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the only student-run jewish newspaper in the country

From our family to yours



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photo illustration by Jackie Jakob

Rahmbo takes on the White House Birthright to cut budget, trips

BY BEN CAVATARO
SHPiEL staff writer

U.S. Rep. Rahm Emanuel could be the main character in a movie. If that movie involved a relentless former ballet dancer who nearly died from a toe infection, mailed a dead fish to a political adversary, stabbed knives into tables at meetings with other political staffers and brought discipline to a chaotic Democratic congressional campaign operation.

Emanuel has been lauded—and feared—for his aggressive political instincts. A former advisor to President Clinton, he was one of the first people tapped by Barack Obama after his election. The president-elect recently chose Emanuel, a fellow Chicagoan, to be his White House chief of staff.

Newsweek called Emanuel "explosive,

profane, wired and ruthless." CNN called him "a pitbull politician, killer strategist and nonstop fundraiser." Emanuel, 49, is known even to his own mother as "Rahmbo."

Sharp upbringing

A Chicago native and son of a Jerusalem-born pediatrician and union organizer, Emanuel grew up with his two brothers: Ari Emanuel, who became a Hollywood superagent and the inspiration for the hyperactive Ari Gold on HBO's *Entourage*, and Dr. Ezekiel "Zeke" Emanuel, a bioethicist at the National Institute of Health who received his Ph.D. and M.D. from Harvard.

The brothers told Charlie Rose earlier this year that dinner at the Emanuel

SEE EMANUEL, PAGE 5

BY LANA SELIGSOHN
SHPiEL staff writer

Each winter and summer, thousands of young American Jews, ages 18-26 - mostly American college students - take part in a free 10-day trip to Israel sponsored by Taglit-Birthright Israel. Funded by the Israeli government, local Jewish federations and private donors, about 190,000 people from 52 countries have been sent to Israel by the program.

But the world financial crisis and the recent announcement by a critical donor that he will reduce his funding for the program will leave Birthright with a budget shortfall in 2009. Representatives from the program are saying it will need to decrease the number of students it accepts for trips by more than a third.

Rising costs of travel, a decrease in donor funding and the decline in the value of the dollar have hit non-profits hard, sponsors said. Jay Golan, Birthright president and CEO, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that Birthright plans to cut its budget to \$75 million from \$110 million and its participants from 42,000 in 2008 to 25,000 in the coming year.

Birthright's largest private donor has already announced plans to cut back.

Property developer and casino magnate Sheldon Adelson - listed in the September issue of *Forbes* magazine as the 15th richest American, with a net worth of \$15 billion - has reduced his financial pledge to Birthright. Adelson's company, Las Vegas Sands Corporation, has spent a year teetering on the edge

SEE BIRTHRIGHT, PAGE 2

{Shorts & Briefs}

BY BEN CAVATARO

{Mumbai terrorist attack kills nearly 200, leaves Chabad rabbi and wife dead}

A three-day terrorist attack on multiple locations in the Indian city of Mumbai - the country's most populous city and financial capital - left nearly 200 dead and hundreds injured. Using AK-47s, explosives and grenades, a team of Islamic militants attacked a busy train station, a famous restaurant, two luxury hotels, the city police headquarters and a movie theatre, as well as a Chabad house.

At the five-story Nariman House in south Mumbai, terrorists killed Chabad rabbi Gavriel Noach Holtzberg, 29, a Brooklyn native, and his Israeli-born wife Rivka, 28, and seven others, all Jews. The Holtzbergs' 2-year-old son escaped with his nanny, 44-year-old Sandra Samuel, who also worked as a cook for the Jewish outreach center.

A young group of 10 to 25 attackers shot randomly into crowds at targeted sites, searching for Westerners - especially Americans and Britons - to kill. Hostages were held at the historic Taj Mahal Palace & Tower hotel. Only after Indian commandos stormed the building and killed several terrorists did the three-day standoff end.

Responsibility for the attacks remains unclear. The group Deccan Mujahideen has claimed responsibility, and the Kashmir-based Lashkar-e-Toiba is suspected of playing a role. Indian officials also accuse the Pakistani government - and particularly its shadowy Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency - of playing a role in the attack. Investigators are questioning one captured terrorist.

{White House sends out Hanukkah cards with Christmas trees}

The White House has apologized and cited a mix-up relating to official invitations to a Hanukkah reception that included a picture of a Christmas tree. The invitations - mailed to Jewish leaders across the country - showed a Clydesdale horse-drawn cart with a Christmas tree in front of a wreathed and snowy White House and stated that President Bush and the First Lady "request the pleasure of your company at a Chanukah reception."

Press Secretary Sally McDonough apologized for a "staff mistake" and said that the intended invitations had an image of a menorah given to the White House during the Truman administration. The invitation mix-up was something that "fell through the cracks," McDonough told UPI.

One recipient of the invitation, Isaac Abraham of Brooklyn, joked to the New York Post: "It's obvious what's going on here: The Christmas tree is being taken out of the White House and the menorah is being brought in the back."

major Birthright donor large cause for cuts

BIRTHRIGHT, FROM PAGE 1

of bankruptcy. The personal fortune of Adelson, the son of Ukrainian and Lithuanian Jewish immigrants, has also declined. In March, he was listed by Forbes as the world's 12th richest person, with a net worth of \$26 billion, and Boston Globe financial columnist Steven Syre named Adelson among the year's biggest financial losers.

Adelson, a major contributor to Jewish causes as well as Republican candidates and groups, announced that he was reducing his expected donations to Birthright to \$20 million dollars in 2009 and then \$10 million in 2010, a sharp contrast from the \$70 million he has contributed over the past two years.

The Jewish Daily Forward reported that trips cost around \$3,000 per participant, "meaning that unless the organization raises other funds, it will lose the ability to fund more than 3,300 trips in 2009, and nearly 6,700 trips in 2010."

The news isn't all bad for Birthright. The Jewish Agency for Israel's board of governors recently decided not to adopt a proposal to cut its Birthright allocation by \$1 million, and Birthright sponsors plan to aggressively seek other sources of funding.

"A number of funding sources agree that Taglit-Birthright Israel must become a national priority for Jewish life and are eager to make that happen



Property developer and casino magnate, Sheldon Adelson

so that wait-lists for trips do not have to build," said Birthright president and CEO Golan.

Founded in 2000, Birthright's eight-year history may help it weather the economic downturn.

"This financial crisis comes at a time when Taglit-Birthright Israel has established itself as a proven winner in the community that has made a concrete difference in the lifelong Jewish identity of those who go on the trip and those who do not," said the spokesperson for Taglit-Birthright Israel.

Answers to Last Issue's Crossword Puzzle

H	E	A	T	S	P	E	N	T	S	T	A		
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Hanukkah vs. Christmas

BY JACKIE AZIS
SHPIEL staff writer

To help spread peace on earth and goodwill toward men, this year The SHPIEL has put together a head-to-head competition between two upcoming winter holidays: the Festival of Lights and the birth of Christ.

Let's begin with Christmas. A quick glimpse at the TV Guide channel during the holidays reveals that when it comes to holiday movies, Christmas takes the prize. There's "The Nightmare Before Christmas," the "Home Alone" and "Grinch" series, "Bad Santa" and a mushy-favorite, "Love Actually." Even "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation" is good. Meanwhile, those of us looking for Hanukkah movies get a choice between standard Sandler ("Eight Crazy Nights") and "Rugrats Chanukah." This one is hardly a competition.

But the best thing about Christmas is the decorations: Trees covered with ornaments, cords of lights, stockings, snowglobes, poinsettias and that superior decoration piece that makes Christmas the giving season it is, the

mistletoe.

I don't know how or why the tradition of kissing under a poisonous plant began, but any holiday that encourages laying a big, wet kiss on the one you love is acceptable in my book.

There are a few downsides to the Christmas holiday as well. The cheesy tunes make me dread the radio in December.

We are forced to listen to the story of magical Frosty and red-nose bigotry victim Rudolph as we shop and get our hair cut—and even at home if carolers make the rounds. Hearing "The Twelve Days of Christmas" every day from Black Friday to New Year's is as painful as eating an entire fruit cake. Heard of "Silent Night?" Let's try silent Christmas songs.

Christmas-lovers, I have one plea for you. For the love of God, get rid of the horrid Christmas sweaters. These knit nightmares are a huge downfall for the holiday.

Nobody is impressed that your favorite aunt knitted it for you or that it has real bells hanging from the sleeves. Next time you're roasting chestnuts on

an open fire, throw in the stuffy, knitted red sweaters.

These wearable monuments to tackiness are immortalized on the Web at uglychristmassweaterparty.com, where—if you must—you can purchase your own nausea-inducing winter wear. The site features advertisements for each piece reading "Does it get any uglier?" and "Wow, you would look awful in this!"

What about Hanukkah? I find it lacking in both the movie and decoration departments. Once you bring out the *menorah*, your decorating is pretty much complete. Not a lot of room for creativity here—but at least clean-up is almost effortless.

As for the gift-giving aspect, Hanukkah is by far the more tortuous and annoying of holidays.

With Christmas, gifts come one right after the other all morning long (and you get a whole stocking stuffed with candy).

Hanukkah, on the other hand, forces eight nights of patience and slow frustration.

As a lover of fried foods, I look forward to Hanukkah for the *latkes* and *sufganiyot*. Any holiday that promotes cholesterol and sugar intake is good for me. And who doesn't love chocolate gelt?

Sure, candy canes are nice and pepperminty, but the existence of fruitcake discredits Christmas from winning on food.

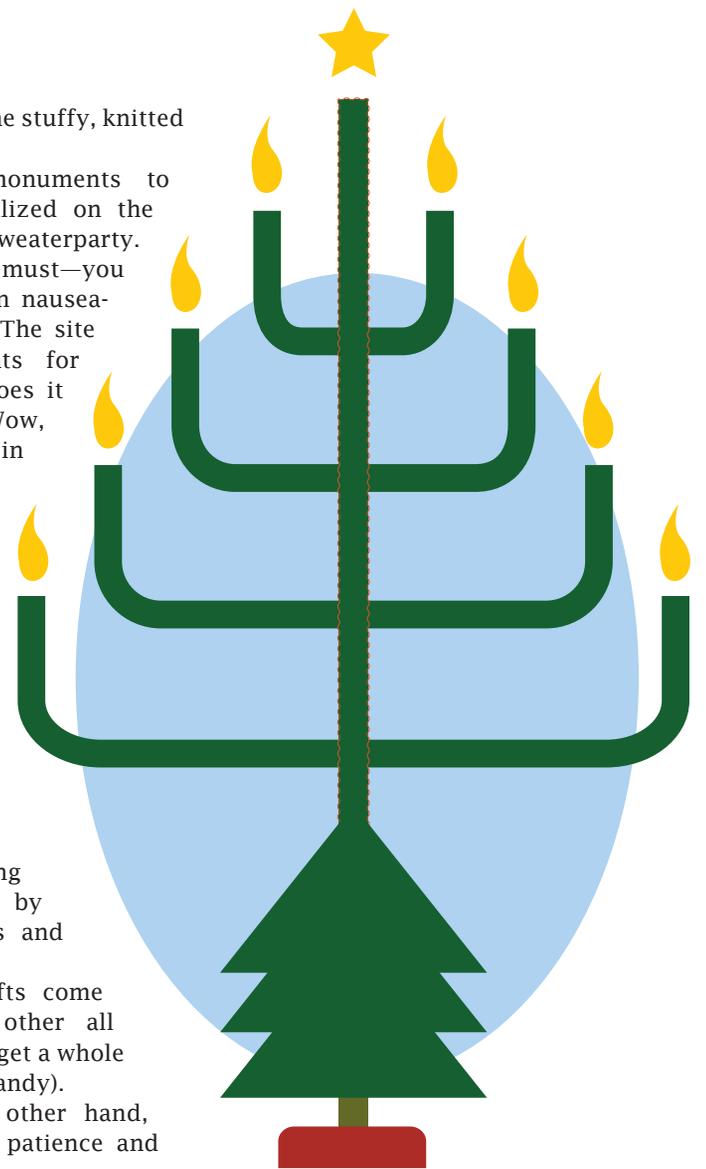
Hanukkah wins in the observance department as well. Christmas is sometimes celebrated at a midnight service, so by the time you get home, prepare Santa and his reindeer some cookies and carrots, write him a nice letter and then fall asleep, the next thing you know your little sibling or restless father is waking you up, begging for it to be time to open the presents.

Christmas, essentially, equals no sleep.

But Hanukkah comes at a much more convenient time—after sunrise, but before I go to bed. No staying up until midnight and no extra-early wake-up required.

The mere fact that there are eight fun nights of celebration for Hanukkah versus only one very early morning for Christmas makes this an easy decision for me.

Hey, I like my crazy family. Eight nights of insanity? Sign me up!



The WRAP-UP

Points for Hanukkah

- Greasier
- Geltier
- More miraculous
- More nights of presents
- More nights of thinking about why you didn't receive presents and learning from your mistakes
- No time spent in church
- No shitty sweaters

Points for Christmas

- A wider variety of seasonal movies to watch so you can avoid talking to that creepy uncle you only see once a year and/or when he's out on bail
- More opportunity to do your part in increasing light pollution
- More choices for gift-wrapping
- Eggnog
- "The Nutcracker"
- Stockings

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Ask Esther: Answers to all your kosher culinary questions

BY ELAINE WILSON

Hanukkah Dishes

Due to kosher time constraints and my sincere love for unbroken multi-course holiday meals, the Hanukkah lineup in this issue avoids meat and dairy conflicts by using a culinary compromise: vegetarian options. Besides, why make yourself wait at least three hours before satiating your sweet tooth?

Begin with a classic recipe that Irish Catholics like me as well as Jews enjoy: the potato pancake. Known as *boxty* to the Irish and *latkes* to Jews, these are a wonderfully simple dish that, in many ways, can act as a blank tablet.

Take those potato templates and build them up with delicious ingredients.

The December issue of Bon Appetit presents three variations on latkes, but it's the Rösti-style potato latkes with rosemary and brown butter applesauce

that made me salivate (Rösti are a type of large potato pancake that hails from Switzerland).

The ingredients are fairly basic, so to make these latkes, you won't need to empty your wallet.

Don't let your latkes get lonely. Sephardic spinach patties listed at epicurious.com (bookmark this site!) are not a traditional Hanukkah dish but will please even your carnivorous friends.

Hinting at Mediterranean origins, this recipe resembles *spanakopita* in its content (Greek spinach pie). Like the latkes, these croquettes are versatile and can incorporate cheese, walnuts or even wine-soaked grapes for an Italian edge. As a vegetable dish, you'll save more room for what really matters: dessert.

Sufganiyot (Israeli jelly doughnuts)

are rich and heavy enough to provide the post-holiday meal fullness that begs you to leave the dishes for tomorrow and fall asleep on the couch.

If you're like me, jelly goes best alongside peanut butter, so try substituting something else to your liking as a filling—maybe chocolate.

An even simpler option is to forego any fillings and just eat the doughnut rolled in sugar. A recipe) at epicurious.com) reproduced from Joan Nathan's Children's Jewish Holiday Kitchen shows how to create your own dough.

While dough made from scratch is often the most delicious avenue, students pressed for time or with limited experience working with yeast may find it daunting. Purchasing



photo courtesy of foodonthefood.com

plain biscuit dough (the prepackaged kind that comes in refrigerated tubes) may be easier. While less glamorous, biscuit dough fried in oil and rolled in sugar makes a delicious doughnut with significantly less hassle.

Email your kosher cuisine questions to elaine@theshpiel.org.

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Obama picks political pirate Emanuel to help navigate

EMANUEL, FROM PAGE 1

house was “competitive.” They called it a “brawl, with yelling and screaming, but with love.”

As a high school student, Emanuel worked at an Arby’s fast-food restaurant, slicing his right middle finger in an accident. Avoiding the hospital, Emanuel went to his high school prom and swam in Lake Michigan the following day. As a result, the wound became infected and Emanuel nearly died. His finger was later partially amputated.

A talented dancer, Emanuel was offered a scholarship to train with the Joffrey Ballet, but instead enrolled in Sarah Lawrence College, where he graduated in 1981.

Rise to fame

After college, Emanuel worked for U.S. Sen. Paul Simon, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in 1988 and for Chicago mayor Richard M. Daley. In 1991, Emanuel joined another young Democrat, Bill Clinton, the then governor of Arkansas and a presidential primary candidate.

The night after Clinton’s election, Emanuel stood at a celebratory dinner with other Clinton operatives nearby, seized a steak knife, “rattling off a list of betrayers, shouting “Dead! Dead! Dead!” and plunging the knife into the table after every name.”

The table “looked like a lunar landscape,” one witness told Rolling Stone’s Joshua Green. “It was like something out of ‘The Godfather.’ But that’s Rahm for you.”

The Emanuel stories are legendary. He sends out cheesecakes from Eli’s Bakery

in Chicago to campaign contributors, but he also once sent a dead fish to a pollster who had angered him. As a White House aide, he briefed Tony Blair before he made a joint appearance with Clinton during the 1998 Lewinsky scandal. “This is important,” Emanuel told the British Prime Minister, “Don’t fuck it up.”

On the offense

Leaving the White House in 1998, Emanuel headed to Wall Street. Planning on a future run for Congress, he knew he would need money. Working with prominent Democratic financier Bruce Wasserstein, Emanuel emerged with more than \$18 million—enough to launch his successful campaign for a Chicago-area House district in 2002. He easily dispatched his Republican opponent.

In the House, as he had before, Emanuel relished in the attack—something reflected in his language. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is said to have quipped that the economic stimulus plan could be paid for if “we put a quarter in a jar every time Rahm uses a swear word.” And an unaired Saturday Night Live sketch featuring Andy Samberg depicts Emanuel hurling obscenities at House Republican Leader John Boehner and others.

An observant Jew, Emanuel sought and received a special dispensation from his rabbi to continue negotiating the \$700 billion bailout plan through Rosh Hashanah.

As the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee chair, Emanuel terrified Republicans (Obama joked that “Jews celebrate Passover recalling the day the Angel of Death passed over their homes in ancient Egypt. Today Republicans celebrate when Rahm



passes over their district”).

Emanuel also ended the practice of doling out money to Democratic candidates freely, instituting a system in which candidates in swing districts would have to sign “memos of understanding” detailing the number of fundraising calls and appearances made. Emanuel’s tactics put him in conflict with other Democrats—especially Democratic National Committee chair Howard Dean. But Emanuel was largely credited with the Democrats’ 31-seat pickup in 2006.

During the 2008 primaries, Emanuel – a longtime Clinton ally, but an Illinoisan like Obama and a personal friend of Obama chief strategist David Axelrod – declined to endorse any candidate.

Still, less than three days after Obama won the election in November, he was offered and accepted the White House chief-of-staff position.

“They are obviously setting up a good cop/bad cop routine in the White House,” said David Gergen of CNN. “Barack Obama can be the good guy.”

RAHM FACTS

- Bradley Whitford’s character Josh Lyman on “The West Wing” is based on Emanuel, and Jeremy Piven’s character’s brother Ari Gold on Entourage is based on Ari Emanuel, Rahm’s brother.
- Emmanuel’s mother was an X-ray technician, rock club owner and civil rights activist who took her three sons to protests. Today, she is a social worker.
- He met his wife Amy Rule on a blind date, and she converted to modern Orthodox Judaism before they married. They have three children: Zacharias, Ilana, and Leah.
- Emmanuel reportedly has referred to Washington as “Fucknutsville,” and Republican members of Congress as “knucklefucks.”
- Admirers have set up RahmFacts.com, billed as “awesome as Chuck Norris Facts — except 100% true!”
- When Dick Cheney suggested that the vice presidency was not part of the executive branch, Emmanuel suggested cutting off the \$4.8 million the Vice President’s Office receives.

RAHM QUOTES

- “You should have messed around with a goyish girl and gotten a Jewish lawyer.” (to President Clinton)
- “There’s no safe Republican district. You can run, but you cannot hide.”

Arabic dialogue takes on a young Jewish face

BY ANKITA RAO
SHPIEL staff writer

It’s the poetic language of Rumi and Hafiz—the elegant script that defines the Koran and Islamic tradition. Now, Arabic is soaking through universities across America, making its mark on resumes and notebooks.

University of Florida visiting lecturer and adviser for Arabic Esameddin Alhadi cites the 9/11 attacks as a turning point for Arabic studies.

“The numbers have doubled I think six times since September 11,” he said. “People became more interested in Arabic culture, trends and society.”

UF caters to the growing demand with classes in beginning, intermediate and advanced Arabic. Students can also study Arabic culture, focusing on business communication, politics and religion.

For Jewish students, the language creates an intercultural dialogue that

could be a vital asset in different industries.

“These two cultures live together,” Alhadi said of Jewish and Muslim populations. “There are two languages, and people need to learn both of them.”

He wasn’t sure about the number of Jewish students enrolled in the course, but he said the number correlated to the overall rise in students choosing to learn Arabic.

Journalism major and Arabic studies minor Dayna Malek, 19, was surprised to find how similar the language was to Hebrew, which she learned while growing up in Israel.

“I always like the reaction I get when I tell people I’m learning Arabic,” Malek said. Her family was hesitant when she first told them, but she said she thinks it is a valuable skill.

She hopes Arabic will help support her career plans with the United States Foreign Service, a branch of the

Department of State that sends diplomats abroad.

Alhadi said knowing Arabic makes students marketable because they can work in intelligence and business fields and also better understand the Middle Eastern culture.

“Arabic culture and Arabic history have been stereotyped for so long. We spend the first week [in class] finding out what students think about it,” he said.

Because the language differs in each country, UF teaches a standard type of formal Arabic like the one spoken in Egypt.

Because Alhadi is from Sudan, he said the standard Arabic helps him to communicate with people no matter where he goes. Even if people don’t understand the colloquial Arabic,

everyone can speak the Egyptian dialect.

Students learning Arabic often study abroad in Morocco or Egypt, Alhadi said. They see that the language is spoken in the streets and applies to both culture and religion.

Malek practices by listening to BBC broadcasts in Arabic, but she would also like to go to Morocco to immerse herself in the culture.

“The minute I start speaking Arabic I go to a different place in my mind,” she



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You probably will not understand

A review of The Klez Dispensers' new album *Say You'll Understand*

BY DOUGLAS SHARF
SHPiEL staff writer

Disclaimer: This writer happens to like klezmer way more than the average college student.

That being said, this isn't your Bubbe Pearl's klezmer album. Though, it might actually be, given the amount of Yiddish lyrics pervading this klezmer-jazz fusion odyssey.

A New Jersey-based band, The Klez Dispensers recently released their third studio effort, "Say You'll Understand," which boasts 13 tracks that all range in Yiddish to English ratios and klezmer to jazz ratios. The diversity of the band's eight members brings these varying cultural points together smoothly and skillfully.

Alex Kontorovich is a Russian-born saxophonist-slash-clarinetist. Susan Watts Hoffman is a Ukrainian trumpet legacy. Heather Chricaden-Versace received her Bachelor of Music degree in double bass performance from Washington State. Well, you get the idea.

The real beauty behind "Say You'll Understand" is it is not solely klezmer

and not solely some form of jazz, but at any point in the album, one of those genres is detectable. It stays true to itself without straying too far from its roots, and it keeps from straying too far while still taking risks.

Pushing play on track one, "Papirosn," results in a crash of Latin jazz. For 10 seconds, you hear the voice of Mr. Mariachi, but he's soon replaced by the smooth, folky pipes of Susan Watts, who has a perfect grasp on the stylized manner in which trope-y Yiddish music is sung. The harmonious marriages of different types of music like this one are found in most of the tracks, which only keeps your ears' attention throughout the entire album. The final song, "Bay Mir Bitsu Sheyn," has a sound that pays homage to the heart wrenchingly beautiful cries of Ella Fitzgerald but with the riffing of a cantor (dare I say Ellen Gerald-Fitz?).

One problem that an album of this ilk runs into is an automatically narrow target audience. It's impossible to write a record consisting of mostly Yiddish and not have it sound "Jewy." The Klez Dispensers surely understand that, however, and are satisfied to know that



the record still appeals to aficionados of folk, klezmer and all jazz stylings. But be forewarned: despite fusing the klezmer segments with other genres, this album still sounds Jewy.

Recording almost entirely in a dying language that only a minute fraction of listeners will understand implies the lyrics are probably not the band's focus. The message is in the notes and the klezmer tradition of lesser-used scales like the Ukrainian Dorian and the Harmonic Minor. Layering these rare

scales with other music makes the band special.

"We're trying to get musical beauty expressed in a variety of different musical languages," explained the band's pianist, Australian Adrian Banner, in an interview with NJ.com.

If that is their mission statement, they are accomplished.

Say You'll Understand is available now at www.klezdispensers.com and at the iTunes music store.

AND YOU SHALL KNOW US BY THE TRAIL OF OUR VINYL

BY ELAINE WILSON
SHPiEL staff writer

Jewish culture has a rich history that now comes with an accompanying soundtrack.

Jewish-American musicians have made a large impact on the music industry throughout the years, and authors Roger Bennett and Josh Kun have been unearthing as many tattered, long-forgotten LPs as they can find to tell the story of Jewish musical greats who played between 1940 and the 1980s.

The project began eight years ago, and now Bennett and Kun are releasing the fruit of their labors, "And You Shall Know Us by the Trail of Our Vinyl," a book chronicling "The Jewish Past as Told by the Records We Have Loved and Lost."

The writers' accompanying blog with the same name functions as a continuation of the historic musical search through garage sales and attics, branching off to include links to specific songs and YouTube videos and more interactive media to unearth not only the titles, but the sound.

Cultural intersection comes with the territory of Jewish-American musical history. Bennett and Kun posted pictures and stories from a meeting with "Israeli song bird" Hannah Ahroni, but also a video file that was a strange sight to

behold, the Israeli woman singing a song about Spain in the German language for a German television show.

Another post examines the influence of Jewish music within the black community and vice versa. Bennett and Kun not only allude to Billie Holiday's cover of "My Yiddishe Momme" but also include video of "Hava Nagilah" as the melody behind a song condemning civil rights abuses.

One mysterious LP began a search that spread beyond music and into the psyche. A vinyl album featuring an unheard-of artist by the name of Lou Mason caused "Trail of Our Vinyl" authors to feverishly search the Internet for more information, but to no avail.

They have learned since that Lou Mason was a comedian and musician from New York, but the discoveries made while in pursuit of Mason's identity make compelling food for thought.

Scouring the Internet for traces of Mason, Bennett and Kun stumbled across an issue of Time magazine from 1978 featuring an article about the large number of Jewish comedians.

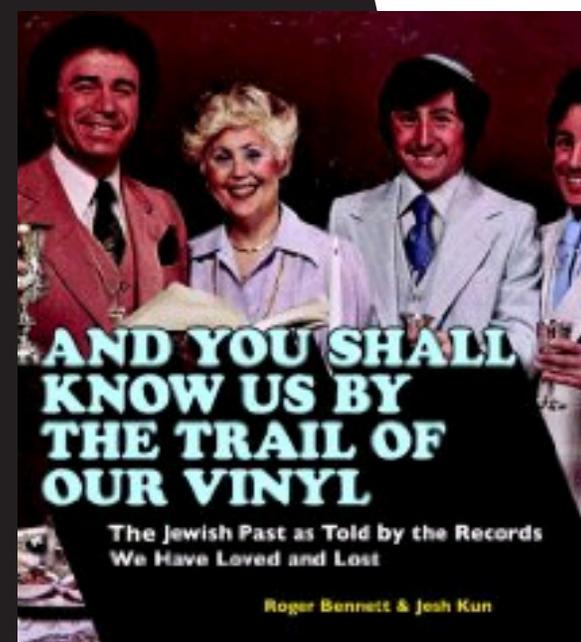
Psychiatrist Samuel Janus links their Jewish identity to their successes with stand-up routines, arguing, "Jewish humor is born of depression and alienation from the general culture."

The blog also introduces a group known

as the Israeli Simon and Garfunkel, The Paravim, which means "the suburbs." The Middle Eastern musicians not only resemble their American folk musician counterparts by simply being a duo playing folk tunes, but they have even created Hebrew covers of Simon and Garfunkel hits.

According to Bennett and Kun, folk music was a logical choice for 1970s Israeli musicians, "partially because the genre's love of flowery lyrics gave Israeli poets permission to let themselves loose ideologically," and also to some degree because electric guitars were a rarity in the young nation.

Listen to Hebrew covers of Simon and Garfunkel's "America" or "El Condor Pasa" on the blog Web site: <http://trailofourvinylbook.blogspot.com/>



You'll never see your friends again, you'll never see your friends again

BY DAN FEDER
AND ZAHARA ZAHAV
SHPIEL staff writers

Every spring, the aspiring and motivated among us look to resume-padding internships, jobs and study abroad programs that send them away from the confines of Gainesville.

For those of us who can't plan ahead to the next week and will cry ourselves to sleep from boredom through the coming semester, here is The SHPIEL's guide to surviving for five months without our nearest and dearest.

Losing a boyfriend or girlfriend or both:

- Get a webcam so that you can set up video-chat dates with your significant other, even though they don't show up at the designated time because they are doing things much more interesting than talking to you because they are so important and can't make time for uncultured, backwater philistines like you.
- Make sure to get numerous photos of yourself up-close-and-personally displayed on Facebook with any random attractive guy or girl you can convince to be in on your jealousy-inducing plan.
- Fill any empty hours (like the ones most people sleep during) with keeping up on every photo, note or comment on the wall of that dolt with whom you're In a Relationship.
- Give homosexuality a try. Or heterosexuality.

Losing a roommate:

- Make the place your own. If you're gonna mope, do it naked. Definitely rub as many body parts as possible on everything your overly motivated roommate couldn't fit in his or her suitcase.
- Throw a dinner for all your new, better friends using every scrap of food your treacherous roommate left behind.
- While that backstabbing co-leaser is strutting the streets of Seville, convert their abandoned abode into a room that better suits your present needs.
 - Ball pit (snakes optional)
 - walk-in freezer
 - planetarium

Losing your best friend:

- Start convincing yourself that the random acquaintance who you always see at parties is your real best friend and you're only now noticing.
- Put a post on Craigslist.
- Play Tetris with the furniture in your room.
- Buy piles of understanding, sympathetic stuffed animals who will never tire of hearing about how your day went.
- Cryogenically freeze yourself for five months.

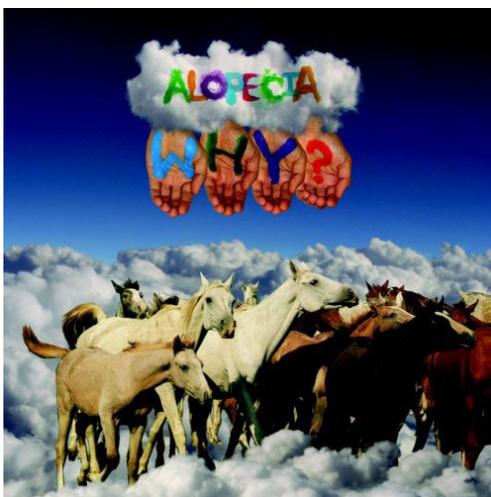
If all else fails, you could volunteer for your local Jewish college paper. Seriously, all our friends are leaving and we need some company.

Rhyming-rapping-indie-hip-hop-psychedelia. "Why?" It sounds good.

BY ANDREW FORD
SHPIEL staff writer

Yoni Wolf taught himself to play music. In 1997, he and several friends formed the independent record label "anticon." The label largely produces artsy hip-hop. The influence of rhythm-driven lyrics is clearly apparent in the work of his latest musical project "Why?"

The scansion of the band's lyrics is mirrored in the accompanying instrumentals. The leading melody is written in a repeating, rhythmic fashion (U2 uses this style greatly). Background instruments make use of arpeggiated chords for a similar effect. There is a slight New Wave flavor in their sound that comes mostly from their use of synth instruments and vocal distortions. This layer of sound adds the psychedelic touch that sets Why? apart from other bands while easing the smash of their two primary influences.



Hip-hop, indie fusion is an original move. Why? does an excellent job of falling squarely between the two genres, likely to please fans of either. They meet the production values of hot hip-hoppers like Danger Mouse while remaining true to the indie values forged with anticon.

The real beauty of the band Why? is the way they carefully occupy a space between indie and mainstream. They are musically talented and original enough to please indie purists while not being too weird for the above-average pop fan.

When asked about the meaning of the name of the band Yoni Wolf replies, "When I was younger, I did graffiti and 'why' was a favorite word of mine."

The interview continued.

The SHPIEL: Your latest album is titled "Alopecia". What is the significance of that?

Wolf: That's the term for when hair follicles stop producing hair.

TS: Right. Baldness. Why did you choose that for the title of the album?

W: It's really a personal metaphor

TS: What would you say is the message of your work?

W: We're trying to be honest, to make something true. We're trying to communicate with the audience.

TS: What role does religion play in your lives and music?

W: I'm not religious. I grew up religious, and it has affected my writing. My vernacular can be biblical.



TS: "What is your preferred method of creating music?"

W: "We're planners, not jammers...I don't write sheet music, but we do plan things and record demos of arrangements before recording the real ones."

While Why? produces solid music, there is much to be desired.

Their lyrics are largely abstract, absurd and disconnected. The band seems to desire some form of offbeat, philosophical significance, but they come up short. At least for now.

There is potential for the band to grow; they have some great material. To sum it up, Why? is worth paying to see. Watching to see where they go in the future is even more valuable.

Welcome Back, Khader: Terroristology

KHADER ABU EL-HAIJA



staff writer

The terrorist bombings in Mumbai this week have shifted the news headlines to India, leaving the global financial crisis, along with the Middle East and other hot spots, as seconds and thirds in media helpings. These bombings sum up many parts of the problem going on in this complicated world.

No one knows for certain who is responsible yet, but most do not condone this brutal attack on innocent people. The results of these atrocities in Mumbai, a financial center in India, are still unknown, but they will surely be negative since economic success demands security first.

Why did this happen? I have no tolerance for any terrorist act: killing innocents is wrong. Period.

But, I am trying to see why this craziness emerged. Sometimes it is

very difficult to try to reach a mature plan to counter terrorism, since any attempt to “understand” the lunatic process can be easily labeled as being sympathetic to criminals. Right-wing extremists especially believe this. If we really want to counter terrorism, we should know with whom we are dealing. Terrorists terrorize for different reasons just as criminals commit crimes for different reasons. An oversimplification of the causes will only lead to more ignorance and a prolonged suffering of innocent victims in every coming attack.

For example, poverty can be a reason for crime to emerge. It is not the reason for all crime, but it does boost crime rates. Fighting poverty is not about listening to the demands of criminals. It is an act against the disasters of poverty. Also, it will prevent potential criminals from entering a vicious cycle of both crime and poverty. The poverty-driven criminals will end up again needing external assistance to help them, but this time it will be much more complicated.

The strongest option against terrorism is simple: spread the justice around. It is so simple to say, but in our current world, it is very challenging to do. This is the most logical option against the illogical terrorist mentality. There is no complete solution, as there is none against crime. But some solutions are more effective than others. The gun should be a tool on the table, but not the only one. Social justice and economic development must be at the core of the operations against terror.

The Middle East can learn from the recent events in Mumbai. The tensions in the Gaza strip due to the Israeli siege are unbearable for the little kids and the old men and women, especially among the ill. More than a million people there are suffering from the effects of a horrible economy. I am wondering if this siege will actually counter the killing of innocent civilians in Israel, or if it will construct terrorist-plantation-camps by increasing the misery and fear of people living under such conditions.

Terrorism is a crime and should be countered in the same way as other major crimes. Criminology helps society to counter crime by understanding it and fighting it through laws and orders. We should work to eliminate the causes of terrorism before we are forced to deal with consequences. It is never, ever, a justified crime. In the same sense, I would love to see politicians conducting the fight against terrorism in a mature and academic way. Criminology helps against crime. “Terroristology” will help against terrorism.

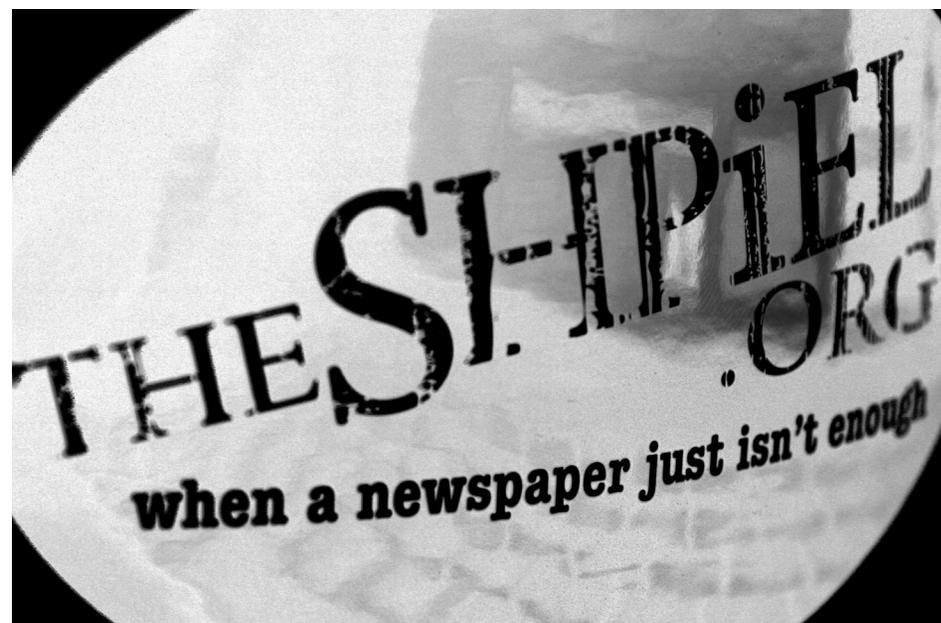
Some politicians think it is so cool if they wait for criminals to do the crime, then they bust them afterwards, so they can look as heroes of “victory.” I think it’s better if you help potential criminals before it is too late. If it is not so cool for political gain, then at least it’s cool enough when you have to answer to your own conscience.

Questions? Comments? Contact Khader at khader.abuelhaija@gmail.com

Harpergoldsteinblatt's Index

Number of sealed jars of kosher olive oil available for rededication of the Temple:	1
Current price of a barrel of oil in US dollars:	54
Square miles of ocean covered by the Exxon Valdez oil spill:	11,000
Difference in acidity percentage between virgin and extra virgin olive oil:	1.2
Average price of oil change at Jiffy Lube in US dollars:	30
Calories from just the oil in a McDonald's double cheeseburger:	150
Percent increase in heart-related deaths during winter holiday season (Web MD):	5
Percent of black hat Orthodox who are overweight:	73
Percent chance that I want McDonald's right now:	100
Tablespoons of oil used to make latkes:	inestimable

Disclaimer: Most of the above information has been well researched. Some was conceived while inebriated. We leave it up to you, oh dear, omniscient, silly reader, to figure out what's what.



Visit us at our new online home for more music, pictures and blogging

THE SHPiEL

Opinions expressed in this section do not necessarily reflect those of The SHPiEL. We encourage comments from readers who possess all points of view. No, really, we're interested in what you have to say. Feel free to write a letter to the editor or you can contact us with a column idea. Please send comments to theshpiel@gmail.com.

A slightly dated dispatch from a Jewish American in Heeb-less Egypt

BY CORY SHERMAN
SHPIEL contributing writer

I went to a synagogue in Alexandria, Egypt, on Yom Kippur (I am here teaching English to 20- and 30-year-old Egyptians). When I walked up to the giant gates guarding the entrance, there was a bomb squad patrol out front and about eight Egyptian soldiers on the sidewalk. A man in a suit came up to me and asked: "Jew or Christian?" I answered truthfully.

He proceeded to take my passport (which he held onto the entire time I was at the synagogue) and searched my bag. All necessary precautions.

They walked me around to a side entrance where my bags were searched again.

Upon entry to a giant, well-kept courtyard in front of the gorgeous Eliyahu Hanevi synagogue, the Jewish leader in Alexandria approached me. His first question was, "Will you be coming tomorrow?" By the end of the conversation, he was practically begging me. The synagogue does not have enough men left to hold a minyan.

I walked into this beautiful old congregation hall with Greco-Roman columns running down the sides. The place was ornate with gold and silver everywhere. It had a balcony running around the whole room. This room could easily hold 200-300 people.

When my eyes stopped wandering around the room, I focused on the congregation. It consisted of three elderly women, one kid my age (20), one elderly man (the rabbi I think) and one even older rabbi leading services (he was shipped in from Israel).

There are less than 100 Egyptian Jews, a large percentage of whom are elderly widowed women whose children have moved away. They were so happy to see me.

It was a brilliantly sad contrast. A room that not too long ago held an active congregation was now down to three old ladies.

What will happen to this place when



Thinking Outside the Lox: Gators and Gelt



UF Hillel Rabbi

There is a wonderful *Midrash*, a teaching from our oral tradition, which the rabbis share about a father who had three sons.

This father wanted to challenge them, and so one day, he brought them to a cave and asked them to fill up the entire cave.

The first son brought as many rocks as he could, and although you could no longer maneuver around the cave, the father explained that there were still gaps within the cave. The second son filled up the cave with straw, and yet again, there were parts of the cave that remained empty. Finally, it was the third son's turn, and he took one candle and placed it in the middle of the cave. The father was amazed and congratulated his son for filling the cave with the light of the candle.

This month, we celebrate the Festival of Lights, Hanukkah, which

classically is the holiday that commemorates the fight against assimilation. It's the story of how a band of Jews, the Maccabees, stood up against the mighty Greek society in order to preserve their own distinct way of life.

As a Hillel rabbi working with college students, one of the best aspects of my job is the opportunity I have to speak with students about their spiritual journey. For most college students, and even for many of us, we live two distinct and separate lives - our religious/spiritual lives and our secular lives. It isn't often that these two worlds collide. Rather, we keep them hidden from each other.

The metaphor I often use is that of a light switch. In the realm of our secular world, the default position for the light switch is on - rooting for the Gators, going out to see a movie, socializing with our friends. We instinctively engage in these daily activities. When it comes to our religious identity, we have to actively turn the light switch on - when we light the Friday night candles, when we celebrate a *simcha*, or even when

we eat gefilte fish.

The question I pose is whether there is a way for these two worlds to learn from each other or to impact each other. In other words, can the light switch be on and off at the same time?

The mere mention of the word assimilation has for decades, and even centuries, made Jewish communities shudder in fear. The loss of one's identity while adopting someone else's culture is something that we Jews have actively distanced ourselves from. But is assimilation really that bad? Is there perhaps a middle ground where we can feel comfortable placing ourselves?

The reality is that most of us already live in two co-existing worlds. We are Jews living side by side with our neighbors. We should celebrate the richness of both worlds, understanding that in more ways than we can enumerate, people influence and depend on each other. In this Hanukkah season, may the light of the candles, the light that fills our caves, inspire us to draw those two worlds nearer to each other without sacrificing the integrity of either.

these people die? There is no young generation to take over.

After services, all the people in the room wanted to know was if I was coming the next day.

"Please come tomorrow. Bring your friends. Make this feel like a community again."

One woman told me stories of being a little girl sitting way up in the balcony (women were not allowed to sit in the lower section) with her mother, sniffing lemons to curb her appetite on Yom Kippur. Another woman told me she used to sing in the choir.

They were remembering a time that is long gone.

I fear this remarkable place will never have a congregation again. They can not even muster 10 Jewish men to make the service complete.

My final thought is this: I am in Egypt - a Muslim country - thousands of miles from home. It's possible that I am the youngest Jew in Egypt (the youngest Egyptian Jew is a 52-year-old woman) and I go to a synagogue.

Even though their numbers are few, and there are qualms about how the service goes (the Rabbi leading is Sephardic), I am in a room of Jews. They are speaking Hebrew, Arabic, French and English, but we are here. Minyan or no, they come every year and they will continue to come no matter the circumstances.

I went back the next day.

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Friday: 7:30 am - 3:00 pm

UF Hillel

2020 W University Ave
(across from O'Dome)
(352) 372-2900

Under Orthodox Kosher supervision

The BCS standings of Jewish communities

BY JEREMY ATTERMANN
SHPiEL staff writer

Let's face it; there are Jews everywhere in the U.S.

From the ranches of the Texas plains to the cold, barren regions of Alaska to the retirement homes of South Florida, you can always find a Jew wherever you go.

I have traveled to a great deal of Jewish communities in my short life. For your pleasure, I have ranked my top five greatest—and perhaps most Esameddin Alhadi ostentatious—Jewish community centers in the U.S.

5 Coming in at No. 5 is the JCC (that's Jewish Community Center) of Pittsburgh, Pa. I'll be blunt. This place is huge. It's so big that they had to divide it into three different community centers. The JCC at Pittsburgh has a long history, beginning when many of its Jewish inhabitants emigrated from Eastern Europe at the end of the 19th century. But the history of this Jewish community seems small in comparison to how much there is to do at these JCCs. With four pools, two gyms, a variety of classes, youth programs and more, this place is always busy. The question is: how do parents decide which JCC summer camp is right for their kids?

JCC at Pittsburgh: <http://www.jccpgh.org/default.asp>

4 At No. 4 is the Hillel at George Washington University. With more than 4,000 undergrad and graduate Jewish students, this place is always busy. Don't believe me? Just take a look at their schedule. With events occurring almost every day, and not to mention the numerous free food programs they have, the Jewish community at GW is always satiated—and with more than just food. And as for other important aspects to Jewish culture such as community

service, the Jews at GW pride themselves on having a "Tzedek Hillel," which means they focus and spend a great deal of time tackling important social issues such as poverty and homelessness in D.C. and the surrounding area. With amazing programs and delicious food, it's no wonder why so many students sport the "George Washington University" Hebrew t-shirts.

Hillel at George Washington University: <http://www.gwhillel.org/>

3 The Hillel at the University of Pennsylvania comes in at No. 3, where Jews make up a whopping 25 percent of the student population. It's clear the Jewish community is involved. The luxurious, three-story building draws around 500 people to services every Shabbat. This Hillel sends out weekly e-mails filled with countless upcoming activities and events of all sorts, such as the Jewish Renaissance Project. This project is an "innovative and alternative choice for Jewish students on Penn's campus to explore their Judaism in an edgy and meaningful way." And the food? How does daily delicious kosher food all around campus sound? At UPenn, whether you're Reform, Conservative, Orthodox or even Sephardic, you can find your niche at this jaw-dropping Hillel.

Hillel at the University of Pennsylvania: <http://pennhillel.org/penn>

Our runner-up goes to the JCA (Jewish Community Alliance) in Jacksonville, Fla. It wouldn't surprise me to learn that many readers have been to this enormous, castle-like structure. The 95,000-square-foot facility comes complete with pools (that's right, indoor and outdoor), indoor basketball courts, gyms, tennis courts and more. If sports aren't for you, then take a look at the dozens of cultural activities offered. From films and music to arts and crafts and dancing, there is always something to do.

Jewish Community at Jacksonville: <http://www.jcajax.org/>

1 The heavyweight champ and the No. 1 Jewish community goes to the University of Florida. I've never been to the barren regions of Alaska, nor the great plains of Texas, but the comforting, intimate feel of the UF Jewish community is refreshing for homesick college students. It may seem trite, but it's true. Whether you are a devout Jew looking for a place to pray, or a Jew who doesn't know much about religion but is eager to learn, the UF community is a perfect place to feel right at home with your fellow Jewish Gators.

You may not agree with my top five choices, and that's OK, because the beauty of us Jews is that no matter where we are, be it a gorgeous new Hillel or a two-room house, we possess the ties that bind.

Red string cuisine

BY FARYN HART
SHPiEL staff writer

A psychologist, rabbi and a *Camellia sinensis* bush have joined forces for the first time.

Café Emunah, a kosher Kabbalistic restaurant and tea bar in Fort Lauderdale, is the result of the inspiration of Dr. Marla Reis. Reis was looking for a place to have group sessions discussing Kabbalah, the mystical branch of Judaism, in an inviting environment. What better way to attract people than with food?

Not only does this funky, contemporary, Asian Caribbean-inspired joint serve award-winning sushi, but it serves organic, local food with the intention to inspire peace through awareness. Biodegradable take-out containers and silverware are made with corn, and the décor is made from recycled and natural materials such as the non-PVC-emitting plastic and ergonomic chairs. Because the restaurant uses dairy products, it serves

only vegan and vegetarian options.

The teas, or "Soul Stirrings," are all garden-direct and organic whole-leaf and are served with individual digital hourglass steeping-timers. "Foresight" appetizers include The Zen Salad and Mind-Body-Soul Soup Trio. "Revelation" entrées offer a "Peace Earth Burger" which is basically fancy, super-sized falafel. And "After the Flood" sushi includes rolls such as the "Day 5 Roll" and the "Rabbi Roll," made with salmon and cream cheese. Heaven is a listing under "Garden of Eden" desserts.

Though it doesn't have a liquor license, the restaurant does offer complimentary wine and is more than glad if customers BYOB.

Their "keep it kosher," in-house rabbi, Rabbi Moishe Meir Lipszyc, visits once or twice a day and will answer all life-pondering, mystical questions. And there are always the shelves of books on Judaism and Kabbalah to tend to the curious mind.

Annie Fore, the restaurant's manager, says that the philosophy of Café Emunah

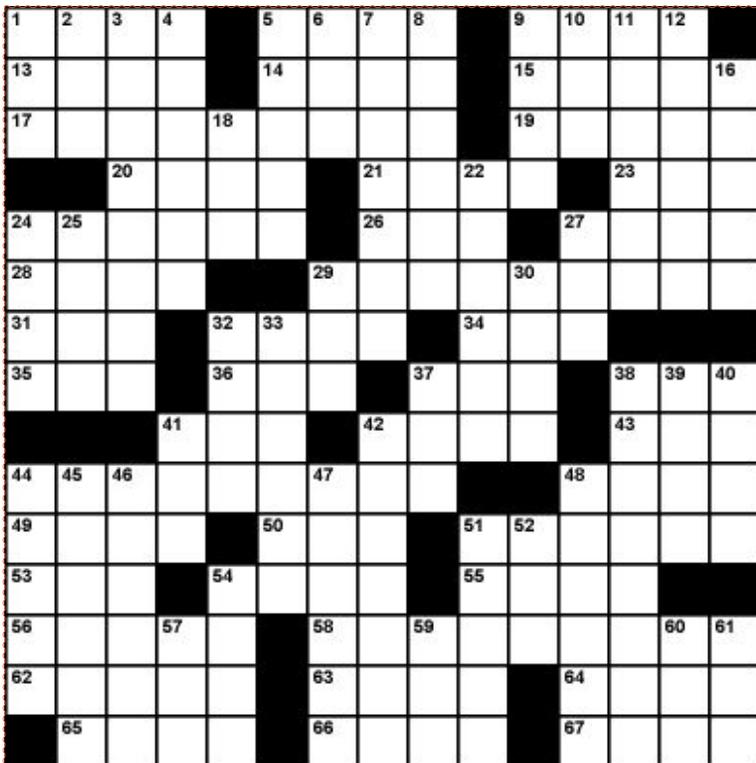
is to "offer an experience for the senses, and an oasis for the mind, body and soul... a physical journey into your spiritual self."

Café Emunah wishes to provide a transformative experience with food. Since their doors opened in February 2007, the restaurant has received a mixed genre of satisfied patrons. Most are Jewish and experience kosher food like they have never experienced it before. But many diners don't even know what kosher is, let alone the ancient esoteric philosophy of Kabbalah.

Many come for the larder, but they stay for lore.



Crossword #16



See next issue for solutions to this puzzle

Across

1. Joseph or Adam
5. Village of Simeon
9. Tuches (Eng)
13. Nurse
14. Part for Peerce
15. Packing Uzis
17. Rothschilds often
19. Need for Manischewitz
20. Macy's event
21. Tu B'Shevat plantings?
23. Reason for shiva?
24. Dilemma
26. Break a commandment
27. Emcee Parks
28. Israeli city
29. Historian
31. Purim drink?
32. Diplomat
34. ___Maris, Jerusalem
35. That woman
36. Rim
37. Prophecies
38. Joseph's entrapment
41. El Al milieu
42. Eden sound
43. Tel-Aviv to Bet She'an (dir)
44. Acted as Abbie Hoffman
48. "The Godfather", star

Down

49. Agadah
50. "Barney Miller", ___ Linden
51. Bird groups
53. Jonas Salk's Org.?
54. Comic Mort
55. "___ Story", Seigel
56. Hasidic text of Kabbalah
58. Full of Chutzpah
62. Hungarian sculptor
63. Sandal maker
64. Megillat Esther
65. Knesset position
66. Starter bet for Greenstein
67. Emulate Spitz

18. Needs a Meeshebairach
22. Tools for the Mohel
24. Exodus midwife
25. Immigrant's Ellis
27. Top for Gottex
29. Streimel
30. Breaks the ninth
32. Wiesel
33. King of Gomorrah
37. Football's Luckman
38. Political party
39. First Swedish Jew
40. Plagues
41. Enjoyed the Seder
42. Author Lillian
44. Center of the Seder
45. Vishniac and Polanski
46. Etrog's cousin?
47. Hummus sauce
48. Lids
51. Herbie Mann's instrument
52. Airport locale
54. Lot's wife
57. Affirmative
59. Cholent holder
60. 151
61. Tu B'Shevat need?

Innovative spiritual growth offered at kosher potluck every third Friday

BY STEPHANIE SHACTER
SHPIEL staff writer

Though many Jews worry about today's Jewish youth straying far from its roots, there is hope in the growing formation of new-age *minyanim*, or prayer groups, attracting young Jews in masses.

Tikkun Leil Shabbat is one such prayer group growing in Washington, D.C. The service is unique in its ability to attract an incredibly diverse group of young Jews.

The service rotates between traditional a capella-sung prayers facing east and another service which removes the congregation from the structure of Hebrew school days into a new zone of spirituality. This nontraditional service includes instruments and circular seating.

The sermons speak of social justice issues within the community in addition to the conventional biblical portion.

Following the service is a potluck during which the essence of Shabbat dinner comes to life with togetherness and giving. Each member contributes a kosher or vegetarian dish with the intent of bringing warmth to the end of everyone's week. The location of the service is always to-be-announced, and the service takes place only once every three Fridays. There are no titles or positions of authority reigning over this

congregation. There is no dress code. No one is paid to help set up or clean.

But despite the unconventional structure, a crowd of twentysomethings always gathers to revamp their spirituality and educate themselves about the needs of their community. Tikkun Leil Shabbat's Facebook group currently has more than 300 members.

Zach Teutsch has been very involved with TLS since its beginnings in 2006. He said that most people who are currently a part of TLS were looking for a more meaningful Jewish life and wanted to build more Jewish connections. He also explained that the uniqueness of TLS lies in its ability to attract and work for such a diverse group of people.

"What's most exciting are the various innovations it's made for a variety of people," Teutsch said.

The Facebook group says its congregation includes Jews of all sects, educational backgrounds, sexual preferences, hometowns, colors and labels.

What also attracts the young Jewish crowd, besides a new lift of spirit, are the social justice issues brought up in sermons. People of the community come to talk about their organizations improving life for all in the D.C. area.

"I feel lucky to be a part of a community that has values I care about that enrich my life, socially and spiritually," said Teutsch.

JEWISH STUDENT UNION PRESENTS

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS PARTY

WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 20

RUE BAR

"HANUKAH IS THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS... WE HAVE 8 CRAZY NIGHTS!"

ADAM SANDLER

JSU Jewish Student Union University of Florida

SG STUDENT GOVERNMENT

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Malz4321@ufl.edu

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