and necessary. This seminar discusses what's normal and to be expected as a basis for the healing to begin.

How Men and Women Grieve: Tuesday, February 10th, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Everyone experiences grief in his or her own way and men typically grieve differently from the way women grieve. This seminar explores those differences and underscores why a person must do their "grief work" just as an athlete who has been injured in the game must do his or her "work-outs" if they want to get back in the game.

Recovery is Possible!: Tuesday, February 17th, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Every person who grieves will experience down days and difficult times. But, as time goes on, your grief will become less intense and less painful, the dark days will become fewer and further apart, and gradually you will feel life is worth living and loving again. There are four specific tasks a person must accomplish for this to happen. This seminar explains those tasks and what you can do to help yourself recover.

Finding Meaning in Death: Tuesday, February 24th, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

We human beings are incurably "makers of meaning." We have to make sense out of what happens to us in life. Death often brings us face-to-face with the ultimate meaning of life and the faith by which it is lived. This seminar will discuss how to utilize one's own spiritual resources to make meaning out of death.

Presenter: Dr. Owen E Tucker, M. Ed., D. Min.

Owen is a seasoned bereavement consultant who has worked with a variety of persons, agencies, and faith groups. He is currently the Bereavement Coordinator for Island Hospice. He has also been a pastoral counselor specializing in families and children, a nationally certified trauma specialist, a clinical faculty member in Baylor University's Doctor of Psychology program, and a parish pastor.

Thanks to the sponsorship of Island Hospice, these seminars are free and open to the public. Please RSVP to 912-355-8111.

A MOVIE & BEER!**Adults 21 and Over—Join us at the JEA for a movie & a beer!**

Feb. 5th - *The Fox* - Dolniker, An uptight Israeli politician, has a heart attack in the middle of his speech. His doctor advises him to go somewhere quiet to rest. His assistant suggests they go to Switzerland, however, Dolniker has taken a vow never to leave Israel unnecessarily—so they go to a remote village instead where no one has ever heard of him. As they arrive, it turns out the villagers have not only never heard of Dolniker, but they have never heard of running water, electricity, TV, newspapers, etc.

After the movie there will be a program on the upcoming Israel elections.

Feb. 19th - *Vulcan Junction* - In the weeks before the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the fate of a close group of friends who are also in a rock band becomes a nostalgic snapshot of the times. The film explores how a band breaks out of the limitations of war, upheaval and geographic isolation to become successful.

All movies shown at 7:00 pm**FREE to Members with ID****Movie & Beer Night at the JEA sponsored by Nancy and Lawrence Gutstein.****Health
Talk
Series**

MorningStar Cultural Arts Group, as part of their Teal Ribbon Project, is partnering with Savannah Jewish Federation Family Services to present a series of **Cancer Answers Health Talks** offered at the JEA starting in January. All presentations are free and open to the public. Save the following dates:

Tuesday, January 27 at 7:00 p.m.—C. Shai Hufard-King, MS, CGC, a Genetic Counselor, leads the discussion including Dr. James J. Burke, II, MD, a gynecologist oncologist, and Dr. Ray Rudolph, MD, about your risk factors, diagnostic tests and new treatments. The Jewish risk factor will also be highlighted.

Sunday, February 15 at 1:00 p.m.—**Been There: Won That**—Rebbetzin Ruchie Status will discuss personal inspirations that helped her fight and win her challenge with cancer. Also featured will be **Employment & Insurance Rights with a Cancer Twist**—Eeta Travis and Barbara Hoffman, J.D. editor of *A Cancer Survivor's Almanac* and founding chair of the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship.

Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 7:00 p.m.—**Been There: Won That Part II** will include discussions of diet, life changes and personal inspirations that helped local friends fight and win their challenges with cancer. **Better Health & Nutrition with a Cancer Twist**—Peter Brodhead, CN, of Brighter Day Health Foods will discuss nutrition as a means of staying healthy and coping with disease and treatment.

Sunday, March 29 at 12:15 p.m.—**Finding Out & Facing Up Luncheon** presented by Dr. Pamela Gallup, MD. Cervical and breast cancer prevention for the under 25 crowd. Lunch and learn is free, but requires pre-registration on our website www.morningstararts.org/TealRibbonProject.

Sunday, March 29 at 1:00 p.m.—**Cancer Answer Health Fair**. Everything you ever wanted to know about your health and then some as presented by local agencies, hospitals and treatment centers.

**Additional Series dates will be published in next month's Savannah Jewish News.*

**MorningStar Arts
Finding Oneself Events:**

Free Youth Workshops—Open to Ages 12 to 20 by pre-registration only by web <http://www.morningstararts.org/find3.htm> or paper application (call 912-652-3582 and ask to sign up for *Finding Oneself* Youth Workshops). All Thursdays 3:30 to 5:30 at different locations.

February 5—Meet, talk & dine with Avishai Telfair Museum of Art's Owens-Thomas House. Includes tour of Owens-Thomas Slave Quarters, workshop and dinner with Avishai. Limited transportation can be arranged.

March 12—Using Film to Get the Story with Michael Hofstein—Jewish Educational Alliance

All About MEE (Motivating, Educating, Empowering) Techniques for Success with Miller Barger, Jr.—Workshop March date to be announced. Savannah Entrepreneurial Center (801 E. Gwinnett St.)

Adult Lectures free and open to the general public:

Thursday, February 5—Avishai's Seven Generations. Jepson Center 6:15 PM – 7:30 PM

**Additional Workshop and Lecture Dates will be published in next month's Savannah Jewish News.*

New Programs at YOUR JEA

SENIOR FITNESS

Not new, but a new additional class. This popular class is adding an extra day by popular demand. Set to Big Band music, this class starts with aerobic dancing (standing or seated) for cardiovascular health, and strength exercises with weights to fight osteoporosis. Class also includes balancing to prevent falls, and Kegels to prevent incontinence.

Monday & Thursday at 10:30

NEW Wednesdays at 9:30

Instructor: Elaine Fox

KRAV MAGA - ISRAELI SELF DEFENSE

The name in Hebrew means "close combat." It refers to combat involving physical contact as opposed to combat using a weapon from afar, and all the techniques focus on maximum efficiency in real-life conditions.

Instructor Roger D'Onofrio is a defensive tactics specialist and consultant and has over 40 years experience in this field. He is acknowledged as a certified Krav Maga instructor by the International Krav Maga Federation, Krav Maga World Wide and the International Krav Maga Association. In addition, he has been awarded the teaching rank of Professor by the American Teachers Association of America.

Registration fee of \$29 (waived for JEA members)
Cost: \$60 JEA Members, \$90 Non-Members, \$80 Student/Law Enforcement/Military/Fire Dept.

Your monthly fee enables you to attend up to five classes per week - There is no monthly limit!

For more information and to register, please call Roger at (912) 308-7109 or by email roger@ccs-savannah.com. You can also check out his website: www.ccs-savannah.com.

Mon., Tue., & Thur. - 7:30 pm

Tues. & Thurs. - 11:45 am

(one hour classes begin Feb. 2nd)



ALL LEVELS YOGA FLOW

Increase your strength, balance and flexibility with all levels flow yoga. You can expect to work on standing and seated poses, forward folds, backbends and even inversions. This class is appropriate for any level of yogi, even newcomers to the practice, as modifications will be made for individual needs.

Wed. 7 - 8 pm for Eight Weeks
Instructor: Amanda Westerfield

Cost: Free to Members, \$8 per class-Non Members, \$50 for a 8 session Class Card (save \$14!)

ZUMBA!

Same time, same location, same teacher, different night. Now Thursdays 7-8 pm.

BALLROOM DANCING: THE NEXT STEP

If you've always wanted to learn how to ballroom dance, but never knew where to start, this is the right place for you. You will learn the Waltz, Fox Trot, Cha-Cha, Salsa, Swing or for those of you that have attended one of the JEA's previous dance classes, we will take you to the **NEXT STEP** & help you refine some of your classy moves.

The first ballroom dance lesson will begin on Sunday, Feb. 22nd at the JEA and continue for six consecutive Sundays. Lessons begin at 4:00 p.m. and will be one hour.

Cost: \$35 for JEA members, \$60 for non-members (in advance). Call 355-8111 or drop by the JEA to sign-up.

Sundays—Feb. 22, Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 - 4 pm
Instructors: Maxine Patterson & Mary Gail Gaddy.

Fitness Classes at the JEA

Sunday

Indoor Pool Hours—9 am-5 pm

Zumba—10 am

Jr. NBA Games—1-4 pm

Monday

Indoor Pool Hours—7 am-9 pm

Firm It Up—8:30 am

Aquasize—10 am

Gentle Yoga—10:30 am

Senior Fitness—10:30 am

Open Basketball—12-2 pm

Open Court Racquetball—4-6 pm

Maxine Patterson Dance—4-7 pm

Winter Swim League—4:15-5:15 pm

Karate—5:30 pm

Evening Water Aerobics—6:30 pm

Krav Maga—7:30 pm

Tuesday

Indoor Pool Hours—7 am-9 pm

Spin Class—8:30 am

Pilates—8:30 am

Aquasize—10 am

Krav Maga—11:45 am

Open Court Racquetball—4-6 pm

Maxine Patterson Dance—4-7 pm

Fencing—6 pm

Women's Self Defense—6 pm

Krav Maga—7:30 pm

Wednesday

Indoor Pool Hours—7 am-9 pm

Firm It Up—8:30 am

Gentle Yoga—10:30 am

Senior Fitness—10:30 am

Open Basketball—12-2 pm

Coach Wayne Gymnastics—2:30-5 pm

Maxine Patterson Dance—4-7 pm

Open Court Racquetball—4-6 pm

Winter Swim League—4:15-5:15 pm

Karate—5:30 pm

Evening Water Aerobics—6:30 pm

All Levels Yoga Flow—7-8 pm

Thursday

Indoor Pool Hours—7 am-9 pm

Spin Class—8:30 am

Pilates—8:30 am

Aquasize—10 am

Senior Fitness—10:30 am

Krav Maga—11:45 am

Open Racquetball Court—4-6 pm

Maxine Patterson Dance—4-7 pm

Fencing—6 pm

Women's Self Defense—6 pm

Evening Water Aerobics—6:30 pm

Zumba—7-8 pm

Krav Maga—7:30 pm

Friday

Indoor Pool Hours—7 am-4 pm

Firm It Up—8:30 am

Aquasize—10 am

Open Basketball—12-2 pm

PARENT'S NIGHT OUT

Want a break? Bring your kids to the JEA for these fun theme nights!

Saturday, February 28th - 8-10 pm



Swimming and a Movie

Beat the winter blues by splashing around in the pool with your friends, then relax with a movie and popcorn!

All kids ages 4 yrs - 5th grade welcome!

Teens are welcome to come and help out

By Reservation Only—No Drop Ins

\$5.00 a kid, \$15.00 a family

JEA Tu B'Shevat Family Day in the Park

February 8th—1-3 PM—Hull Park

Join us for an afternoon full of activities at the park—A celebration of Tu B'Shevat, the holiday of the trees!

Among the activities:

- We will make grass heads
- Learn more about recycling and nature preservation
- Play sports and make crafts
- Cooking station
- Learn songs in Hebrew for the holiday

There will also be information and a discussion about nature preservation for adults.

Bring comfortable clothes and water!

In case of rain, activities will be held at the JEA.

Questions: Call Maia or Ashley, 355-8111.

Winter Swim League 2008-2009

With Coach Connie Buckley

Program Objectives:

Stroke & Turn Development; Technique Improvement; Muscle memory; Endurance

Ages 5 & Up

(Children required to swim length of pool)

**Runs from January thru April
Mondays & Wednesdays**

4:15—5:15pm

JEA Members—\$50 per month

Non-members—\$75 per month

For more info contact Coach Dawn, 355-8111 or dawn@savj.org



Art at the JEA

January Artists (Jan. 2-30, 2009)—

Vicky Hennie, Frances Mills, Penny Sebrell
& Joyce Weinzettel



Mills



Sebrell



Weinzettel



Hennie

Vicky Hennie didn't start painting until retiring from the business world. She then joined an oil painting class at Generation One. This is where she started, "her recreational painting" under the tutelage of Sam Hirsch.

Frances Mills paints en plein air, as well as from sketches and photographs. She interprets the romance and allure of Savannah through its architecture.

Penny Sebrell became fascinated with oils after moving to Savannah. She enjoys painting landscapes en plein air.

Joyce Weinzettel works in all paint media, but particularly enjoys acrylics. She is inspired by objects, people and places she sees around her.

February Artist—Mordechai Rosenstein



Original Art



Mezzuzah



Wedding Contract

The Hebrew alphabet is the essence of the art of Mordechai Rosenstein. "The flowing forms of the letters have been an inspiration to me since my youth." Mordechai's love of these forms is evident in every piece he creates. His vibrant shapes and colors enhance synagogue interiors, tapestries, paintings, murals and silk screen prints.

His unique style evolved as a result of various influences. He was a member of the first graduating class of Akiba Hebrew Academy. While studying at The Philadelphia College of Art, Abstract Expressionist professor Franz Kline profoundly influenced Rosenstein. By uniting his interest in Judaica and painting, Rosenstein has given a contemporary meaning to the art of Hebrew calligraphy.

Rosenstein feels that "It is very stimulating and rewarding to interact with members and communities throughout the country and develop a rapport with them." He and his associate Saul Zalesne have traveled throughout the country visiting many states where synagogues and conventions have exhibited Rosenstein's works. Internationally, audiences in Zurich, Hong Kong, and London have welcomed Rosenstein, viewing his paintings and learning from the slide lecture he presents. Recently a new synagogue in Bloomfield, MI commissioned Rosenstein to design a series of stained glass windows. He has become one of the leading designers in the stained glass field. Synagogues all over the United States have requested Rosenstein to create their stained glass windows, ark doors, Torah mantles, and memorial or builders' walls. In the Summer of 1990, Camp Ramah in the Poconos dedicated Mordechai's first outdoor steel sculpture in honor of their 40th anniversary.

Artwork available for viewing February 2-27, 2009

Artist Reception February 2nd, 5:00-7:00 pm

February 2009	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
	Jan. 25	26 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Gentle Yoga</u> - 10:30 am Sr. Fitness- 10:30 am Senior Lunch- 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg- 1 pm	27 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Pilates</u> -8:30 am Kibitzers Club- 10 am <u>Genetic Counseling</u> Seminar- 7 pm	28 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Gentle Yoga</u> - 10:30 am Senior Lunch- 12:30 pm <u>Bridge</u> - 1 pm Zumba- 7 pm	29 <u>Indoor Pool</u> - 7 am-9 pm <u>Pilates</u> - 8:30 am <u>Aquasize</u> - 10 am Mah-Jongg- 10:30 am <u>Senior Fitness</u> - 10:30 am Sr. Lunch/Program- 12:30 pm <u>Evening Water Aerobics</u> - 6:30 pm	30 Indoor Pool- 7 am-4 pm <u>Aquasize</u> - 10 am Community Shabbaton- 6 pm	31
	Feb. 1 AARP Driving Class-Part 1- 1 pm	2 <u>Indoor Pool</u> - 7 am-9 pm <u>Gentle Yoga</u> - 10:30 am Sr. Fitness- 10:30 am Senior Lunch- 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg- 1 pm <u>Art Gallery Reception</u> - Mordechai Rosenstein- 5 pm <u>Black Heritage Concert</u> - 7 pm	3 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Pilates</u> -8:30 am <u>Kibitzers Club</u> - 10 am <u>Yiddish</u> - 3 pm <u>Grief Support Group</u> -7 pm	4 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Gentle Yoga</u> - 10:30 am Senior Lunch- 12:30 pm <u>Bridge</u> - 1 pm <u>Zumba</u> - 7 pm	5 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Pilates</u> - 8:30 am <u>Aquasize</u> - 10 am Mah-Jongg- 10:30 am Senior Fitness- 10:30 am Sr. Lunch/Program- 12:30 pm <u>Evening Water Aerobics</u> - 6:30 pm <u>Movie & Beer Night</u> - 7 pm	6 Indoor Pool- 7 am-4 pm <u>Aquasize</u> - 10 am	7
	8 <u>Erev Tu B'Shevat</u> Hull Park Event- 1 pm AARP Driving Class-Part 2- 1 pm <u>JFA Speakers Series</u> -Dr Suggs- 7:30 pm	9 <u>Tu B'Shevat</u> Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Gentle Yoga</u> - 10:30 am Sr. Fitness- 10:30 am Senior Lunch- 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg- 1 pm	10 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Pilates</u> -8:30 am Kibitzers Club- 10 am <u>Grief Support Group</u> - 7 pm	11 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Gentle Yoga</u> - 10:30 am Senior Lunch- 12:30 pm <u>Bridge</u> - 1 pm Zumba- 7 pm	12 <u>Indoor Pool</u> - 7 am-9 pm <u>Pilates</u> - 8:30 am <u>Aquasize</u> - 10 am Mah-Jongg- 10:30 am Senior Fitness- 10:30 am Sr. Lunch/Program- 12:30 pm <u>Evening Water Aerobics</u> - 6:30 pm	13 Indoor Pool- 7 am-4 pm <u>Aquasize</u> - 10 am	14
	15 <u>Been There: Won That</u> - Cancer Survivors Health Talk Series- 1 pm	16 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Gentle Yoga</u> - 10:30 am Sr. Fitness- 10:30 am Senior Lunch- 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg- 1 pm	17 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Pilates</u> -8:30 am Kibitzers Club- 10 am <u>Grief Support Group</u> - 7 pm	18 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Gentle Yoga</u> - 10:30 am Senior Lunch- 12:30 pm <u>Bridge</u> - 1 pm Zumba- 7 pm	19 <u>Indoor Pool</u> - 7 am-9 pm <u>Pilates</u> - 8:30 am <u>Aquasize</u> - 10 am Mah-Jongg- 10:30 am Senior Fitness- 10:30 am Sr. Lunch/Program- 12:30 pm <u>Evening Water Aerobics</u> - 6:30 pm <u>Movie & Beer Night</u> - 7 pm	20 Indoor Pool- 7 am-4 pm <u>Aquasize</u> - 10 am	21
	22	23 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Gentle Yoga</u> - 10:30 am Sr. Fitness- 10:30 am Senior Lunch- 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg- 1 pm	24 <u>Indoor Pool</u> - 7 am-9 pm <u>Pilates</u> -8:30 am Kibitzers Club- 10 am <u>Grief Support Group</u> - 7 pm <u>Cancer Series Lecture</u> - 7:30 pm	25 Indoor Pool- 7 am-9 pm <u>Gentle Yoga</u> - 10:30 am Senior Lunch- 12:30 pm <u>Bridge</u> - 1 pm <u>Zumba</u> - 7 pm	26 <u>Indoor Pool</u> - 7 am-9 pm <u>Pilates</u> - 8:30 am <u>Aquasize</u> - 10 am Mah-Jongg- 10:30 am Senior Fitness- 10:30 am Sr. Lunch/Program- 12:30 pm Jewish Film Festival-6 pm <u>Evening Water Aerobics</u> - 6:30 pm	27 Indoor Pool- 7 am-4 pm <u>Aquasize</u> - 10 am	28 <u>Parent's Night Out</u> - 8 pm



Keeping Hope for Gilad Shalit

by Maia Koiller

Gilad Shalit (22) was born on 8/28/1986. He is the son of Aviva and Noam Shalit from Mitzpe Hilla in the Western Galilee and the brother of Yoel (24) and Hadas (17).

Since the attack at Kerem Shalom on Sunday, June 25, 2006, Gilad has been held in the Gaza Strip by Hamas. In June 2007, Egyptian mediators received a letter written by Gilad in which he stated that he was alive and well. In June 2008, Israel received an audiotape proving that Shalit is still alive.

When Gilad was 11 years old, he wrote a story about the relationship between a shark and a fish. In it, he writes about a young fish and a young shark whose families hate one another. The youth, however, get to know one another and want to keep their friendship. Gilad's family decided to publish this story, hoping that he will be released:

A small and gentle fish was swimming in the middle of a peaceful ocean.

All of a sudden, the fish saw a shark that wanted to devour him. He then began to swim very quickly, but so did the shark.

Suddenly the fish stopped and called to the shark, "Why do you want to devour me? We can play together."

The shark thought and thought and said "Okay fine, let's play hide and seek!" The shark and the fish played all day long until the sun went down.

In the evening, the shark returned to his home.

His mother asked, "How was your day my dear shark? How many animals did you devour today?"

The shark answered, "Today I didn't devour any animals, but I played with the animal called fish."

"That fish is an animal we eat. Don't play

with it."

At the home of the fish the same thing happened.

"How are you little fish?

How was it in the sea today?" asked the fish's mother.

The fish an-

swered, "Today I played

with an animal called shark."

"That shark

is the animal that devoured your father and

your brother. Don't play with that animal!"

answered the mother.

The next day in the middle of the ocean, nei-

ther the shark nor the fish were there. They

didn't meet for days, weeks and even months.

Then one day they met. Each one immedi-

ately ran back to his mother, and once again they

didn't meet for days, weeks, and months.

After a whole year passed, the shark went out

for a nice swim, and so did the fish. For a third

time, the shark said, "You are my enemy, but

maybe we can make peace."

The little fish

said, "Okay."

They played secretly for days, weeks, and

months until one day the shark and fish went

to the fish's mother and spoke together with

her. Then they did the same thing with the

shark's mother. And from that same day, the

sharks and the fish live in peace.

We, different shlichim in the United States, felt the need to do something in order to support Gilad's parents. During conversation we had with one with each other we realized Gilad could be anyone of us. We wanted to say: bring Gilad Shalit home.

Rambam Day School joined me for an important project. The children in the Pre School heard the children's story he wrote and had activities about it.

The whole school participated in hand printing. The result will be a big flag, made from children's hand prints from different communities in the United States that have a young



Gilad Shalit



Maia reading Gilad Shalit's story to her class

Shaliach. During the project I was fascinated to hear what kind of comments the children said, the questions that pupils from different classes had, and the solidarity they showed during the process. The teachers talked with them about it more during their classes.

When we started the project the situation on the border of Gaza was tense — before the operation started. I pray for Gilad's safe return home with all the other soldiers that are on a mission to protect our country.

I hope, one day, the moral of Gilad's story will become reality and we will

have peace.

Thank you for joining me for this special journey!



Pre-school children preparing handprints for Gilad Shalit

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Friends,

Trying to think of ways to thank my wonderful community for all the donations to campaign and other Jewish institutions, the personal encouragements, food baskets, gifts, and prayers on behalf of my recovery, taxed even my sometimes overactive brain.

So my wonderful husband and I put our heads together and wanted to offer our gift of renewed health back to you. Please join us for a series of Cancer Answers Health Talks offered at the JEA through the Savannah Jewish Federation's Jewish Family Services and organized by MorningStar Cultural Arts Group beginning January 27, 2009 at 7 PM and continuing with programs through the end of March. These discussions are designed for healthy friends and those traveling roads to renewed health, to learn risk factors, good health maintenance, current diagnostic tools, cutting edge treatment and cures from the experts, local resources, and friends whose inspirational stories provide hope for us all.

Please join us for these programs that focus on BRCA 1 gene mutation

that is a high risk factor for Jewish populations. BRCA 1 gene covers male and female breast, colon, prostate and, my particular affliction, ovarian cancer. The diagnostic test, developed in part by work from Hadassah Medical Organization, is available here in Savannah along with genetic counseling. Please join us January 27 (with Drs. Burke, Rudolphe and genetic counselor Hufford-King) and the succeeding Sunday and Tuesday events to learn more about ways to protect and empower yourselves—what a great gift indeed you will be giving Joel and myself.

What an "adventure" learning about cancer has been, but one we wish you only to share through "travel blogs" (mine is on the Teal Page at www.morningstararts.org), books (author and legal counsel Barbara Hoffman speaks Feb.15) and discussions (Peter Brodhead of Brighter Day speaks Feb. 24)! Thank you so much for being our friends—for becoming our extended family—especially during this difficult time.

Carol Towbin Greenberg

To the Savannah Jewish Federation:

Thank you again for sending me such wonderful volunteers [for Trading Places]. It was a nice treat to be able to attend a Christmas dinner today with good friends. It was so nice to have help these last two days; I really cannot thank you enough.

**Lisa Scarborough
President/Founder
Coastal Pet Rescue, Inc.
912.228.3538
www.coastalpetrescue.org**

Dear Savannah Jewish Federation,

On behalf of TALI and the Schechter Institute, I want to thank you for your allocation to the TALI Education Fund. Despite this period of financial instability and institutional belt tightening, TALI's commitment to providing Jewish education to more and more children in the Israeli secular education system has continued unabated, and over the past year we have had many accomplishments:

This past fall the TALI program entered 10 new schools and 2 preschools, and we are in negotiation with 10 schools and 8 preschools to join our network this coming September. Currently some 80 schools and 100 preschools, with 35,000 pupils are in the TALI Net-

work.

Thanks to the generosity of our funding partners, in 2008-9 the TALI Education Fund is providing pedagogical counseling and in-service training programs to over 1,500 teachers in TALI 70 schools, has published three textbooks and the beautiful new TALI siddur, and is sending TALI rabbis to dozens of schools to conduct tefila workshops and family programs for thousands of pupils and parents. Among our new projects is the TALI Parental Leadership Program - a program in which this year 150 parents from 45 TALI schools all over the country are learning how to support their children's Jewish education at home and advocate for TALI in their schools and communities.

We'd like to strengthen our connection to the Savannah Federation. If there is a mission coming, we'd be delighted to host you at the Schechter Institute and/or take you to visit a TALI school.

All of us are praying for quiet in the South - for the safety of our soldiers and a quick return to school and work for all our students and teachers in that area.

**Best wishes,
Eitan Cooper
Schechter Institute/
TALI Education Fund**





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In memory of Madeline Rubin
Her children, grandchildren and
great-grandchildren



Tu B'Shvat Quiz

1. Where was the first garden planted on earth?

2. On which holiday do we NOT eat fruits from Israel?

3. How long is it from Tu B'Shvat to Purim?

4. What organization has been planting trees in Israel for more than 100 years?

5. Name some of the fruits you might find in a Tu B'Shvat Seder.

6. From what kind of tree was the branch that the dove brought back after the flood?

7. What were the two "named" trees in the Garden of Eden?

8. What does the word "Tu" in Tu B'Shvat mean?

9. When was the last time you planted a tree in Israel?

10. On what other holiday do we hold a Seder?

Answers located at bottom of page

Four Cups of Wine, Anyone?

This year, February 9th (15th of the Jewish month of Shvat) marks the beginning of the "New Year" for trees. A good comparison of Tu B'Shvat to a Western holiday is that it's the Jewish Arbor Day. During the beginning of Zionism, Tu B'Shvat became more popular, as it was used as a symbolic way for Jewish re-attachment to the land of Israel. Ecological organizations in Israel have adopted it to stimulate environmental awareness. On some kibbutzim, Tu B'Shvat is celebrated as an agricultural holiday and an opportunity to plant trees and spend time in and around nature. In many communities, Jewish children collect money to send to organizations such as the Jewish National Fund to plant trees at this time of year.

It also is customary on Tu B'Shvat to eat fruits and food local to the land of Israel such as nuts, figs, dates, raisins, carob, pomegranates, and almonds. Some people even mark this holiday with a Seder much like Passover. Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, one of the Jewish mystics in Safed in the sixteenth century, is said to have created a Seder in which the fruits and trees of the land were given symbolic meaning. The main idea was that eating ten specific fruits and drinking four cups of wine (honoring the four aspects of Acting, Relating, Knowing, and Being) in a specific order while reciting the appropriate blessings would bring



Tu B'Shvat Seder Plate

human beings and the world closer to spiritual perfection. Even special hag-gadas have been written for this purpose. In one today, the four cups are used as follows:

- White wine, symbolizing the calmness of nature

White wine mixed with a small quantity of red for the sometimes restlessness of nature

Red wine mixed with a small quantity of white wine, contrasting rain with sun and hot with cold.

Red wine for the sun and upcoming summer.

In Savannah contact the local Haddassah chapter to purchase a tree for planting in Israel. If you are interested in fulfilling this mitzvah, either in honor of someone, or to mark the holiday, call Beezy Forstot at 352-0765.

Seven Generations, Twenty Years; Avishai Mekonen for One Night Only

By Carol Towbin Greenberg

How far back can you trace your lineage? To some Savannah Jews, this is an easy question to answer; but for some of us whose relatives were part of large immigration waves at the crux of the last century or the tempest tossed remnant of WWII, that might not be such an easy task.

For one night only, Thursday, February 5, 2009, Avishai Mekonen, internationally recognized Israeli filmmaker and photographer, will present a fascinating multi-media presentation, Seven Generations, at the Telfair Museum's Jepson Center from 6:15 pm to 7:30 pm. His talk, and a preceding youth workshop at the Owens-Thom-as House (from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm) are free and open to the public courtesy of MorningStar Cultural Arts Group in celebration of their 20th year of serving the Coastal Empire. The workshop, for youth ages 12 to 20, includes a tour of the slave quarters at the historic house as well as an opportunity for participants to meet, talk and dine with Avishai. Jewish youths are especially invited to attend.

Yeganyahu Avishai Mekonen's award-winning work has been shown at festivals and museums in Israel, the U.S. and Europe. His projects investigate issues of race and identity and have been broadcast on Israeli television and screened at numerous international venues including the Tel Aviv and Jerusalem Cinemateques and the International Competition Documentary Festival, Czech Republic. His video, Four Hundred miles to Freedom, chronicles his search to remember and reconcile what happened to him at age 10 in 1984, when he was kidnapped by slave traffickers in Sudan. Throughout his life-long journey from Ethiopia to Sudan, Israel, and finally America, his fundamental identity is challenged: "What does it mean when others insist that you can't be who you know you are?"

While in Savannah, Avishai will present his newest project, Seven Generations, which deals with the con-

sequences of losing one's sense of history and culture when one loses their personal identity through assimilation; and gaining that identity back through traditions shared and accepted by younger generations.

The premier of his work in Savannah is courtesy of MorningStar, a Jewish based cultural arts group. In its 20 years, MorningStar has presented over 150 free programs, festivals, projects and charitable support to Savannah and surrounding communities and is now presenting a three month youth initiative: Finding Oneself, that begins with this program timed to coincide with the 2009 Black Heritage Festival and ending May 21 with a similar program that will honor the Asian Festival.

The Jepson lecture is limited to 250 people and the workshop to thirty-five. Both are free and open to the public; pre-registration is required for the youth workshop; click on the Finding Oneself icon for an online application at www.morningstararts.org or call Carolyn Allen, Blue Blazer Coordinator for the Savannah Entrepreneurial Center at 912-652-3582 for a paper application. Workshop space is limited so participants will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. School credit, service hours and limited transportation can be arranged. The workshop includes a brief tour of the historic house's original slave quarters and is followed by light dinner with the artist. Several more project oriented workshops this spring will be offered first to this first group of participants.

This project owes a debt of gratitude to the JEA, The Telfair Museum of Art, The Savannah Entrepreneurial Center, volunteers Sarah Denmark, Carolyn Allen and Sarahlyn Argrow of AWWIN; and to Gwendolyn Fortson Waring and Ron Higgins of Savannah Movie Tours for generous financial support.



Avishai Mekonen

On the Personal Side

Jessica Cohen, daughter of Ron and Donna Cohen, made the Dean's List her first semester as a freshman at the University of Georgia... Faye Kirschner and Chris Addy placed first in their age groups in the Sunrise Rotary Club's 11th Annual Trick or Trot 5K (3.1 miles) Road Race. Faye also placed third in her age group in the 20th Annual Turkey Trot 5K Run on Hilton Head Island and third in the Savannah River Bridge 5K Run.

Answers to Tu B'Shvat Quiz:

1. Eden

2. Yom Kippur - It's a fast day

3. Exactly 1 Month

4. The Jewish National Fund

5. Almonds, Dates, Olives, Cherries, Plums, Carob, Avocado, Pomegranate, figs, Grapes/Raisins, Strawberry

- berries

6. Olive Branch

7. 'The tree of knowledge' and 'the tree of good and evil'

8. It is the number 15

9. If you can't remember, wouldn't it be a great time to plant another?

10. Passover

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Top 10 Things to Know About Choosing a Jewish Camp

To turn around the harsh economic conditions currently engulfing the country, President-elect Obama has proposed a massive investment in rebuilding and strengthening the nation's infrastructure. To fortify the Jewish community, the Foundation for Jewish Camp suggests an investment, as well, in our "spiritual infrastructure."

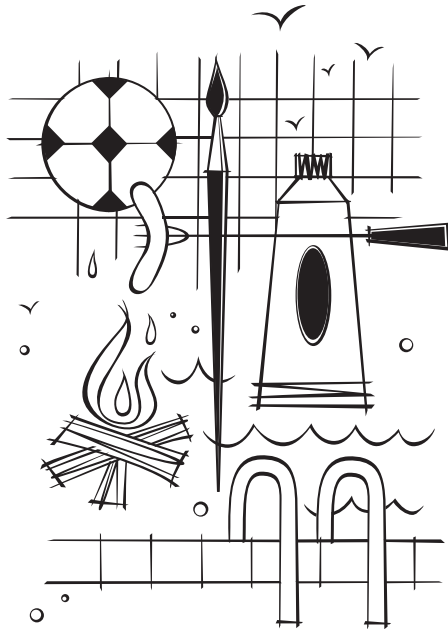
"Jewish overnight summer camp offers a tremendous return on investment," says Jerry Silverman, FJC's CEO. "It's solid, wholesome, and grounded. It's a return to our roots. It's a community builder. And it's a proven precursor of adult Jewish identity."

Now is the ideal time to make such a sound and vital investment in our future by exploring camps for your child or summer job opportunities for your teen in 2009. And in considering a Jewish overnight summer camp experience, the FJC has compiled some helpful tips:

Give your child the opportunity to mature and gain independence in a camp atmosphere that is warm and inviting. Campers develop a strong sense of self, gaining confidence and social skills in a shared, nurturing and healthy environment. Campers mature through learning more about themselves as well as building relationships with others, all interwoven with the common experience of being Jewish. Jewish camp affords Jewish families, regardless of their levels of affiliation, the opportunity to offer their children a chance to experience a Jewish community that is not overwhelming or foreign.

Search for the appropriate camp for your child. While the thought of searching through hundreds of camps may seem daunting, online search directories can be very helpful. The Foundation for Jewish Camp's online camp directory lists over 150 nonprofit Jewish overnight camps in North America that span the denominational and regional spectrum. Search the directory by religious denomination, location, special needs availability or gender.

Choose a camp that will complement and strengthen the Jewish affiliation and identity of your child. The magic of Jewish camp is rooted in its 24/7 atmosphere, where Jewish values, connection to Israel, and the culture of Judaism are entwined into every aspect of daily activity in ways that make campers feel proud to be Jewish. From Orthodox, Reform, and Conservative to Reconstructionist, Zionist, Humanist and Non-denominational, there is a Jewish camp for every expression of Jewish life. Find the right Jewish experience for your child by visiting the online camp directory at www.jewishcamp.org



www.jewishcamp.org to search camps by religious denomination.

Jewish specialty camps enable your child to hone a specific skill or interest within the context of Jewish values, such as teamwork, fair play and good ruach, spirit. Whether your child is interested in perfecting her jump shot, honing his painting skills, improving his swim stroke, directing a film, or understanding a science theorem, there is a specialty camp that fits his/her needs. Jewish specialty camps offer programs in the following areas: jewelry making, pottery, ceramics, painting, filmmaking, drama, basketball, soccer, tennis, swimming, baseball, astronomy, kinesiology, biology, chemistry and physics.

Jewish camps offer a variety of models to accommodate special needs campers, including mainstreaming, separate programming, and exclusive special needs camps. Regardless of the function level of your child, there is a Jewish camp ready to provide him/her with the summer of a lifetime. Visit www.jewishcamp.org to access a full list of Jewish special needs camps and programs, including those specifically targeted at children with autism, Down Syndrome, and Aspergers.

Check out a camp's website to learn about camp features, including programs, facilities, and daily schedules. Look for a broad base of activities that both enhance skills that your child wants to improve and emphasize fun. Keep in mind, however, that while websites can provide plenty of useful information, the best way to get a sense of the camp environment is to visit the camp grounds during the summer.

Narrow down your options to about four or five camps. Take into account camp size, activity offerings, atmosphere, security, cost and location. Look for a camp that best accommo-

dates both your and your child's interests. It may be helpful to involve your child in the search to ensure that his/her needs and expectations are met.

Talk to veteran families or your child's friends who have attended the camp before. Ask them about the details of day-to-day life at camp and the "feeling" of the camp atmosphere—things that cannot be gleaned from the website. Keep in mind, however, that just because a camp works for your friend's child does not mean it is the right camp for your child.

Visiting camp during the summer gives you a great sense of the camp culture and environment. If you are planning ahead, try and visit prospective camps the summer before you hope to send your child there. Look for drive-up appeal—not whether it is rustic or modern but how well it is maintained, cleanliness, how the staff greets visitors, and if they know the campers by name when walking through the grounds. If you have missed the summer tours, try to gauge camp culture through the website or conversations with the camp director and other campers and their parents.

Equip your camper with the tools they need to have an amazing summer. Be sure to send your child to camp with self-addressed envelopes to keep in touch. Consider leaving your child's cell phone at home so that he/she can grow and mature by being truly independent—and also find out what the camp policy is on cell phones, since many do not allow them at camp. Healthy snacks, family photos, and summer reading books are always good to have in the bunk. When your children finally return home at the end of the summer, you may notice that while their duffle bags are slightly less full from misplaced clothing and eaten goodies, their souls are filled with Jewish pride and their minds and hearts are bursting with memories of friends and fun that will last a lifetime.

The Foundation for Jewish Camp, a public foundation, is the only national organization dedicated to nonprofit Jewish resident camps, advancing program and leadership excellence in camps and access to vibrant Jewish experiences for campers. The Foundation helps raise awareness and support for Jewish summer camps, highlighting their successful track record for building powerful Jewish commitment in young Jews, ensuring future Jewish continuity. FJC works with more than 150 camps, 70,000 campers, and 12,000 counselors across North America to further its mission. Visit the website at www.jewishcamp.org.

Get Your Motor Runnin'

By Betsy Ahrens



The Jewish Motorcyclists Alliance (JMA) is currently seeking Jewish motorcyclists in Savannah with interest in starting a local club. The Jewish Motorcyclists Alliance is a non-profit umbrella organization consisting of 26 clubs formed worldwide in just four years and growing with over 2,300 members. There is no fee for Member clubs (or individuals who belong to a Member club). For more information, please visit the JMA website at <http://jewishbikersworldwide.com> and join the JMA forum to keep abreast of what is happening in the world of Jewish motorcycling.

The common thread among our members is our religion. The JMA mission is to create a global environment whereby members of the Jewish faith who ride motorcycles can congregate physically and through the Internet to share and exchange ideas about matters of concern to the Jewish community, as well as issues concerning motorcycles.

Every year we conduct a Ride to Remember (R2R) to memorialize the victims of the Holocaust and to raise money for organizations that support and promote Holocaust education and awareness. In past years, rides have included travel to the National Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C.; to Whitwell, TN, visiting the home of the world renown Paper Clip Project and Museum; to NYC to ride in the Israeli Day Parade in support of the Israeli Mogen David Adom first responders organization; and in 2008 to Omaha, Nebraska to raise money for the Heartland Holocaust Endowment Fund. For 2009, we are riding to Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina to emphasize and show support for educational resources aimed at Holocaust studies in both cities. It is a three day event which in addition to its charitable mission brings everyone together in what also serves as our annual gathering.

We do not have a club yet in Savannah and are very aggressively looking to start one in time to join us for our ride in Savannah, which looks like it might be our biggest R2R yet.

My name is Betsy Ahrens and you can reach me at msbetsya@yahoo.com or contact Ron Wynne at ccaod@yahoo.com.

We look forward to including you amongst our ranks of Jewish motorcyclists!



Thoughts from Rambam

Rambam students presented a Chanukah program which demonstrated to parents, grandparents and friends how even animals sing praises to the Almighty. Also within their presentation, the children shared what we can learn from the characteristics of various animals. The students were dressed up as the animal for which they were giving information. Each group sang a song that pertained to their group as well. A zoo train decorated the whole auditorium and where the children stood to give their presentation, there was hay to make them feel at home. The evening began with the first grade lighting the menorah and singing m'oaz tzur. The evening concluded with Rabbi Gordon's third graders singing a popular Chanukah song. The evening was a success and enjoyed by all.

Rambam students have been busy worrying about others, which is an integral lesson taught in Rambam. Rambam students collected \$338.37 for the Savannah Jewish Federation Campaign. Pre-school classes donated their tzedaka to the campaign and the older children paid at least a dollar to have the privilege to break the dress code (which means they were allowed to come to school not following the structured dress code that Rambam

ect dedicated to the efforts on behalf of Gilad Shalit being set free as he is a POW (Maia has written an article about this soldier). Maia discussed with some of the classes their thoughts about Arabs and Israelis not getting along. Maia shared with me that the discussion was inspiring and informative for her and the children. Maia was quite moved to participate with a group of women who gathered together to say tehillim (psalms) on behalf of all the Israeli soldiers. Maia was also touched to hear that Rambam students have



Ester Y. Rabhan,
Rambam Day
School Principal



Deer Max and Sam

been saying tehillim after davening (prayers) each morning.

Rambam had an Open House at the end of December and the beginning of January, giving families an opportunity to come and visit the school. Four new families came to the Open House. We were very excited to see new faces and new interest in Rambam. G-d willing the efforts of Rambam to educate the next generation will be productive for Klal Yisroel and the Savannah Jewish community.

Ester Y. Rabhan



Seventh Grade Lions Briana, Lena and Sarala

requires). As well, Rambam had another break from the dress code (due to the seriousness of its purpose, the children were only allowed to change colors while respecting the basic daily rules) to raise money for Israeli soldiers. The school raised \$300, which will cover the cost of sending baskets to an entire unit of soldiers.

Rambam students participated in a proj-



Zebra serving popcorn

Shalom School and the Spirit of Giving

Our Shalom School, the joint religious school of Congregations Agudath Achim and Mickve Israel, incorporates G'milut Chasidim, or acts of loving kindness into every part of our teaching. This cornerstone of Judaism is an integral part of our school's curriculum and we strive continually to make the mitzvot come alive and have true, enduring meaning for our children's lives, now and in the future. To give substance to our words, Shalom School students recently became part of Congregation Mickve Israel's Back Pack Buddies Program, providing food for needy public school children who have nothing to eat on the weekends. Our parents and children bring in food every week and, on Sundays, families from individual grades spend time at the end of school putting together the food packages for 45 children.

Of course, righteous giving has many faces and our children are learning about

the many agencies which comprise Savannah's own Jewish community and their need for support, particularly through the Savannah Jewish Federation. On December 14, 2008, the last day of our Sunday school met before this year's winter break, our children happily showed their support of Federation by giving to Sharon Galin, pictured below with the students and staff of Shalom School, their weekly tzedakah contributions for the months of September through December. They were happy to provide more than \$100 to help this year's Federation campaign.



Jules Kerness,
Shalom School
Principal

Until next time,
B'Shalom,
Jules Kerness
Principal



Sharon Galin, General Chair of the Savannah Jewish Federation 2009 Annual Campaign, receives the Shalom School's donation from Harris F.

AA Torah Fund Brunch on March 1

By Midge Schildkraut

The Agudath Achim Sisterhood will hold its annual Torah Fund campaign event on Sunday, March 1, at the AA synagogue, 9 Lee Boulevard, at 10:30 am. One of the responsibilities of the sisterhood is to financially assist the Jewish Theological Seminary, where many of the Conservative rabbis, cantors and teachers receive their education.

The Sisterhood of Agudath Achim takes this opportunity not only to collect funds for the seminary but to also honor a Jewish woman who has distinguished herself in Savannah, the Jewish community, the synagogue and/or the sisterhood. This year, the committee for the event chose Dr. Linda Sacks for her expertise as a respected physician, a past president of the AA, her generous contributions of financial support, impressive participation in services, as well as the unselfish hours she spends tutoring and conducting study groups.

During a brunch, the program will include a talk by Professor Janice Steirn of Georgia Southern University and the presentation of a Torah Fund pin to

Linda by Ellie Galin, President of the AA Sisterhood.

For a tax deductible gift of \$180 for the seminary, the donor will receive a magnificent pin designed in Israel which is worn with pride. Checks should be payable to JTS and either mailed or brought to the AA (marked "Attention: Steffie Zerden-Sisterhood"). The suggested minimum contribution is \$18. All revenues are presented to the seminary. In the past, the AA Sisterhood has won recognition for its impressive presentation to the seminary. The entire community is welcome to attend this event. The Sisterhood is offering you an opportunity to be present as we raise funds for the seminary, honor Linda, enjoy a delicious brunch and hear an impressive ceremony.

The chairs for the event are Cookie Gale and Stacy Schlafstein. Heading the solicitation efforts is Steffie Zerden and the chair of the food committee is Donna Horesch. Please reserve your place by calling the synagogue at 352-4737.



Linda Sacks



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Mr. & Mrs. D. H. Hulsey
In Memory of Susan Karpf
In Honor of Gerald & Riette Pollack
Sandy & Marcia Berens

**LISA & DANNY KAMINSKY
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Paul & Jo Applefield
In Honor of the Birth of Richard & Merry Bodziner’s Grandson
In Honor of the Birth of Barbara & Alan Tanenbaum’s Grandson
In Honor of Larry Lasky’s Speedy Recovery
In Honor of Stephen Sacks’ Speedy Recovery
In Memory of Alice Felser
In Memory of Karen Nelson’s Grandson, Sam
In Honor of the Speedy Recovery of “Julie” Rudikoff
In Honor of the Speedy Recovery of Carol Greenberg
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In Honor of the Birth of Sharon & Moises Paz’ Grandson
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In Honor of Rhoda Weiland’s Birthday
Beezy Forstot

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**MATTHEW KLUGMAN B’NAI
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Doris & Abe Klugman

**STEPHEN LASKY B’NAI TZEDEK
FUND**

In Honor of the Speedy Recovery of Larry Lasky
Doris & Abe Klugman

**ROSS KOODEN B’NAI TZEDEK
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In Memory of Marilyn Levy
Joanne & Michael Kooden
In Honor of Michael Kooden
Merry & Richard Bodziner

**ELLIOTT KOODEN B’NAI TZEDEK
FUND**

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Joanne & Michael Kooden

**RALPH & PAULINE TENENBAUM
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In Honor of Aunt Jeannie Kaminsky’s Birthday
Nancy & Bert Tenenbaum
In Honor of Zelda & Sheldon Tenenbaum
Merry & Richard Bodziner

**ALLAN & ARLENE RATNER
FAMILY FUND**

In Memory of Dorothy Stapen
Arlene & Allan Ratner

**IRENE & LEE BRAUN FUND FOR
SOCIAL SERVICES**

In Honor of Meg & Dana Braun
Merry & Richard Bodziner

My Day as a ‘Shadow’
at Memorial Hospital ER

By Phil Scharf

I decided to bid at the Silent Auction at the “Great Gelt Give-away” held at the JEA [in August] for the job of shadowing Dr. Jay Goldstein, the Doctor who is in charge of the ER [Emergency Room] at Memorial Medical. I’ve been to the ER several times in my life horizontally; so I thought it would be good to go in vertically this time and so I could be aware of what goes on in an ER on a daily basis.

Arriving on my own two feet, I was promptly greeted by Dr. J, who then proceeded to outfit me in green “scrubs” and then introduced me to the staff of doctors and nurses. I accompanied him while he made the rounds on an assortment of emergencies. I realized how previously unaware I was of how big and diverse the ER at Memorial is, compared to how small it was years ago.

I spent five hours with Dr. J which



From left, Dr. Jay Goldstein and Phil Scharf

were very rewarding and enlightening. If the care and efficiency and attentiveness of the ER are indicative of the caliber of treatment in the rest of the hospital, I now understand why Memorial is rated so favorably in recent polls.

It is good to know that Savannah has such an exceptional staff of professional and caring doctors and nurses ready and able to help when the occasion arises. My day at Memorial was interesting and informative thanks to the helpfulness of Dr. J and his staff. My hat is off to Dr. J and his friendly, efficient staff.



Thank You for making Trading Places a great success!!

Special thanks to our 2008 chairs:

**Vivian Slotin
Barbara Kooden
Rhoda Weiland**

**Matthew Allan
Arnold Axelberg
Lynne & Lindsey Bailey
Merry Bodziner
Robin, Lawrence, Daniel & Louis Brody
Rachel & Jan Brody
Kathy & Michael Burnce
Carole & Jerald Cohen
Edye & Lee Cohen
Lisa , Scott, Ashley & Jena Cohen
Hannah Cohen
Neil & Mason Cohen
Norman Epstein
Donna, Jay & Richard Epstein
Lindsey Fenton
Jackie Friedman
Cookie & Megan Gale
Ellie & Mel Galin
A.M. Goldkrand
Toby & Sarah Fay Goldstein
Ellen & Allison Hagen
Josie Harper
Peggy Harris
Greg, Lena, & Jonathan Hirsch
Gale & David Hirsh
Miriam & Jake Hodesh
Toby Hollenberg
Anita Karnibad
Jackie & Larry Katz
Laura Kellogg
Danny, Sue, Ali, & Matt Klugman
Suzanne & Michael Konter
Michael & Aaron Kooden
Barbara & Lew Kooden
Alex & Seth Kovensky
Betty Lasky
Jessica, Mark, Liberty & Abraham Lebos
Rene Lehrberger
Roni Libow
Ann Lukes
Harriet & Eric Meyerhoff
Melissa, Jeff, Ellie & Jessa Neil
Judy Odrezin
Aaron Pargman
Sue & Richard Parker
Roz & Buddy Portman
Zita Prince
Laurie & Halle Rubnitz
Michelle Russo
Jodi & Kenneth Sadler
Ashley, Scott, Jared & Allison Samuels
Lillie Sanders
Sally & Herb Sanders
Brenda & Patrick Salter
Susan, Frank, Sam & Hannah Slotin
Sue Solomon
Adel Stein
Brad & Max Strauss
Vivian Slotin
Janice Steirn
Mike Strear
Harriet Ullman
Rhoda Weiland
Laura, Eric, Adam & Sarah Weiss
Stephanie Zerden
Linda, Rebecca, & Jonathon Zoller
Elaine & Joel Zuckerman**

*We apologize if we omitted you
Your work was appreciated*

