



L'Chaim!

Winter 2002
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Federation: 940-6001
Email: altfed@uplink.net

News & "Chailights" of The Greater Altoona Jewish Community

Friend of friend preserves JMC

The Jewish Memorial Center has undergone a facelift.

Thanks to a generous donation from a friend of a friend, the JMC is in its best financial health and physical condition in years.

For those who may not have yet seen it, the JMC has installed a sparkling new basketball floor, dignified with a Jewish star at midcourt. In addition, a new heating and air conditioning system -- separate from Agudath Achim Synagogue -- has been installed and the windows have been blocked in.

"It's been a lot of hard work by a lot of people and to see it come to fruition has been gratifying," JMC president Clark Adelman said. The Center was able to afford the refurbishments when it unexpectedly received \$56,000 left by the estate of Charles Luther, who had become friends with long-time JMC member Barney Adelson. The two spent their last days at Hillview together. Barney left \$5,000 to the JMC and Charles, who had no heirs, divided his estate between nine charities/non-profit organizations.

"I received a letter one day that outlined Mr. Luther's estate," Adelman said. "The first notice we got, we thought we were getting \$3,000. The next package was an inch thick and we were told we were getting \$50,000."

The JMC also received a \$5,000 state grant orchestrated by representative Rick Geist.

"The floor had been completely shot," Adelman said. "We had refurbished and sanded for 50 years. Now, it looks fabulous.



JMC President Clark Adelman (left) and Athletic Director Cal Bragonier pose at the center's new basketball floor.

Without these donations and grants, we would not have been able to accomplish this."

Adelman said community participation at the JMC is at an all-time high: Winter basketball leagues have attracted a record 56 teams. He credits JMC athletic director Cal Bragonier, "who really loves his work and has made the JMC a better place."

Although the JMC is not used as much by the Jewish community as certainly it was 50 years ago when it was an athletic, social and resource center, Adelman still feels good

about the Jewish community's impact on the Center and the Center's place in the community.

"After many years of trying to do things for the (Jewish) community, we've let the Jewish programming fall to the Synagogue, Temple and Federation," Adelman said. "We've concentrated on being a community center, and it's something the Jewish people in the community are helping to support."

Adelman said talks are in the works to create a Jewish museum in the upstairs of the JMC. Sue Holzer is the chairperson.

"It would be a place where the whole community can go and learn about Judaism in the Altoona-Blair County area," Adelman said.

For information on how to join the JMC, or renew a membership, contact Cal Bragonier at 944-4072.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Feb 2** Michal Chorny Bat Mitzvah
Feb 3 Super Bowl Party
Feb 7 Film Festival
Feb 10 Family Film Festival 2-6pm
Feb 13 TBI Board Mtg
Feb 14 Film Festival
Feb 16 Brittany Thaler Bat Mitzvah
Feb 21 Film Festival
Feb 24 Hamentashen Baking - TBI
Young Judea Snow Tubing
Feb 24 Purim Carnival at JMC
Feb 25 TBI Purim Program
AAC Megillah Reading
Feb 26 Purim
Feb 28 Film Festival
Mar 13 TBI Board Mtg
AAC Board Mtg
Mar 27 TBI Seder - Calvin House
Mar 28-4 Pesach
April 7 YJ Chocolate Seder
April 9 Yom Hashoah
April 10 TBI Board Mtg
April 21 YJ Mtg after SS
April 27 Bar Mitzvah of Sean Allen

L'Chaim!

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Articles should be submitted to the Federation at 940-6001 or e-mailed to: AltFed@uplink.net

Suggestions and feedback are welcome.

PERSPECTIVE

United Jewish Communities share vision

By Reva Schulman

What a thrill it was to represent the Altoona Jewish community at the 70th annual General Assembly held in Washington D.C. on Nov. 11-15.

Despite a cautious fear, the Jewish community showed up at this year's United Jewish Communities General Assembly in impressive numbers. Over 3600 to be precise, of which one out of every five was a student. From the time the GA opened, it was non-stop — run, sit, run, and choice from over 160 different sessions, forums and workshops. This year, due to these unusual times in history, the GA not only showed our solidarity with Israel, but with America and with all Jews who fight for freedom worldwide.

Experts from the United States, Israel and Europe were on hand to share their knowledge and help us better understand pressing issues and priorities in the Jewish world.

These priorities, to help repair the world, to pursue justice, to take on the responsibility one for another have been reaffirmed. The pressing issues at this 70th assembly remained at the heart of all the sessions, from understanding and responding to the needs of the next generation to performing our duty to the elderly, from awakening Jewish identity in our local communities to sharing in the efforts of building and securing our Jewish homeland in Israel.

For three days, professionals from many different organizations, from ORT to Hadassah, and committed volunteers networked, attended meetings and sessions and stayed up late into the night discussing the future of our Jewish world.

United Jewish Communities represents and serves 189 Jewish federations and 400 independent communities across North America. Founded in 1999 to put forth a new model of community and philanthropy, United Jewish Communities promotes the tolerance, the understanding and the excitement that create vibrant communities of Jewish learning and growth.

Their blueprint: four pillars that work together, seamlessly and effectively, to raise money, open doors, foster growth and build confidence in the traditions that guide us and that give us, the Jewish people, our strength. The first of

the four pillars is the campaign/ financial resource development. It is the engine that drives the North American federation system. The UJA Federation Campaign, Planned Giving and Endowments, Supplement Giving and other financial streams are the world's preeminent fund raising vehicles. The human services and social policy enables the federation system to meet its mandate of tikkum olam by addressing human needs at local, state, national and international levels. It does this by working with relevant agencies and organizations to support federation efforts to house the homeless, heal the scars of abuse, lead the mentally ill back to wellness, provide health care and security for the frail elderly, and by strengthening communities. Israel / overseas is the instrument by which UJC reinforces the linkage between the North American federation system, Israel and the global Jewish community. This pillar educates, communicates, and advocates on behalf of Israel and Jews in the world.

Finally, the Jewish renaissance and renewal embraces a new vision of communities, built on Torah, Tzedakah and Chesed. It promotes programs that strengthen Jewish identity, embrace diversity and enhance North American Jewry's connection to Israel and other Jewish communities around the world.

At this year's GA, the Greater Altoona Jewish Federation was honored by being recognized with the Sapir Award for Campaign Excellence. We were one of three Network communities bestowed with this honor.

By the end of this fiscal year, the UJC Federation system through the UJA Federation campaign and the Planned Giving and Endowment efforts will again raise \$2 billion. We have raised over 900 million dollars in our annual campaign and 1 billion dollars in endowment giving.

In one phone conversation with Prime Minister Sharon, 24 families pledged 66 million dollars for the Israel Now Campaign. When the

February 7-28, 2002

Return! Film Festival III

The curtain is ready to go up on the Third Annual Altoona Jewish Federation Film Festival.

There are five scheduled dates, beginning Thursday, Feb. 7 and running four consecutive Thursdays. The films include "Hollywoodism: Jews, Movies and the American dream" (Feb. 7), "The Imported Bridegroom" (Feb. 14), "The Last Marranos," (Feb. 21) and "Fiddler on the Roof" (Feb. 28). As a bonus, on Sunday, Feb. 10, "The Frisco Kid," will air.

All the movies will be shown once again at Penn State's Downtown Conference Center. Each movie begins at 7:30 p.m., except for the Sunday showing, which starts at 2 p.m.

The Festival continues to be chaired by Michael Tomor, who is gratified at how well received it has become.

"I think the Film Festival has added another dimension to our cultural understanding here in the Altoona community," Tomor said. "It's geared for the entire community and its popularity and attendance have shown us there's an interest in this type of diversity."

Tomor said the 10 movies over the past two years have averaged about 135 people per show.

"Sometimes we've got 90 but sometimes we've been at 150," he said. Tomor thanked the Penn State Conference Center for donating its facility, in addition to Southern Alleghenies providing a venue to hold the catered dinner.

Tomor heads a committee that includes Rey Altberg, Ed and Adele Giller, Madeline and Jeff Greenberg, Barbara Hollander, Steve Kaplan, Bernice Levinson, Mildred Miller, Marilyn Muhlfelder, Mickey Port, Fay Schmitt, Reva Schulman, Doug and Sue Simon, Roz Sky and Bonnie and Len Zimmerman.

"A lot of people need to be thanked," Tomor said.

Students from Penn State Altoona as well as high schools connected through the Federation's Celebrate



Tevya and Fiddler on the Roof will be shown Feb. 28 as part of the annual Film Festival series.

Diversity program are also informed. Tomor said the selections of the movies are often in response to the previous year's choices.

"The first year we kind of went toward middle-of-the-road movies and the community then wanted something deeper," he said. "Most of last year's films had subtitles and this year it was decided we needed more community-oriented films so it's a good balance. Everything is a reaction and a counter-reaction."

Dinner at the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art in Altoona will precede the four Thursday showings. Dinner costs \$10 and reservations are required. Bus transportation will be provided from the Museum to the Conference Center, which is the former Playhouse Theater.

"We wanted to make it convenient," Tomor said.

Cost of the series is \$20 for adults and \$12 for senior citizens and students. Individual adult and senior citizen/student tickets are priced at \$5 and \$3.

Advance ticket sales can be purchased from *The Greater Altoona Jewish Federation*, 1216 11th Avenue, Suite 217, Altoona, PA 16601 or by calling 940-6001 or E-mailing: altfed@uplink.net.

Super Bowl party set for Feb 3 at Bellemead Inn

The third annual Jewish Federation Super Bowl party will be held Feb. 3 at the Bellemead Inn.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. with the kickoff set for 6:20 p.m. Cost is \$6 per adult and \$3 per children 10-and-over. Kids under 10 eat free. The party has become one of the big social events of the year.

The menu includes kosher hot dogs, sandwiches, salad, snacks and desert plus a cash bar. The Bellemead Inn, run by Boris and Danny Aryev, has a 55-inch TV screen and a great bar/lounge area for kids to enjoy a pool table and video games.

RSVP by Jan. 28 to Neil and Dianne Rudel at 695-8488 or scupe@aol.com

LA'CHAIM PROFILE: HENRY WEINBERG

'Jewish foundation began early'

Name: Henry C. Weinberg.

Address: 4917 Third Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602.

Family: Wife, Maxine; son Joel living in Boyds, MD with wife Amy and children, Jenna & Michael; son Marc living in Philadelphia with wife Lisa and children Sara & Max; daughter Ellen living in Media, PA.

Education: 1947 graduate of AAHS. Attended St. Francis College, Duquesne University Pharmacy School and the University of Pittsburgh.

Professional Experience: Owned with parents, The Colony Shop, an exclusive retail operation for children and junior clothing, in downtown Altoona and the Logan Valley Mall.

Congregation: Agudath Achim Synagogue.

I've been a contributor to the Federation Campaign since: 1958.

I have been to Israel: Maxine and I had the distinct pleasure of going to Israel with my boss, State Treasurer Barbara Hafer, in November of 1999, along with other co-workers from the State Treasury, executives from Israel Bonds, union leaders, and dignitaries from other states. This trip was to honor Barbara Hafer for her purchasing and investing to the tune of \$35 million of State monies in Israel Bonds and as one of the state treasurers of the United States who worked on the reclamation of assets from Swiss Banks for holocaust victims. I, along with my co-workers, interviewed holocaust survivors and their families thru out the State of Pennsylvania.

My first memories of being Jewish include: The celebration of holidays in my parent's home with our extended families, attending Synagogue, Hebrew School and Sunday School. My weekly schedule included going to Synagogue every day at a very young age until my Bar Mitzvah.

My strongest Jewish influences at an early age were: Henry R. Goldberger, who served as my Rabbi and teacher at Agudath Achim Synagogue along with my beloved parents, Esther and Jules. Benny Schulman was my youth leader and the Reverend Y.B. Henderson, who was the leader of the services.

The leaders in the Altoona Jewish community during my impressionable years were: My father and



Henry Weinberg, with wife Maxine, doesn't mind getting dressed up for a good party.

mother; my uncle, Abe Colbus; Frank Titleman; Phil Klevan; Eddie Henderson; Mike Devorris; Sam Port; Izzy Sky; Irv Bregman and Joe Cohen. Maxine, who came to Altoona from Baltimore, took her place in the community serving on many organizations as an officer or board member.

My most important contribution to our Jewish community has been: President of Agudath Achim Synagogue.

In our Jewish community, I am most proud of: My parents who served in many roles. My father was president of the synagogue at the same time my mother was president of the sisterhood. I am a past chairman of the Synagogue board, and currently serve as chairman of the Funeral/Cemetery committee. I have also served on the boards of the Greater Altoona Jewish Federation and Jewish Memorial Center.

In my perfect Jewish world: That my family knows of only good health, happiness and will always find peace in their daily lives.

My vision for our Jewish community includes: That as Jews, we will continue having a mutual bond of love and respect for one another, and that our lay leadership will continue to have an active role in the secular community as we are small in number but mighty in strength.

Sunday School continues to thrive

By Phyllis Thaler & Susan Katz

The Altoona Jewish Community Sunday School resumed on Sunday September 9, 2001 at Agudath Achim Synagogue.

The students and parents were greeted by the co-principals (Phyllis Thaler and Susan Katz) and both Rabbi Chorny and Rabbi Schuman. The entire group enjoyed an open house bagel nosh. The pattern was repeated Jan. 6 when Sunday School shifted to Temple Beth Israel, where it will remain for the remainder of this school year and the beginning of 2002-2003.

This year the school is fortunate enough to have many parents expressing an interest in working with the kids. The teachers for the 2001-02 school year are:

Kindergarten	Sandra Knepp
1st Grade	Carol Lipitz
2nd Grade	Bonnie Gordon
3rd Grade	Jack Schocker
4th Grade	Elliott Bilofsky
5th Grade	Aviva Chorny
6/7th Grades	Barry Allen/Andrew Katz
8/9th Grades	Neil Rudel

Each month we have been introducing a different Jewish Theme. Both Rabbi Chorny and Rabbi Schuman have worked with the children teaching and explaining the themes.

In September we learned about Teshuva (Repentance) and for October the theme has been Hoda'ah (To Give Thanks). School wide activities like this are helping us become a more connected group.

The Sunday School has enjoyed several holiday celebrations including Sukkah that overflowed with their enthusiasm and their decorations. They then piled into the Sukkah for a service.

During Simchat Torah the entire school learned about the loving and painstaking process involved in creating every Torah. The children then participated in a service while standing under several Talit.

The atmosphere on Sunday mornings is upbeat and energized. The first of several planned parallel education sessions, an interactive family learning experience for students and their parents, has taken place. We are



The Sunday School has held a parallel learning session with parents and their children for the past couple of years. Above, Larry and Terry Primack join son Alex while below Allison Cohen works with parents, Andrea and Michael.



simply thrilled with the level of parent interest and involvement. The parent led Holiday Committees have exciting things planned.

As always, parents and students are reminded — friendly reminder — to be on time.

Our Sunday School is a happening place, full of Jewish pride and learning.

FIRST-PERSON ACCOUNT

'I can definitely feel the tension'

(Editor's note: Leemor Dotan has spent the last five months in Israel. During her stay, she sent the following letter to her mother, Reva. It reflects the anxiety existing in Israel. Leemor has since returned to the United States.)

Hi Mom:

I woke up early this morning so I would have extra time to write to you before leaving for class, but I was interrupted by the morning news: another suicide bomber in Mammilla, a neighborhood outside the Old City and close to the center of town. I was not exactly surprised but extremely angry.

Thank G-d only a few people were lightly injured; however police suspect that the terrorist was on his way to carry out a more devastating mission. But, that is the job of a terrorist. Hamas, Islamic Jihad and many more groups are very honest with their work and unfortunately, too successful with their goals. They have a very specific agenda and the world must realize that passive negotiations and talks are not going to stop their operations.

These Extremists are not a civilized people looking for a compromise. However, Israelis are very strong people who will overcome this as they have overcome other devastations. The past 10 days has been very trying for everyone here. I can definitely feel a tension in the air and people are not in the best of spirits. A friend of mine was downtown last Saturday night at a nearby bar during the attack. I can tell just by talking to him, that he is still disturbed by what he experienced. I also notice that there are not as many people out.

Every morning when I walk to class, I always pass this coffee shop that is filled with people regardless of the weather. But this past week, the café has been empty and no one is sitting outside. Jerusalem is swarming with security as many cities in Israel are right now. We are all playing the waiting game. It's hard to tell what will happen next, but life does go on here. I still go to my ulpan downtown and do not hesitate to go to my office on Ben Yehuda where I am working at a Jerusalem based magazine. I continue to hang out with friends and family at restaurants and shops. But, I am trying to be more and more aware of my surroundings without putting any constraints on my daily activities.

One thing that does worry me is the perspective and attitudes of Jews in the Diaspora. While it is a miracle that the U.S. Government is supporting the actions that Israel is taking, I am concerned about how Jews in the states are feeling and what they are doing to show their support. I don't expect an immediate



Leemor Dotan spent the last five months in Israel.

surge in tourism here, but I feel there is so much more one can do, if they cannot physically come to Israel right now. It is so vital to support this country.

We have been fighting for this land for so long and now it's our responsibilities as Jews to cultivate, secure and preserve the rights of our people. Jews all around the world must proclaim their support verbally and financially. Economically the country has suffered badly. While tourism has taken a drastic plunge, many social services are also in dire need. A friend told me last night, that it is reassuring to see people like myself in Israel at this time.

It would be reassuring for me, to see more and more communities organizing speakers, programs, rallies and fundraisers to support our country now more than ever. Educating yourself, family and friends at this time is crucial. I worked at one of the largest Jewish Federation's in the United States for over three years and I know it can be difficult to explain to people why they should be supporting Israel. But the more you know about the history and reality of the situation, the easier it will be to strengthen your solidarity. It is very important to understand the situation here and be informed accurately.

I strongly recommend reading daily updates from Israeli newspapers or Jewish organizations off the Internet. The US media, especially CNN, does not even come close to expressing the reality of the situation and often distorts the truth.

I am always comparing the Israeli press with the news from the states, and it just doesn't compare. While, the situation in Israel is to be determined, I only hope that the Jewish community outside Israel continues to be as strong as the Israelis here who have endured so much pain and loss. I will continue to update you and talk to you soon!

**Love and miss you,
Leemor**

2001-02 Federation campaign tops \$195,000

The Greater Altoona Jewish Federation would like to take this opportunity to thank the following individuals for their contributions to the 2001-02 fund-raising campaign, which generated \$195,000. Our Federation builds community, provides comfort, and makes dreams come true. It's your connection to the Jew across the street and the Jew around the world. It's seamless and global. It's meaningful philanthropy, hands-on volunteerism and shared commitment from childhood to old age. You have given time and resources and for that, We thank you. *It's the one place that belongs to all of us.*

Women's Campaign

Gerry Antikol
Mitzi Bailinger
Susan Bauder
Kara Bilofsky
Mary Ann Bloom
Pat Campbell
Carol Cohn
Estelle Dembert
*Nancy Devorris
Beatrice Devorris
Colleen Devorris
Melinda Eckard
Mollie Evin
Ethel Fried
Sandra Getz
Eleanor Grossman
Jeanne Heinbaugh
Kathy Henderson
Tera Herman
Janet Lurie Housman
Anita Hurwitz
Sissy Kadane
Susan Katz
Ethel Kaufman
Maggie Kaufman
Vicki Sommer Kivitz
Betsy Kline
Ronna Lasser
Marion Lebendig
Betty Lenson
Shirley Levinson
Mildred Miller
Charlotte Morris
Marilyn Muhlfelder
Irene Newborn
*Shirley Pechter
Rita Pollack
*Mickey Port
Jeannette Rifkin
Tobi Rispoli
Helen Rosch
Fay Schmitt
Ida Schulman
Marcia Schulman
Reva Schulman
Sylvia Schulman
Amy Seltzer
Norma Sevel
Minnie Shapiro

Annette Shaw
Linda Shaw
Tina Sheetz
Pat Silverman
Susan Simon
Roz Sky
Genia Sommer
Phyllis Thaler
Andrea Thaler
Sandy Weber
Linda Weinberger
Ida Wolfberg
Bonnie Zimmerman
Ilissa Zimmerman
***Lion of Judah**

Men's Campaign

Elliot Bilofsky
Donald Devorris
Charles Schevker
Yale Schulman
Burt Schuman
Michael Seltzer
Steven Seltzer
Joseph Silverman
Louis Silverman
Douglas Simon
Phillip Sky
Louis Small
Robert Terdiman
Bruce Thaler
William Thaler
Michael Tomor
Ian Tucker
Joel Younger
Leonard Zimmerman
Jeffrey Rosch
Reynold Altberg
Hy Antikol
Morris Antikol
Jordan Bailinger
Abraham Bavar
Harry Benjamin
Paul Blender
Larry Bloom
David Brooks
Morley Cohn
Philip Devorris
Mitchell Devorris
Terry Goldstein

Edward Henderson
Robert Herman
Alfred Hurwitz
Robert Jubelirer
Melvin Kadane
Sam Kaplan
Philip Kardon
Rick Karp
Andrew Katz
Harry Kaufman
Alan Kivitz
Michael Kline
Michael Kranich, Sr.
Herbert Kusner
Byron Lasser
Benjamin Levine
Morris Levine
Robert Neidorff
Barry Newborn
Arthur Pollack
Neil Port
Benjamin Root

Family Campaign

The Halpern Family
The Arlick Family
The Belenitsky Family
The Gerald Bergstein Family
The David Bergstein Family
The Binus Family
The Black Family
The Blender Family
The Brett Family
The Breuer Family
The Brozgal Family
The Chorny Family
The Cohen Family
The Dolinger Family
The Edelman Family
The Fishbaine Family
The Getz Family
The Golant Family
The Goldstein Family
The Gordon Family
The Giller Family
The Greenwald Family
The Gurman Family
The Hand Family
The Hollander Family
The Holliday Family

The Holzer Family
The Kaplan Family
The Karp Family
The Lou Leopold Family
The Levin Family
The Levinson Family
The Lipitz Family
The Lurie Family
The Meisner Family
The Morris Family
The Paiken Family
The Parish Family
The Pielmeier Family
The Pimentel Family
The Josh Port Family
The Stephen Port Family
The Primack Family
The Rosenberg Family
The Rosenthal Family
The Rudel Family
The Savitz Family
The Sam Scheinberg Family
The Schmitt Family
The Schocker Family
The Shullman Family
The Phillip Singer Family
The Jerry Singer Family
The Sky Family
The Strobert Family
The Jon Thaler
The Wallen Family
The Wayne Family
The Weinberg Family
The Weiss Family

Organization's Campaign

Agudath Achim Sisterhood
Altoona Community Sunday School
Klatzkin Foundation
Lullaby Boutique
North American Communications
David & Sarah Sky Trust
Altoona Area Foundation
B'nai B'rith Scholarship
Ed & Julia Petsonk Endowment Fund
Samuel & Rose Port Philanthropic Fund
Neil & Mickey Port Foundation

La'Chaim News & Notes:

- Mazel tov to Dr. Jonathon and Dr. Barbara Thaler on the birth of son, Brett Ryan.
- Mazel tov to Dr. Josh and Leanne Port on the birth of son, Adam Stanley.
- Katy Patt, daughter of David & Betsy Patt, graduation from Kenyon College.
- Condolences to the family of Irene Wilkinson on the death of her son, Patrick.
- Welcome to Wendy Christie, our new Federation Administrative Assistant. Wendy's hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30-3:00.
- *(Editor's note: Beginning with the next La'Chaim, this will be an expanded feature. Please send your family's news and notes to altfed@uplink.net.)*



*The Greater Altoona Jewish Federation
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