

# THE GREATER DES MOINES Jewish Press

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## HAPPY NEW YEAR!



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Tracy Engman  
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Education Day**  
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## Super Sunday's Coming

No, we're not talking about the Super Bowl, but we are talking about a day of celebration when Jews throughout the greater Des Moines area stand together both as phonathon volunteers and generous supporters of the Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines' 2009 All-In-One Campaign.

Super Sunday has become a Jewish tradition in communities all across the nation. It is the one time each year when you, personally, have a chance to connect with a volunteer caller who is deeply committed to the work of the Federation, to ask questions about Federation programs, to hear poignant stories, to learn about the meaningful work the Federation accomplished over the last year and the important work to be tackled in 2009.

**Mark your calendar for Super Sunday on February 1, 2009.** Board Members and volunteer callers, people who have already pledged their support, will be reaching out to you between the hours of 10:30am - 12:00pm and 12:30pm - 1:30pm.

We'd love to have you join the group that reaches out to the community on Super Sunday! You can sign up to volunteer to either make phone calls or to help with clerical tasks by calling 277-6321. By volunteering you will be among the few to qualify to win a Metro Arts Alliance membership, entitling you to many discount opportunities! It's just one way we can say Thank You to our volunteers!

If you can't volunteer, be home to answer the call. Listen, ask questions and let your spirit of giving be lit with generosity.

Now more than ever, your Annual Campaign donation provides a vital safety net that supports Jews in need, both here and abroad. Remember, it's a mitzvah, a commandment, to help those less fortunate, as long as we are able to do so. Just as those with the ability to give are impacted by the economy, Jewish needs at home and around the world are only intensifying.

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## Developing Jewish Leadership

By **Judy Deutch & Bruce Sherman**



**Judy Deutch**



**Bruce Sherman**

It has been a generation since there was a young Jewish leadership development program in Des Moines, but thanks to the Federation we now have the Leadership Forum.

For the past 18 months, we have worked with wonderful group of 25 - 40 year-old individuals. We included Jewish singles, couples, and inter-faith couples from all congregations.

Our goals for the Forum were to develop leadership skills, increase participants' knowledge about our Jewish community and the global community, and, most importantly, to make connections/friendships with other members in the group.

We started about two years ago, selecting individuals from our community whom we perceived to be our future leaders. The Leadership Forum's first event was an informational meeting at Toni and Tim Urban's home. Since then we've had potlucks, pool parties and Shabbat dinners. We enjoyed a dessert reception and a chance to hear Irshad Manji. We've read Jewish books and had several leadership development sessions. We discussed many topics including the future of the congregations in Des Moines.

We learned about The Israel Project. At our "Meet the Mentor" program, experienced community members told why they have gotten involved in volunteer work. Our bus trip around "Jewish Des Moines" and the Leadership retreat at Cathy and Tom Goldman's beautiful farm, with speaker Rabbi Michael Cook were two favorite events.

*continued on page 15*

## Jerilee Mace Joins Federation Staff as Campaign Consultant



We are pleased to announce the hiring of Jerilee Mace for the Board-approved position of part-time consultant to the All-In-One Campaign. Jeri spent 30 years

with the Des Moines Metro Opera and was their Executive Director beginning in 1988. In that capacity she ran the Opera's successful annual campaign and developed \$12 million for their Foundation.

This investment in campaign development is a one-year pilot project to get new eyes to look at our campaign materials and offer extra solicitor support. Jeri is being hired for 500 hours of consultation. Elaine Steinger remains chief fund-raiser for the Federation and the Des Moines Jewish Foundation, along with her other administrative duties for both organizations.

Jeri and Elaine will work with the board to develop the various divisions of the campaign. Jeri will also help create new materials that will familiarize the community with directed messages concerning "what the Federation does" and "where your dollar goes" to better connect our givers to their gifts.

The Greater Des Moines community recognized her contribution to the business of philanthropy in 2005 with the "Business Leadership Award" from the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute, in 2003 the Indianola Chamber of Commerce "Employee of the Year" Award, the 2001 "Woman of Influence" award from the Des Moines Business Record, a 2000 "Leading the Way" award from Channel 8 News, Des Moines and in 1992 the "Outstanding Achiever Award" from the Fort Dodge Chamber of Commerce.

Under her leadership, DMMO received the Iowa Arts Council's 2000 Arts Build Communities "Arts Organization" Award as well as the Greater Des Moines Partnership's 2000 "Best Kept Secret" Award.

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# JEWISH FEDERATION COMMUNITY SCHOOL NEW! Young Adult Education Program Begins



11th/12th grade Jewish students getting together on Nov 25 for a social function – dinner and a movie.

This year JFCS has added the icing on our youth education programming cake by offering 11th and 12th grade Jewish students opportunities to continue to gather together throughout the year at various locations to discuss topics of common interest.

This Jewish Young Adult Program (called JYAP for short) is for students who desire to learn and participate in the Jewish community by providing those teens opportunities to become part of a social action network, listen to speakers, experience cooking, get college questions answered or just enjoy social activities like a movie and dinner together.

The program was launched in November, so there's still plenty of time to participate and give us your input. As this program grows and flourishes, come help us plan what you want to do.

If you have not received any information regarding JYAP and would like to be involved, contact David Copeland, our adult facilitator, at davidjcopeland@yahoo.com. Upcoming events will be posted on our website at [www.jewishdesmoines.org](http://www.jewishdesmoines.org). Or you may also call Lyanna Grund, JFCS Director, at 277-5566 or e-mail Lyanna at JFCSDM@aol.com.

## Farm Bureau Life's Contribution Appreciated

For the past four years, the employees at FBL Financial spent one "Week of Caring" to give back to the community. During that time they build, prime, paint and decorate a piece of furniture to be donated to United Way agencies. This year Jewish Family Services received two beautiful trunks. They will be enjoyed by the students at the JFCS when they visit the library at Tifereth. Next time you're at The Caspe Terrace you can admire the beautiful picnic tables and benches previously donated by FBL Financial through United Way. Thank you!



The Jewish Federation joins in commemorating

# Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

honoring the life and legacy of a true American hero

Monday, January 19, 2009.

## capture lasting memories with a gift that lasts forever...

- HONOR YOUR GRANDPARENTS
- WEDDINGS
- BIRTHDAYS
- BIRTHS
- BAR / BAT MITZVAHS
- CELEBRATE YOUR CHILDREN
- REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONES

"One person cannot plant a forest, but a community can plant a forest one tree at a time."

Purchase a tree certificate – a gift that lasts forever.

Jewish Federation Community School - 924 Polk Boulevard - Des Moines, IA 50312

For \$36, a tree certificate will be mailed to the recipient. Your \$36 goes towards the purchase of trees, care and maintenance.

## Jewish Reading for Jewish Families JFCS Seeks Partner to Fund Jewish Family Reading Program

The PJ Library is an established reading program sponsored by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. This program reaches out to Jewish families with young children to help create stronger Jewish homes – homes that foster children's curiosity about their Jewish heritage and help families explore their Jewish identity.

What is the PJ Library program? This is a program seeking to engage Jewish families with young children in Jewish life. Each participating family with children between the ages of six months and five years will receive a monthly mailing of a Jewish children's book, CD, or the occasional parenting book. Each book and CD comes with guides to help families use the selection in their homes. The book and music list is chosen by the foremost early-childhood experts. The list includes a wide array of themes such as Jewish holidays, folktales and Jewish family life.

The PJ Library is free for participating families during the first year of participation, with a nominal donation requested each year thereafter.

How do you become a participant? Any Jewish family in the Des Moines and surrounding communities who have children between the ages of six months and five years are eligible for this program.

How can we bring this program to Des Moines? The Harold Grinspoon Foundation subsidizes most of the costs for this program. However, locally, a funding partner is needed to bring The PJ Library to our local families. These partners would finance a minimal cost per child that helps cover the cost of the books, music and the mailing to all participating families. The Foundation covers all overhead and administrative costs for the program and coordinates the monthly distribution of the books and music. Locally, we would receive resources for implementing the program, recruiting families and planning complementary programs. Each mailing would be advertised as a gift from the local partner.

This is a wonderful program that we could bring to Des Moines with your help. What a great way to help young families start their own home Jewish libraries. If you are interested in being a partner, please contact Lyanna Grund at 277-5566 or email JFCSDM@aol.com.

## New Feature! TEST YOUR JEWISH KNOWLEDGE

### Word Search

Find the words below and circle them.

T	U	A	M	Z	T	A	A	H	M	O	Y
I	R	S	H	A	K	U	N	A	H	C	C
T	B	U	V	O	O	T	I	S	I	A	E
E	U	B	P	P	S	O	S	M	C	T	E
R	D	D	A	P	H	S	I	W	E	J	Y
E	L	R	S	R	I	R	A	I	E	E	O
Z	M	S	T	S	U	K	K	O	T	W	S
T	W	A	O	P	E	O	M	T	I	A	Y
A	Y	O	M	H	A	S	H	O	A	H	A
I	K	V	J	I	T	S	I	O	Y	O	D
N	T	O	U	V	A	H	S	T	O	U	Y
I	E	G	N	Y	O	C	T	O	U	S	L
M	L	P	I	O	V	T	A	O	V	Y	O
E	N	I	N	G	A	O	I	T	I	E	H
H	A	N	A	H	S	A	H	H	S	O	R
S	I	M	C	H	A	T	T	O	R	A	H

### Passover

Shavuot  
Rosh Hashana  
Sukkot  
Shemini Atzeret  
Simchat Torah  
Purim  
Yom Hashoah  
Yom Ha'Atzmaut  
Chanukah  
Holy Days  
Rabbi  
Jewish

### Holiday Highlight

Chanukah (pronounced Kha'-noo-kah) - This Festival of Lights lasts eight days and commemorates the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem after a successful revolt against Syrian-Greek conquerors in 165 B.C.E. Jews have celebrated this holiday for over 2000 years.

Elaine Steinger is a collector of Tzedakah boxes, small containers of various sizes and shapes used to collect spare change each day, which is later given to the poor. Everyone can have a Tzedakah box - they are easy to use and let us fulfill our need to help those who are hungry or without homes.



## Message from the President



**Neil Salowitz**  
**President**

Friends,

It's a cold, snowy Sunday afternoon at the end of November. I've done all the yard work (one of my least favorite things to do), put away the lawn mower, changed the oil in the snowblower and positioned it just behind the garage door, cleaned the basement and the garage—all of the things that, for me, mark the transition from the last halcyon days of summer and early autumn to the dreary, blustery but somehow more purposeful, days of winter.

The High Holidays have passed and Chanukah is approaching. It's at this time of year that your Federation prepares for the annual All-In-One Campaign, and I look back at how your Jewish Federation has served our community during this year.

You should have received the Federation's 2007-08 Annual Review. If you didn't, please let me know (dmjfed@gmail.com) and I'll see to it that you get one immediately. If you received it but tossed it out without reading it, let me know (I won't be offended; I promise) and I'll send you another copy. If you still have it but haven't taken time to read it, please do so—soon.

I received my copy a few days before writing this. I'm involved in the Federation's activities, of course, but it was a revelation to be reminded of all the ways the Federation affects the lives of Jews in Greater Des Moines and beyond.

Toni Urban, my immediate predecessor, brilliantly summarized the work of the Federation: "Together, we've made a difference in:

- the needs of our youth for educational and camp activities,
- the needs of our families for activities that strengthen Jewish identity,
- the needs of our senior adults for social and health services,
- the need to develop the potential of prospective community leaders for our future,
- the need to preserve and nurture our cultural and communal heritage,
- the need to support Israel and
- the need to continue to educate our non-Jewish brothers and sisters about the Jewish community."

Notice that Toni said, "**Together**, we've made a difference...." We can be proud of all we've accomplished together—but there's more work to be done. The Federation's role in helping to support and sustain this community never ends, and the Federation's need for funds to perform its work on your behalf is also ongoing.

Yes, these are difficult economic times. Some of us may have lost our jobs, money is tight, credit is scarce. Even those of us with resources feel less secure. In times like these, the answer is not to stop giving tzedakah, but to prioritize our giving. I don't like telling anyone what to do, but I'm going to do so here: In these tough times, as Jews, your charitable priorities should be your shul or temple, and your Jewish Federation. Every other charity should come after these two essentials.

Why? Most other charities can call upon the general populace to meet their needs. We Jews have only...us Jews. In this community of approximately 3,000 people, we must rely on ourselves. No one will care for us but us.

You may be tempted to maintain your gift this year, or even cut back (G-d forbid) because of economic circumstances. **Don't!** Now more than ever, your gifts to the All-In-One Campaign are needed to continue to provide the programs and services that help sustain your fellow Jews. **Your** gift touches so many Jewish lives. Without **your** gift, the Federation can't continue to do its job.

Your Federation always endeavors to use your gifts wisely and efficiently, but at this time we're looking even more closely at everything that we do, trying to save as much in administrative costs as we can without sacrificing essential services. We will continue to do our part—and so must you. Our budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2009, will depend on your generosity. Your gifts will determine what your Federation can do for this community in the coming year.

The theme for the All-in-One Campaign is, "Now more than ever." During difficult economic times, the Federation is called on to do even more to support this community. I call on each of you to do more, too. Now more than ever, your Federation needs your support.

When you receive the phone call or letter, look deeply into your Jewish neshama (soul). Remember why the Jewish Federation exists. Remember that you are a Jew—and give generously.

Shalom, Neil

## INTERFAITH MEMORIAL FOR VICTIMS OF MUMBAI



A memorial service for the victims of Islamist terrorism was held in December at the Temple co-sponsored by DMARC, Jewish Federation, Interfaith Alliance, Temple B'nai Jeshurun and Tifereth Israel Synagogue. Pictured: Rabbi Padorr, Phil Sickels (TIA), Rev. Tim Bonney (1st Baptist), Rabbi Kaufman, Jagtar Singh and Jindar Singh, (Sikh community). Right, Rabbi Yosef Jacobson (Iowa Chabad) and Ross Daniels, president of DMARC.

## THANKS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Federation and the many friends in the community for all their good wishes, prayers and donations during my recent operation and recovery. I am still recovering and getting stronger and hope to be able to call everybody soon.

Thank you,  
Linda Fishman

## CORRECTION

In the Leadership Forum update of the Nov/Dec 2008 edition of the Jewish Press we inadvertently erred in naming the gracious hosts of the Shabbat Torah Study. The hosts should have been listed as Tom and Cathy Goldman. We apologize for this error.

## CZECH AND MATE

Dear Editor, Jewish Press of Des Moines,

As Director of Prague Castle, you can only imagine my dismay upon reading Mr. Moskowitz's incomplete description of the popular Barbie Doll Museum at Prague Castle.

He makes it sound like everyone in Prague lives in an Iron Curtain time-warp filled with bread lines, antiquated technology, and rusty sprocket repairmen.

But he is wrong! Prague is at the cutting edge of Eastern European style and fashion, and our newest Barbie, known as Bohemian Barbie, along with her much cooler new boyfriend Durko, exemplify our progress. Bohemian Barbie works as a bleu cheese taster at the Czech Institute of Systemic Food Poisoning while Durko dredges river bottoms in search of rusty hubcaps for vintage Tatra all-terrain debris removal vehicles. The kids at the museum just love 'em!

Sincerely,  
Karol Majdanek, Prague Castle Toy Museum

THE GREATER DES MOINES

# Jewish Press

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We are always happy to receive articles and contributions for consideration. We reserve the right to edit submissions for space considerations and clarity.

Vol. 25, No. 3, Jan/Feb 2009



## Do you...

- Have an interesting story or memoir you'd like to tell the community about?
- Have a secret interest in writing an occasional story for the **Jewish Press**? Don't wait for us to ask—we won't know you're interested if you don't tell us.
- Know someone in the community with an interesting story (even if you don't feel up to writing it yourself)?

If you recognize yourself (or someone you know, go ahead, rat on him) here, please email jcrc@dmjfed.org

# Jewish Press

Hazan by David Friedgood



Judaism developed as a participatory religion, a religion of the people. Our ancestors actively participated in the ancient rites of their worship - carefully instructed by knowledgeable priests and elders. In antiquity, service to God centered about service (sacrifices) at the holy Temple in Jerusalem. As our people migrated along the trade routes of the known world, sacrificial worship was gradually replaced with prayers and community gatherings to teach Torah and the principles of faith. The Jerusalem Temple was reproduced in miniature scale countless times in the synagogues and prayer rooms found in every community Jews settled. In the year 70 C.E. the second Temple was destroyed. Sacrifice as a means of religious expression was forever gone from Jewish religious life. Rabbinical Judaism emerged and codified the prayer service, setting up the structure of prayer and Torah reading that has evolved into modern Jewish practice. The center of religious life moved from Jerusalem to every Jewish home and synagogue scattered across the world.

As was true in the time of sacrifices, Jews wanted to participate in their worship but most were not fully educated in the intricacies of the prayer and Torah service. To be meaningful to the masses, prayer required a certain nuance; a flavor to stir the soul. Rote reading of text had its place but never fully satisfied the Jewish heart. Davening (praying) required more than passive recitation of words. The prayers chosen to be part of our first sidurim (prayer books) were often poetic, lending themselves to music which became an early feature of home and synagogue observance. Prayer leaders skilled in singing and reciting poetry were valued members of the congregation. In fact, the most ancient prayer recorded in the Bible is the Song of Miriam - chanted by woman singing and dancing in the desert with tambourines in hand. Woman who had just been delivered from the horrors of slavery and who witnessed the glory of God at the Red Sea:

*“Sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously;  
Horse and driver He has hurled into the Sea.”* (Exodus 15:21)

Public reading of the sacred Torah scroll eventually became central to synagogue worship. The practice was started by Ezra the Scribe who read Torah to a people in danger of losing their way after destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem in 587 B.C.E. Ezra made a point of translating words of Torah and reading from the scroll in a fashion people could understand (Nehemiah 8:1-8). Today the Torah is not actually read, it is chanted. The current musical mode of Torah chanting uses notes, or ta-anim, first developed in Tiberius (northern Israel) in the 9th century by Rabbinical scholars known as Masoretes. (The ta-anim, along with vowels, are found in every printed version of the Hebrew Bible. They not only indicate musical motifs but provide clues for proper syntax and grammatical

reading of Biblical text.) The musical chanting is designed to illuminate the text for better understanding, as well as for aesthetic value. In both prayer and Torah reading music became essential to Jewish worship. As the service became more complex, poetry and music developed as tools to educate and keep congregants engaged in their worship.

Early in rabbinic times it became standard practice for prayer and Torah reading to be led by knowledgeable prayer leaders, a seliach tzibur or messenger of the congregation. It wasn't long before the position of professional Hazan (or Cantor) developed. The word Hazan is derived from the Hebrew verb HZH = to oversee, to behold. A Hazan oversees the Jewish service. He is, in a sense, a seer - bringing a level of meaning, of ecstasy, to Jewish worship. This is conveyed by the words of devotion combined by the ineffable power of melody and song to move our souls. (Some Cantors have been known to move their flock simply by the power of their voice and presence, even without uttering words.) I believe the 1st century Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria envisioned the role of modern Hazanim (Cantors) when he declared ecstasy, and the ability to communicate deep allegorical meaning of words and text, as the hallmark of a Jewish prophet. Much as ancient Biblical prophets taught ultimate truth to our ancestors, a skilled Hazan can bring to light the ultimate meaning of our presence on this earth.

Recently our community lost a Hazan emeritus - Hazan Pinchas Spiro. Certainly a Hazan metzuyan or “perfect Hazan” as he was labeled by Rabbi Marshall Berg delivering the eulogy at his funeral service. Hazan Spiro was the seer who illuminated our worship. He was a constant presence, overseeing our community's spiritual welfare even in retirement. More importantly he was the teacher of our children and the next generation of our prayer leaders. His influence radiated from his modest office on the 2nd floor of Tifereth Israel's sanctuary to the greater Jewish community - throughout the world. His was a life filled with meaning and accomplishment. A quiet man with a loud stirring singing voice. Men like Hazan Spiro are deeply missed but are never truly gone. They live in the hearts of their congregants, their students, and all the generations of worshipers and students to follow who are warmed and inspired by the sweet melodies, which enlighten our lives. Zichrono L'Bracha - may his memory always serve as a blessing.

*“Halleluiah.  
Sing to the LORD a new song,  
His praises in the congregation of the faithful.  
Let Israel rejoice in its maker;  
let the children of Zion exult in their king.  
Let them praise His name in dance;  
with timbrel and lyre let them chant His praises.”* (Psalms 149:1-3)

Senior Care Meals  
Kosher Meals  
from Us to You

The Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines, through Jewish Family Services and in partnership with Maccabee's Deli, the Iowa Jewish Senior Life Center, and with a grant provided by the David Tobis Fund, is proud to introduce Care Meals.

Care Meals for seniors is a service provided when you return from a hospital stay, are sick, homebound or shut-in due to ice and snow.

Upon your request, frozen or hot, delicious, nutritionally balanced, Kosher meals can be picked up at the Iowa Jewish Senior Life Center, Maccabee's Deli or delivered to your home. Most meals can be prepared according to dietary health restrictions, such as reduced sodium, fat or sugar.



Senior Care Meals Menu  
PREPARED BY MACCABEE'S DELI

- **Soup and 1/2 Sandwich (Meat)**  
Soup of the day, with your choice of deli meats or vegetarian.
- **Salad Plate (Parve or Dairy)**  
Choose from Egg or Tuna Salad, Baba Ganoush or Hummus, Challah Roll included.
- **Shabbat Dinner (Meat)**  
Includes Chicken or Brisket with Vegetable, Soup with Matzo Balls, Kugel, Challah, Dessert, Grape Juice or Wine, Candles and Shabbat Blessing Sheet.
- **Chicken Breast Dinner (Meat)**  
Entrée, Rice and Vegetable
- **Baked Salmon Dinner (Parve)**  
Entrée, Couscous and Vegetable
- **Desserts (Dairy)**  
Choose from Assorted Fruit, Cakes or Cookies

Senior Care Meals  
PREPARED BY  
IOWA JEWISH SENIOR LIFE CENTER

You may request Care Meals be prepared by the IJSLC. In those circumstances, menu selection will not be available, but instead will be according to the IJSLC's pre-scheduled menu.  
Meals may be picked up at the IJSLC, if ordered 48 hours in advance.

To Order  
Care Meals

Call Dorothea  
277-6321 x-218

48 Hour Advance  
Notice Required

Cost Based on Individual  
Financial Circumstances

Donations Accepted

Confidentiality Respected

Delivery Not Available on  
Shabbat or Jewish Holidays

Jewish Family Services Committee

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Miriam Mintzer; Neil Salowitz; Justin Schoen;  
Elaine Steinger, Executive Director

David Tobis Fund Committee

Sheldon Rabinowitz; Elaine Steinger;  
Michael Tobis; Sam Tobis; Toni Urban



## See What's Cooking at Project Elijah Foundation



Julie Kaufman

In October, Project Elijah Foundation premiered our new and improved version of Elijah's Kosher Manna at the World Food Prize. I am so pleased to be able to announce that it met with glowing reviews. This new food product is designed to feed our American Jewish food insecure. The number of food insecure Jews in the United States is astounding to me, and I am continually amazed at the number of food pantries across this nation that are doing invaluable work to help those in need.

With such a great need in mind, the Project Elijah Foundation is headed to New York to meet with the leadership of the URJ, NFTY, and BBYO.

These organizations have all expressed great interest in hosting food packaging at their youth conventions, both nationally and regionally. We have also been in close contact with the RAC in Washington D.C. and they have been extremely helpful in promoting our Kosher food program across the country. Just recently we have returned from Temple Bet Shalom in Minnetonka, MN where over 150 volunteers packaged 19,000 meals in under two hours. We even had people waiting in line just to have the chance to participate. What a heartwarming sight.

A group of energetic young women in New York: Rebecca Feldman, Maya Cohen, Nicole Katz, and Daniella Kahane have created an organization called Sensi6. Each year they pick an organization near and dear to their hearts and hold a giant fundraiser. This year they had heard the call of 'our children' at leladeinu. On January 15, 2009 Sensi6 will be holding their fundraiser for leladeinu at the Argentinean embassy in New York City. We are so glad and grateful for their support. My holiday wish -- for this fundraiser to be a tremendous success.

As I mentioned in last month's article, Project Elijah Foundation is currently in the process of having quilts made for the children that live at leladeinu on a permanent basis. These quilts will bring joy and comfort into the lives of these children. The quilts that are already complete will be hand carried back to Argentina by the leladeinu staff who attend this fundraiser in January. If you are interested in helping with this project please call me at 515-246-8001. So far it has been great fun.



As always, thank you for your continuing support of the Project Elijah Foundation. Without you, our work could not be done.

Julie Kaufman, Executive Director, Project Elijah Foundation  
515-246-8001 [www.projectelijahfoundation.org](http://www.projectelijahfoundation.org)

## senior news

**Senior Volunteer Program** Are you looking for a way to put meaning back into your life while helping others? Become a Senior Volunteer and help us reach out and care for someone in need. The rewards are many and the need is great. To learn more about volunteer opportunities or any of the programs listed above, please contact Pat Nawrocki, OASIS Project Services Manager, at 277-6321 x215.



**There's a lot more programming still to come in the Senior News department! At the November luncheon, our guest speaker, Barb Rinell, R N, (Lifeline Coordinator for Iowa Health Home Care) did a wonderful job of informing the seniors about the medical alert system. It is designed to give senior citizens the opportunity to remain independent and to live in the home of their choice with the medical alert system help just a push of a button away.**

### Upcoming Luncheons:

Winter can be chilly outside but come and warm up with some lively conversation, great programming and Kosher luncheons scheduled in January and February:

**Thursday, January 8th**, Noon at Beth El Jacob Synagogue. The lecture is on "HOW TO CHOOSE A GOOD HOME HEALTH PROVIDER." They are not all the same. This educational update is offered by Angie and John Burger from Accessible Home Health Care of Des Moines. After their presentation, we'll all enjoy music from the "good ole days" with a fun and entertaining OLD TIME SING ALONG!

**Thursday, February 12**, Noon at Beth El Jacob Synagogue. Come join us once again for good fellowship, music and food! Musical entertainment will be provided by the Zarnow Fund in honor of Abraham, Regina, Paul, Sidney, Silvia, and Ralph Zarnow.

  
**outreach, activities and services  
for independent seniors  
JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES**

## It's a Wonderful Life/Israel

by Barb Hirsch-Giller



November 19, 2008

Yom Kippur Message

On December 20, 1946—a year and a half after the final European battles of World War II, a film was released by RKO Radio Pictures with high hopes and a disappointing response from holiday audiences around the country. "It's a Wonderful Life," starring Jimmy Stewart, portrayed a deeply depressed George Bailey, who, in one magical moment wishes away his entire life and is privileged with the experience of viewing the world without the benefit of his presence. With the aid of a pathetic Angel Second Class, George is horrified to witness the wretchedness

of his community and the losses incurred by his family as a result of his absence.

A year and a half later—and a half a world away—a tiny country was born in the Middle East. Conceived, perhaps with the "Angel Second Class help" of cosmic post-Holocaust guilt, on May 14, 1948, the Jewish Community in Israel, under the leadership of David Ben-Gurion, re-established sovereignty over our ancient homeland. The Declaration of Independence of the modern State of Israel was announced on that day—the day that the last British forces left Israel. The following day, we all know that the armies of five Arab countries (Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon and Iraq) invaded Israel. And the struggle for the survival of OUR particular star that shines in the EAST continues.

As I think of our Israeli brothers and sisters, on this Yom Kippur morning—exactly 35 years after the famous attacks on this most holy of days—my mind wanders, perhaps in George Bailey-type bewilderment: What would our Jewish world be if Israel had never been born on that remarkable May day in 1948? If there had never been an Israel, where would all of the olim—the immigrants have gone? Who would have died in the seemingly eternal crusade against our forebearers? What wonderful contributions would our entire planet have missed without the ingenuity of this country? If Israel never existed, how does that change our future?

Without the dream of Eretz Yisrael and shivat Zion (the return to Zion), the sporadic aliyah of immigrants who journeyed there would not have kept the dream alive from the time of the destruction of the Second Temple in the first century. The Diaspora would be just that: Jews dispersed from Palestine into foreign lands, never to return to the ancient land that was promised to us by a God who loved us, out of Egypt into the Land pledged to us in Covenant.

Where would the first groups of immigrants from Yemen and Russia have traveled in the latter part of the 19th Century; and the 85,000 who came in the First and Second Aliyahs to escape the pogroms of Eastern Europe? Where would be the 400,000 Jews who populated the land by 1936, while Hitler and his Nazi regime rolled into Poland and Czechoslovakia? Oh, how well we know the answer to that!

And those 75,000 who came legally and illegally, fleeing extermination, in the days before and during WWI—where would they go? To America? To Great Britain? We know that answer, too. We know because during the war, in the years of the most intense persecution of Jews in Europe, Britain initiated a policy of severely limiting aliyah to Palestine. And after liberation, as the Remnant of our people—100,000 of them—sat in displaced persons camps, the British Authority allowed merely 1,500 Jews per month to enter. Where would our people have gone...with no dream—only nightmares?

If May 14, 1948 had never dawned to see the birth of our Homeland, where would the 685,000 have moved, en masse between 1948 and 1951, to fulfill the Dream, to keep the promise of refuge alive for US—so that we can say with confidence, NEVER AGAIN! Jews from Yemen, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Iraq, Romania, Morocco, Tunis, Algeria, Iran, Libya – where would they go?

And the 270,000 Jews from the Former Soviet Union who left for Israel between 1971-1981; and the 22,000 Ethiopian Jews who were airlifted in the midst of enemy fire on Shabbat in two astounding, clandestine rescues known as Operations Moses and Solomon... this ancient community of Jews, carried out of Sudan in a matter of hours, what would have happened to them? Can we forget the stunning midnight rescue of 100 members of hijacked Flight 139 traveling from Tel Aviv and forced to land at Entebbe Airport in Uganda in 1976?

Today's Israel has grown to over six million Jews...who would have taken them in—if Israel had never been born? This sparkling little democracy that has developed the first cellular phones, most of the Microsoft operating systems, including the Pentium and Centrino processors in their entirety; this oasis of medical miracles where firsts in breast cancer diagnosis, heart pumps, ingestible cameras for diagnosis of digestive diseases, and new ultra-violet, light-free skin treatments cause acne to self-destruct...what would the world have lost?

This country that in 60 years has made the desert bloom with the advancement of hydroponic planting methods and drip irrigation systems and desalinization plants... technology for the Third Millennium...that desert would be, simply a desert if there had never been an Israel.

And our future, what might we face with no Israel? If we simply consider our past as a basis for imagining our future, we have little reason to be comfortable without the solace of Israel. The constancy and durability of anti-Semitism that has caused our people to be expelled from nearly every country in which we have lived, and the depth of the hatred that has inspired unthinkable violence and hostility against us may cause us to pause.

*continued on page 12*



# Welcome to Venice: The Original Ghetto by David Moskowitz



In our last episode, Heidi and David and family experienced the highlights of Prague culture, ranging from a uniquely Czech spin on Barbie to an insanely inappropriate marionette show that made "Saw II" look like the "The Little Mermaid." Farewell to the Jewish ruins of Eastern Europe, where ghostly tourist synagogues and haunted cemeteries are the primary evidence that our people ever existed. Hello to the warm breezes of Venice Italy, home of the original Jewish ghetto.

I knew I was a world away from the ominous gloom of central Europe when a boat captain met us at the airport to take us to our hotel in Venice. A boat captain! Blinking in the bright azure skies of the Adriatic coast, we bounced along the waters of the Venetian lagoon to the romantic and mysterious ancient city that looks the same as when Marco Polo lived here. The shallow lagoon was dotted with many multi-purpose islands, from ones that made glass for tourists (more on this next issue) to ones filled with the weathered tombstones of non-Jews. Hey, where were the Jewish tombstones?

[Editor's interruption: That didn't take long, did it? Two sentences in, and we're already dropping hints about a sad story involving a maligned Jewish cemetery. I am going to make an editorial decision here and ask our columnist to try and depict Venice without his relentlessly warped obsession with latent anti-Semitism.

Clearly he should be able to do that when he writes about a tourist attraction as happy and scenic as Venice.]

Okay, fine, let's start over.

This was my James Bond moment, and I wanted to savor it. I was sitting at the world famous Gabbiano Bar at the Hotel Cipriani in Venice, home of the "shaken not stirred" dry martini (the "Montgomery") made famous by Bond, but named by Ernest Hemingway. I had struck up a friendship with bartender Walter Bolzonella that was largely fueled by a level of tipping warped by my unfamiliarity with the euro/dollar exchange rate.

"Walter, what should I order?" (Jews have no clue about how to order mixed drinks; if Walter didn't suggest something fast, I was going to fall back to my normal mixed drink order: chocolate milk).



Room with a view

"Signore, I know you will love the special Buona Notte cocktail I made for George Clooney when he was here for

the premiere of his film 'Good Night, Good Luck.' "

So I tried it. It was awesome. What an awesome place. Walter wrote down the recipe for me and I promised I would introduce the Buona Notte to a new generation of Americans (well, Iowans) and that I would give him credit. I have not even tried to actually prepare this drink even once, since substantially less effort is required to open up a bottle of Yoo-Hoo, but I thought you might like to give it a try: BUONA NOTTE

Serve in an old-fashioned glass:

- 1/2 unpeeled lemon, diced into small pieces
  - a tablespoon of cane sugar
  - a strip of cucumber peel
  - a ginger round
  - 3-4 drops of angostura
- Pestle well, then add:
- 50g of vodka
  - 50g of cranberry juice
  - Complete with ice flakes. Serve with a straw.

Celebrities love the Cipriani because of its seclusion, its luxury service (a chilled bottle of Prosecco and a personal note from the hotel's managing director, Natale Rusconi, welcomed us to our room, with its terrace overlooking the Grand Canal), and the fact that it is a mere five minutes by private launch from its location on the Island of Giudecca to the Piazza San Marco. Casanova used to prowl the private gardens here. Surrounded by the gentle waters of the lagoon, and filled with an attentive staff dressed in formal whites, the



Hotel Cipriani staff prepare for Festa

Cipriani makes you feel like you are at sea on a luxury Italian cruise ship. Where else among the cramped canals and precious "land" of Venice could you find a hotel with its own massive swimming pool and spa? Excuse me, I'd love to talk more, but I think I see Steven Spielberg on the lido deck. He looks like he is in the mood for some poolside schmoozing.

I had been in Venice for fifteen minutes and I already was in love. I quickly developed a plan to become fluent in Italian and get a job as the Cipriani's pool maintenance man (a secret expertise of mine), with the goal of spending the rest of my life here.

But first, I needed to become the first person to make his inaugural trip to the Piazza San Marco by walking there. Our timing was perfect: tonight was the annual Festa del Redentore, an authentic local Venetian tradition that became one of the funniest and scariest evenings of our lives!

continued on page 12

## HADASSAH Performs Miracles in Israel and the United States

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## United Way Donors

Did you know that you can designate part or all of your United Way contribution to Jewish Family Services?

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**Jewish Family Life Education** - Sponsorship of community-wide programs

**Volunteer Opportunities** - Numerous volunteer projects

**Tzedakah** - Last year assisted 180 community members in need

## Thank you

to all who have contributed through United Way. Please remember that your gift to Jewish Family Services through United Way has to be re-designated each year.



The Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines is a beneficiary of United Way



**Elaine Steinger**  
Executive Director

## Now More Than Ever

### **Tzedakah in a Troubled Economy**

This is the worst economic crisis since The Great Depression. Jewish Federation agencies are responding to an alarming increase in requests for emergency assistance; many from people who were fine...before the economy plummeted. They need food, financial aid, jobs, and help with Jewish education tuition. Our friends, people who have always been self-sufficient, are now falling through the cracks. How do you or your family members get help? Contact me, Jewish Family Services Director and Federation Executive Director, Elaine Steinger, at 277-6321 x211 or Pat Nawrocki, Jewish Family Services Social Worker x215.

### **What is the Federation doing?**

We constantly monitor trends and needs throughout our community. The Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines has a high rating for its efficiency – in good times and bad. Costs are kept very low in order to maximize all of our donated dollars. The Federation will make its budget for 2008, but as we prepare the 2009 budget we must take into account extraordinary new circumstances.

We must trust that the economy will rebound...and so will our long-term investments. Thanks to our excellent advisors and investment volunteers, our portfolio is secure. However, the markets in the short term will mean less income today to support our agencies.

### **Why Give to the All-in-One Annual Campaign Now?**

The Federation must make sure that, **now more than ever**, there is help for all who need it. This campaign funds our family of essential humanitarian and social services. Every contribution, even a small one, makes a significant impact.

**This is the time to prioritize your giving.** There are many people and corporations in the Des Moines area to support a multitude of worthy causes. However, there are only 3,000 Jewish community members to take care of our synagogues and the vital Federation services of education for our youth, care of our fragile seniors and Israel where the weak dollar overseas has forced major cutbacks in services. This economic crisis won't end soon.

The media speaks of a great recession, but it is important to note that the percentage of major gifts represented by bequests and deferred gifts peaked at some 70% during the depths of the Depression in 1933. Now more than ever, make caring for your greater Jewish family a priority in your giving.

– Elaine Steinger, Federation Executive Director



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# Out of the Ashes

HONORING OUR LOCAL SURVIVORS  
ON THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF KRISTALLNACHT  
“NIGHT OF BROKEN GLASS”







On November 5th, the Jewish Federation and the Jewish congregations honored the legacy of the past and present survivors of the Holocaust who have resided in Central Iowa.

Guest speaker was Neil Salowitz, President of the Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines who provided a brief history of Kristallnacht, the massive pogrom in Germany considered to be "the beginning of the Holocaust," and who then addressed a broader theme – of the joy and honor, and legacy shared with us by the survivors of the Holocaust who chose to live their lives here in our community.

"We must never forget what happened on Kristallnacht in 1938 and during the dark months and years that followed," said Salowitz. "In particular, we must teach this history diligently unto our children. They must know that there is evil in the world and that some of it is directed toward Jews."

I am thankful, however, that the events I have just described for you are not the end of the story. As there is evil in the world, so too there is great goodness. It's that goodness that we should focus on this evening. For out of the ashes of Kristallnacht and the Holocaust, there arose people who not only survived the horror but transcended it, dedicating their lives to enriching the life of the Jewish communities in which they settled.

We have several of those special people here this evening. They have brought to our community their memories, their passion and their dedication to telling their individual stories—not just to warn us, but to inspire us. They have visited with school children and have written about their experiences. In 1995, Adele Anolik put together a book detailing the lives of survivors in our community for the Federation's commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camps. In preparing for this talk, I read those histories. The anguish and pain experienced by these people broke my heart...and their strength, courage and determination made my spirit soar. They live among us as witness and as testament to the unquenchable fire that burns in the Jewish heart for justice, for freedom, and for the G-d of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, of Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah. Their presence in our community has been a great gift to us.

And so it is fitting that we honor those Holocaust survivors who are with us this evening, and through them, all of the survivors who have shared their lives with us. Although the words are hardly adequate, we say, "thank you" to all of you—those who are with us this evening, and those who no longer are. We want you to know that we love you all very much...and that we will never forget."

**Pictured: 1. (From Left) Adele Anolik and Neil Salowitz; 2. Thelma Kardon and Jody Hramits; 3. Judy and Rosita Rabinovitz; 4. Jacob and Paula Waizman; 5. Alvin and Dorothy Kirsner; 6. Cantor Deborah Bletstein and Danny Malina; 7. Linda Fishman and Peter Pintus; 8. Heidi Moskowitz and Lyanna Grund; 9. Rabbi David Kaufman and Mark Schlenker, Honorary German Consul; 10. Rabbi Beryl Padorr and David Anolik; 11. Tracy Engman Finkelshteyn; 12. David Wicczner; 13. Yitzi, Mayeer and Rabbi Aaron Schwarzbaum and Michael Libbie; 14. Logan, Ameena and Tammy Abdulghani and Jami and Megan Schnoebelen; 15. Meyer Shnurman; 16. Warner Bergh; 17. Linda Fishman, Bud Hockenberg and Carol Brown; 18. Dr. Robert and Debbie Gitchell and Ruth and Herbert David; 19. Neil Salowitz, Fred Lorber, Debra Salowitz, Debbie Gitchell and Judy Deutch.**



# Two-Gun Cohen

By Marvin Tokayer

As featured in SASSON 2007, reprinted with permission. SASSON is an annual Canadian Luxury publication geared to a Jewish demographic. SASSON functions both as a lifestyle magazine and an upscale resource for Jewish celebrations and can be found at [www.sassonmagazine.com](http://www.sassonmagazine.com).

Two-Gun Cohen cried only twice in his life: when his father died and when he learned of the untimely demise of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, whom he regarded as his hero. At the private funeral of the first president of China, Two-Gun Cohen was the only foreigner present, for he was considered family. Dressed in top hat and tails, Cohen led the procession that paid tribute to the father of modern China.

Dr. Sun's successor, Chiang Kai-shek, held the loyal and trusted servant of China's first president in the highest regard, and appointed Cohen a general in the Chinese army, making him not only the first Jew, but the first person of European descent to hold such a post in the Chinese military. Cohen continued to prove his worth to the new administration as well. He was among the first to recognize the danger posed by Japan, a small country with a large population that had its sights firmly fixed on expansion, and warned China to consider Japan its primary enemy.

Cohen also alerted Chiang Kai-shek to the internal threat presented by a large group of Soviet agents within government ranks, the members of which were subsequently purged. As a precaution, Cohen helped train Chinese civilians and farmers to defend their country in the event of a foreign invasion. To rouse them, he provided evidence of Japanese genocidal ambitions: a gas cylinder used during the Sino-Japanese war.

When China was invaded by Japan in 1937, Cohen supplied weapons to the Chinese and provided intelligence for the British. On December 7, 1941, the day of the infamous Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Cohen inauspiciously found himself in Japanese-occupied Hong Kong. Incarcerated in the notorious Stanley Prison, Cohen was beaten and tortured by his Japanese oppressors but refused to divulge any information. He was finally released as part of an unusual prisoner exchange in 1942 and repatriated to Canada, where he was greeted by both welcoming admirers and quizzical immigration officers who had never before heard of a Canadian general in the Chinese army.

The end of the world war was also the beginning of the civil war between hostile factions in China, ultimately dividing the country into two warring states. Under Communist rule, mainland China was led by Mao Zedong and became known as the People's Republic of China. Chiang Kai-shek headed the Republic of China, which established itself in Taiwan. Both leaders detested each other, but were deferential towards Two-Gun Cohen, the only person allowed to fly directly from Taipei (Taiwan's capital) to Beijing, as both Chinas

trusted him. In fact, both states utilized Cohen's services to convey top-secret messages and extend peace feelers between themselves.

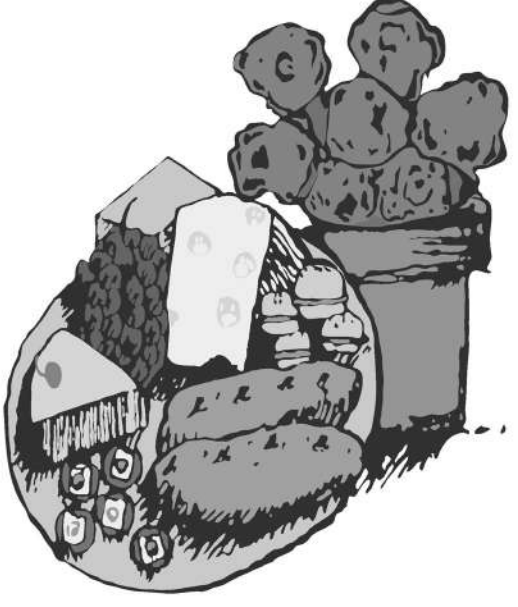

Despite all these accomplishments, Two-Gun Cohen likely achieved his greatest triumph after he had retired and was living quietly in Montreal.

The United Nations, the organization born of the Second World War with a mandate to ensuring lasting world peace, had its origins in San Francisco. One of the most important issues on the agenda soon after its formation was the question of whether the partition of Palestine into two states – one Jewish and one Arab – should be a matter placed before the General Assembly. A veto by any member nation would scuttle the debate and thwart any plans for a future Jewish state.

The Americans favoured the partition proposal on ideological grounds; the French planned to vote for it to assuage their guilt for their mistreatment of the Jews during the Holocaust; and the Soviets supported it as a ploy to push the British out of the Middle East. Opposed to the plan, of course, were the entire Arab orbit and any country they could entice to their side, including China, which accepted their "Asia for the Asians" propaganda strategy.

The outcome was by no means certain; many fence-sitting nations were subject to intense, last-minute lobbying from both sides. Zionist leaders in San Francisco were desperate to meet with the Chinese delegates to present their position, but were refused an audience. Rabbi Israel Goldstein, an astute member of the Zionist group, made a quick phone call to Montreal, bringing Cohen to San Francisco for an emergency meeting. When informed that a diplomat by the name of General Wu was leading the Chinese delegation to the UN, Cohen smiled knowingly and announced that it was he who had appointed Wu a general. Cohen met with Wu the following morning and the rest is history. China did not vote against the partition, but instead abstained, contributing to the passage of the motion. After 2000 years of exile, the State of Israel would now become a reality.

Two-Gun Cohen died in September, 1970, at the age of 83, after returning to his family in England. His funeral was attended by representatives of both Chinas – who were still at war with each other – demonstrating their deep respect for the loyal friend of China. His tombstone was etched with traditional Kohanic and English inscriptions, memorializing the British Jew. But what sets this headstone apart from all the others in the austere Manchester cemetery is an inscription in Chinese characters that a grateful Mme. Sun Yat-sen, the Vice Chairman of the People's Republic of China, penned, acknowledging Mah Kun as a hero of China. It is a tribute to the man who was, if not by birth, then certainly at heart, a true brother to the Chinese people.



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In the Kitchen With  
**Tracy Engman Finkelshteyn**

by Karen Engman



Tracy Engman Finkelshteyn was born and raised in Des Moines. She is the daughter of Larry and Suzanne Engman and the sister of David and Rob Engman.

Tracy graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1980, and then attended Northwestern University, earning a degree in Music Education. She received her Masters of Music in Violin Performance from Yale University and her Doctorate of Music in Violin from Northwestern University.

She currently is a member of the 1st violin section of the Des Moines Symphony and the Belin Quartet. She also teaches violin to intermediate and above level students. When she lived in North Carolina, she taught at North Carolina State and was the Concertmaster of the Raleigh Civic

Symphony. She also toured with a number of bands and singers, including Gene Pitney (“Town without Pity”) and Frank Sinatra. Tracy said the accommodations were always first rate when traveling with “Frank”! Most recently she played violin for Cathy Lesser Mansfield’s production “The Sparks Fly Upward.”

Tracy and her two daughters Becca (age 13) and Anya (8) have been back in Des Moines for four years. They have two cats, a dog and an aquarium. They love to watch movies together when the girls are not too busy with dance and gymnastics and school related activities. Becca plays the piano as well as sings while Anya is a beginning violinist.

Tracy serves on the Jewish Federation Board of Directors and is a chair for the Jewish Federation Community School. Reading, gardening and cooking are just a few of Tracy’s favorite pastimes. She finds cooking to be relaxing as well as fun.

At first it was hard for her to recall a dish to share because most of her recipes are not written down so she said she would have to actually prepare a batch of this Butternut Squash Soup and measure the seasonings. Tracy recommends serving this winter favorite with a green salad with a balsamic vinaigrette and a loaf of hot, crusty bread

with unsalted butter.

The JEWISH PRESS thanks Tracy for sharing this delicious soup recipe with our readers. It should be perfect for a cold winter evening. Remember, if you have a recipe to share or a question, call Karen Engman (274-3300) or email (aengmandsm@yahoo.com).

**Butternut Squash Soup**

A Recipe from Tracy Engman Finkelshteyn


Parve

- 4 tbs unsalted butter
- 1 large shallot, chopped fine
- 3 pounds butternut squash (approx. 1 large) quartered, reserving seeds and strings
- 6 cups water

- salt
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 tsp dark brown sugar
- pinch freshly grated nutmeg

1. Melt the butter in a large, heavy-bottomed stockpot or Dutch oven over medium-low until foaming. Add the shallot stirring frequently until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the seeds and strings stirring occasionally until butter turns a saffron color, about 4 minutes.
2. Add the water and 1 tsp salt and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce to medium-low, place squash cut-side down in a steamer basket in the pot. Cover, steam until tender, about 30 minutes. Transfer squash to baking sheet. When cool enough to handle, scoop out the squash and discard skin.
3. Strain the liquid into a second bowl. Discard the solids. There should be approx. 2 1/2 - 3 cups liquid. Rinse and dry the pot.
4. Puree the squash in batches in blender, pulsing on low. Add enough liquid to obtain a smooth consistency. Transfer puree to the clean pot. Add cream, brown sugar and as much of the remaining liquid as needed to reach desired consistency. Warm over medium-low until hot. Stir in nutmeg and salt to taste.
5. Serve immediately with a drizzle of balsamic vinegar on the top.

[variation: Curried Squash Soup: add 2 tsp madras curry to the blender while pureeing; top with dollop of cilantro-yogurt (4 tbs plain yogurt, 2 tbs minced fresh cilantro leaves, 1 tsp lime juice, 1/8 tsp salt)]



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## Super Sunday from page 1

Jews have always felt the urgency of Jewish needs very deeply. We have always responded in times of greatest need by giving tzedakah most generously even in times of economic recession. With the world in turmoil, more of our brothers and sisters are in crisis. This economic crisis won't likely be ending any time soon. **Your gift makes a very real difference in the lives of those Jews who are most affected in these troubled economic times, those in need of housing, food, heat, transportation, medical and pharmaceutical needs.**

The Federation needs your increased financial support now to help prevent the loss of the essential Jewish services we provide to you, your family, your friend's family and to others. Your gift will determine what your Federation can achieve in this community during the coming year. There are only 3000 of us in Des Moines to take care of our needs. Now more than ever...

**Life/Israel from page 5** When we consider a world without Israel today, in our lifetime, we need to pay attention to the reality of a resurgence of ethnocentricity that, once again, relegates the Jew to the category of Other or Undesirable. The recently released results of the respected Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project find 46% of Spaniards rate Jews unfavorably and more than 33% of Russians and Poles echo this opinion. 25% of Germans and 20% of the French who were interviewed also express negative opinions about Jews. While these numbers may not overly alarm, what IS alarming is the fact that these countries are showing a rapid upswing in such attitudes in the years between 2004 to the present. As you may know, Jews are more favorably viewed in Europe than in Arab states, where there is explicit hostility toward Jews and Israel. One of the most obvious challenges comes from Iran's president who has likened Israel to "a stinking corpse."

An extensive study in Argentina addresses the present threats to their Jewish citizens: "Through this Report on Anti-Semitism we make the reader face anti-Semitic events which [have] occurred...with a strong increase of anti-Semitic paintings on public spaces – journalist editorials and public acts with alarming expressions displaying a prejudiced culture and feelings underlying in the depths of the society. In the desecration of graves, in the selection criteria for working positions, in the seemingly harmless social gossip, prejudice and discrimination are constantly, daily and painfully present in our social tissue."

Furthermore, "The New York Times" explains that: "The Jewish Agency for Israel [has] reported a doubling in the number of French Jews who arrived [in Israel] last year to more than 2,000 each year as a result of anti-Semitic attacks and the overwhelming Muslim influence that now exists in much of Europe. But if there is no Israel, where will they go?"

As we face these realities, I am reminded of the opening pages of Elie Wiesel's first memoir, "Night." As the narrator of his Holocaust experiences, he recounts the story of Moshe, the Beadle. Moshe is miraculously saved from a mass murder by the Gestapo and believes that he was spared only to return to his village in Transylvania to warn the inhabitants of the impending cataclysm that is about to befall them, yet they all think he is mad. Moshe cries out: "Jews, listen to me...I wanted to come back to

Sighet to tell you my story so that you could prepare yourselves while there is still time..." Wiesel responds, "That was toward the end of 1942...I continued to devote myself to my studies. My father was occupied with his business and the doings of the community...My mother began to think that it was high time to find a suitable young man for Hilda." And so they waited...even as the Final Solution was determined at Wannsee the following month.

On this, our most holy day of the calendar year, our Torah reading from Leviticus commands us to practice self-denial...you shall do no manner of work, neither the citizen nor the alien who resides among you. For on this day, atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you of all your sins; you shall be clean before the Lord. Even as we set this day apart from work, I posit that there is no prohibition against planning positive, unwavering action on behalf of the state of Israel during this next year. And I invite you to do exactly that today... remembering that in Truth, Israel DOES live...She is our reality and Hope... Hatikvah. As we consider what Jewish life, past and present could be without her—in George Bailey fashion—it is essential that we listen to experts like our recent scholar-in-residence, Michael Cook, who said he is not convinced that Israel will survive the next 40 years due to waning Jewish interest and support. I ask, no, I implore you to join me in proactive support for our homeland—whether through AIPAC, which is my vehicle of choice for making my little voice BIGGER, or through direct financial support or simply by calling your congressional leaders.

My passion for the State of Israel goes beyond worries about our past or future. I inherited these indescribable feelings from my father and share these words on the almost mystical love that I feel, expressed most eloquently by Rabbi Harold Kushner...

"Over the years, I have found that the issue that puzzles non-Jews the most about Judaism is the role that Israel plays in our minds and souls. The attachment is emotional, not nostalgic or theological... neither is the attachment religious; nonreligious feel as strongly about Israel as do our more religious neighbors..."

What then is the nature of this attachment? Israel symbolizes for us the idea that we are a people, not only a belief system...the existence of the Jewish state of Israel is an expression of the world's willingness to let the Jewish people live. It is nearly impossible for non-Jews to appreciate the meaning of the scar that the Holocaust, and the centuries of persecution leading up to it, has left on the Jewish soul. I don't know of any other people that wakes up virtually on a daily basis wondering if the world will let them live...Israel says to us, "Despite the haters and the sick minds out there, there is a place for the Jewish people in the world."

– Shana Tova, Everyone...Thank you for the privilege of sharing my thoughts.

**Mace from page 1** The Company's education outreach programs, OPERA Iowa and OPERAtion Opera received the Iowa Arts Council's 2002 ArtsBuildCommunities "Arts in Education" Award and the 1998 Governor's Award for "Outstanding Service to the State of Iowa".

This position was authorized by Planning and Budgeting Committee and passed by the Board in June with our 2008-

09 budget. We expect that this one-year position will be a good investment for our campaign during these difficult times.

## Venice from page 6

The Festa has an amazing past and present. Between 1575 and 1577, Venice was suffering from a horrible outbreak of the plague in which more than a third of the population died. The local government voted to build a church and plea for divine help. When the city was declared disease-free the following summer, it was decided to celebrate Venice's deliverance every year with a festival.

The Festa is highlighted by the construction of a 333 meter long temporary votive bridge, called the Ponte Votivo, between the Redentore Church on Giudecca and the main island of Venice. At night, the Grand Canal is filled with Venetians who have staked out locations on Giudecca, and in boats, to watch an amazing fireworks show and gondola regatta. From the Cipriani, we had a perfect location to watch fireworks that rivaled the greatest shows ever presented, with explosive techniques passed down through the generations, directly from Marco Polo upon his return from China. The Cipriani's exclusive fireworks viewing area was roped off from the dense throngs of local partiers on Giudecca's shore, but we decided to jump the ropes and walk across the votive bridge to Venice. Lei vive solo una volta!

Picking our way through crowds of Italian picnickers, musicians, drunks, performers, and families was overwhelming. The only thing missing was a drenching rainstorm and Hendrix playing the Star Spangled Banner on a burning guitar. We finally wormed our way across the bridge and tried to find our way to the Piazza San Marco. Easier said than done. The pedestrian streets of Venice are poorly marked and completely unrecognizable at night. We followed anyone who seemed to be going anywhere, but it always turned out that they were lost too. Eventually we turned a corner and found ourselves standing in the deserted center of the famous Piazza. Warm summer breezes mixed with the refuse of the days' horde of tourists and pigeons – while crews dismantled the concert stage that had been erected for an Elton John concert. Magic.

I can't keep this tourist stuff up much longer. [Editor's note: Go ahead. You have been relatively well behaved this month. Besides, I think we prefer your paranoid anti-Semitic perspective to your boring travelogue narrator anyway.]



Preparing for the big night

It occurred to me that Venice has a special meaning for Jews, since it has the reputation of being our original safe haven. It turns out that reputation is unfounded. Venice was not particularly nice to the Jews, and may have been directly responsible for extending anti-Semitism another 500 years.

Jews settled in Venice in the 13th Century, but were not allowed to live in the main part of the city at that time, and instead lived on the island of ... Giudecca. Say it out loud. Things were never that

great for us in Venice. In 1394, Jews were required to wear a yellow badge to identify themselves (sound familiar?), and later a red hat that sounds like it would have been especially humiliating for Jews who happened to be Yankee fans.



Fireworks over Venice during the Festa del Redentore.

After the Spanish Inquisition, Venice was one of the few places willing to provide "refuge" to Jews. In 1516, the Jews of Spain and Portugal flocked to Venice after the local doges decided to admit us.

But there was a catch. The doges had a little history of their own to make: the Jews would be confined to the tiny, dirty Venetian island of Nuova Ghetto, the world's first "ghetto." And there would be some humiliating rules that a people with nowhere else to go would be forced to accept: the Jews could only leave the ghetto during the day and were locked in at night. We were permitted to work only in pawnshops and in professions such as ... moneylender. One of our all-time favorites! And more yellow badges, which we have grown to dislike over the centuries.

Even Shakespeare got wind of the Jewish restrictions in Venice and created his famous Merchant based upon what he knew audiences would love: a depiction of a devilish Jew who is abused by the Christians of Venice, robbed and deserted by his own daughter, and forced to abandon his religion and convert to Christianity. Or maybe it is a play about religious intolerance:

*"Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, do we not revenge?"*

Shakespeare may have subtly recognized that there were two sides to the popular depiction of Jews, but the "comedy" assumed an extended life of its own by depicting the unscrupulous money lending practices of Jews. This was not ultimately helpful to us. Thanks a lot Shakespeare, you jerk!

The morning after the amazing Festa, we decided to visit the Ghetto, which still stands today. Our story of empty alleyways, orthodox Jewish sentries, abandoned synagogues, and the angry proprietor of a Judaica shop, will be in our next column. And to keep you interested, I will throw in some romance and international intrigue. And some funny stuff that actually happened. Is that okay, Editor? [Editor's note: Yes.]

In our next episode: the hilarious story of Dropo, the Criminal Clown of Venice's Casino and the Thief of Tips, our beautiful night at Trattoria Sempione, and Murano: Island of Unwanted Purchases of Glassware. Ciao!

For more pictures of the Jews in Europe, including humorous captions and stories, check out [www.insaneworld.org](http://www.insaneworld.org). Write to the author at [iowadavid@me.com](mailto:iowadavid@me.com).



## [community news]

### Iowa Jewish Senior Life Center The Year That Was

In the past year...283 individuals experienced our outstanding care. The Alzheimer's/Memory Care Unit celebrated 2 years of success. The annual Luau, Therapy Olympics and Nursing Home Week celebrations made memories. "A Fine Affair in Fresh Air" renewed annual traditions, "Project Renewal" enhanced the environment of our 21-year-old facility. The Life Center Endowment Fund supported the escalating costs of care.

The Iowa Jewish Senior Life Center remains a vibrant and growing organization dedicated to meeting the health care needs of our community's elders and their families. The history of The Life Center has been energized by an understanding of the necessity of continuing change. The past year has been no exception.

Memory Care at Boulevard Place approaches its second year of operation. The exceptional programming in this unit has created a care environment second to none. For well over a year now, attention to the needs of Memory Care residents has evidenced itself in seeing every bed filled and a lengthening admission waiting list.

The past year saw the initiation and completion of a facility-wide, albeit somewhat limited, remodeling/redecoration, updating The Life Center's interior spaces - which, in some cases, had not seen substantial change since the facility's opening in 1987. While major changes were made, much remains to be done to permit enjoyment of aesthetics worthy of The Life Center's reputation for excellence.

For some fifty years, The Life Center celebrated its achievements through its annual Golden Ball. That tradition came to an abrupt halt in 2001. This September, a new tradition was born with "A Fine Affair in Fresh Air" held at The Caspe Terrace. The event proved remarkably successful, exceeding its original fundraising goals. That success will now permit much-needed additional renovations of The Life Center's physical plant, further enhancing the everyday lives of our residents. And, speaking of fundraising, The Life Center is now able to accept donations through its website [www.seniorlifecenter.org](http://www.seniorlifecenter.org).

The Life Center has joined with The Jewish Federation in a renewed commitment to explore areas where organizational interests intersect and where there can be mutual efforts made to serve a broadening spectrum of community needs.

## Mazel Tov



On the occasion of Mendele Goldstein's Upshernish and third birthday held 25 Kislev/ December 22. Mendele's parents are Rabbi Levi and Miriam Goldstein.

## In Memoriam

*We note with sorrow the recent passing of*

*Jack Blair*

*Col. Louis Erbstein*

*Ephraim Mogolow*

*Cantor Pinchas Spiro*

## INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE



Clergy, lay leaders, and choristers from various faiths participated in a very warm and moving second annual Interfaith

Thanksgiving service in November that included a combined choir from Faith Lutheran Church, Temple B'nai Jesurun and Tifereth Israel Synagogue. At left, some of the clergy who participated in the program, including Rabbi David Kaufman and Rabbi Beryl Padorr. Not pictured: Cantor Deborah Bletstein, Cantorial Soloist Laura Berkson, Rabbinical Assistant Peter Pintus. Tifereth Israel lay leader Steven Altman and JCRC Director Mark Finkelstein also took part.

## HARD AT WORK ON THE DIRECTORY



A lot of hard work went into the production of The Fall 2008 Community Directory. Thanks are extended to Susan Seidenfeld, Toni Urban and Joyce Swartz, (pictured) in addition Shirley Berg, Vicki Givant, Robbie Winick (not pictured) and Federation Staff Member Cathie Jensen for their hours of dedication to this project. Copies may be purchased at the Federation office at \$12 per book or three for \$30.

## Let us know...

Has your family had a celebration? A Bar/Bat Mitzvah? How about sharing with the community? We'd all love to see photos of your anniversary party, new grandchild, son's wedding, or any simcha.

The **Jewish Press** is **your** community newspaper and we'd like to publish more local news, but you need to tell us about it. Please help us to sharpen our local focus with your news. Send photos, information or stories to [jcrc@dmjfed.org](mailto:jcrc@dmjfed.org).

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— at The Caspe Terrace

Usage of The Caspe Terrace is limited to the Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines, its employees, Jewish Federation Members and to United Way affiliates. Events are limited to Federation community programming; for Members of the Federation for occasions that are significant life stage events and religious in nature. A maintenance fee shall be charged to individuals to cover costs incurred of these events.

## OLSON-LARSEN GALLERIES

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Iowa Jewish Historical Society

# FALL EVENT: Dinner and Premiere of “The Sparks Fly Upward”



**November 8 Patron Dinner**

Saturday, November 8 was a very special evening for the Iowa Jewish Historical Society. (See the photos above taken by Janice Rosenberg, President of the Iowa Jewish Historical Society.) A record-setting crowd enjoyed the ambience of Hoyt Sherman Place for dinner and the world premiere of Cathy Lesser Mansfield’s musical drama “The Sparks Fly Upward.” Nearly 90 people made this one of the largest Patron Dinners in the IJHS’ history and showed the organization’s support for Mansfield’s work. Mansfield spoke briefly at the dinner, welcoming everyone and thanking the dinner guests for their support and encouragement that so many have given her during the years it took to write and stage the musical drama.

IJHS President Janice Rosenberg thanked everyone for their continued support of the Iowa Jewish Historical Society and asked the group to join her in recognizing Central Iowa’s Holocaust survivors who were the Historical Society’s and Cathy Lesser Mansfield’s guests for the evening—Esther and Warner Bergh, Ruth and Herb David, Louise Fishel, Linda Fishman, Peter Pintus, Frances and Meyer Shnurman, and Jacob and Paula Waizman. A special thank you went to Karen Engman, who has been the driving force behind the Patron Dinners for many years.

Rosenberg ended her remarks by urging everyone in the audience to continue to seek out and preserve the pieces of our past. The Iowa Jewish Historical Society has been entrusted with unique artifacts and manuscripts that connect the Des Moines community to other Jewish communities in Iowa and throughout the world. It is critical that the IJHS and the Jewish community continue to focus on this mission.

## IJHS News

### The Coming Months

At the end of November, several members of the Iowa Jewish Historical Society—Board President Janice Rosenberg, Board Members Heidi Moskowitz and Susan Seidenfeld, and Interim Director Sandi Yoder—visited the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium to view “From Distant Places to Dubuque’s Shores: 175 Years of Jewish Life,” an exhibit produced by the Alexander Levi Heritage Project. The IJHS is considering bringing the exhibit to Des Moines during the coming year. Levi, a Jew of Spanish origin and a French and German speaking immigrant from Alsace, was the first Jew to become a naturalized citizen of the United States and the first naturalized American to sign a state charter.

The IJHS is also looking forward to additional new projects in the coming year and creating new ways to involve more volunteers in the Historical Society. Projects will include rearranging the collections storage area for more effective use of space and more accessibility to the collections; reviewing and updating donation records; initiating a campaign to acquire more photos and artifacts relating to the IJHS mission before they are lost; researching possible partnerships with area schools in the development of traveling trunks that can be used to address specific themes in the curriculum; reviewing current exhibits and deciding on possible new exhibits, updating and adding to the web site, and so much more.

To accomplish all of this, IJHS will need more volunteers who are willing to donate their time and expertise to save the history of Jews in Iowa and educate people across the state about our important contributions to the history and culture of Iowa. More details about the projects and a chance to sign up for volunteer projects will be announced in the next edition of The Jewish Press.

### New Lifetime Member

IJHS board member Joyce Swartz received a very special present for her recent birthday! Joyce’s husband Ben and her family surprised Joyce with a Lifetime Membership in the Iowa Jewish Historical Society! The membership was presented to Joyce at the October board meeting. Joyce is Membership Chair of the IJHS. The \$5,000 membership will be used to increase the IJHS endowment and/or to help with a special project mutually agreed upon by the member and the board. Please join us in thanking Ben, Joyce, and their family for this wonderful gift to the IJHS.

For more information about the IJHS contact Sandi Yoder, Interim Director, at 515-205-0379.



## [upcoming events]

JCRC Current Affairs Committee presents:

### “Islamic Anti-Semitism: Why They Hate Us”



**Caption: “The sixtieth anniversary of the Holocaust.”**

**THURSDAY, JAN 22  
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM**

Location: Iowa Jewish Senior Life Center,  
Board Room.

An introduction to the sources and  
current manifestations of Islamic Anti-  
Semitism. Includes discussion.

Instructor: Mark Finkelstein

All are welcome. Free of charge.  
To register, call 277-6321 x 218 or e-mail  
dorothea@dmjfed.org

**2nd Annual  
Temple B’nai Jeshurun and  
Tifereth Israel Synagogue  
PURIMSPIEL! with performances on  
March 7 and 8  
GET INVOLVED! Call either TBJ or TI**

### SAVE THE DATE!

**Cantor Deborah Bletstein  
and Cantor Randy Herman  
in Concert**

**With original music from their album  
Meet Me on 110th Street**

**Plus special guests to be announced!**

**Sunday, April 26, 2009, 7:00 p.m.**

**at Tifereth Israel Synagogue  
Dessert reception to follow**

## We look forward to speaking with you on Super Sunday, February 1, 2009



**The Board and Staff of the  
of the Jewish Federation  
thank you for your generosity.**

#### Mission Statement:

To further the continuity and welfare of the Des Moines, Ames and other Central Iowa Jewish communities,  
and to enable these Jewish communities to maximize their resources by facilitating the coordination of the philanthropic,  
educational and cultural activities of the congregations, Federation committees, donors and volunteers;  
and to support financially the requisite programs to fulfill its responsibility to Israel and world Jewry.

#### Leadership from page 1

The participants' enthusiasm, energy, and commitment has made this journey a rewarding experience. Of all the Federation activities we have been involved with, being the mentors of the Leadership Forum has been one of the most fulfilling and meaningful for us.

Laura Sparks, as a Leadership Forum participant, said, “George and I are so grateful to be offered this opportunity. This is a remarkable group of people from the Temple, Tifereth and Beth El, committed to strengthening and supporting our community, whom we otherwise might not have gotten to know.”

Sparks continued, “All of this has been made possible through grants and your gifts to the Federation. We are your future directors, presidents and board members of your Federation and synagogues, and maybe one day I will be soliciting funds for another leadership group made up of your own children, or mine. I sincerely hope so, and I look forward to that day.”

Graduation will be January 18th. Our culminating activity will be a 10-day mission trip to Israel in June. We anticipate over twenty participants. Thanks to the generosity of the Jewish Federation, the Steven Blank Memorial Leadership Fund and the Belin Outreach Fund, the trip will be highly subsidized.

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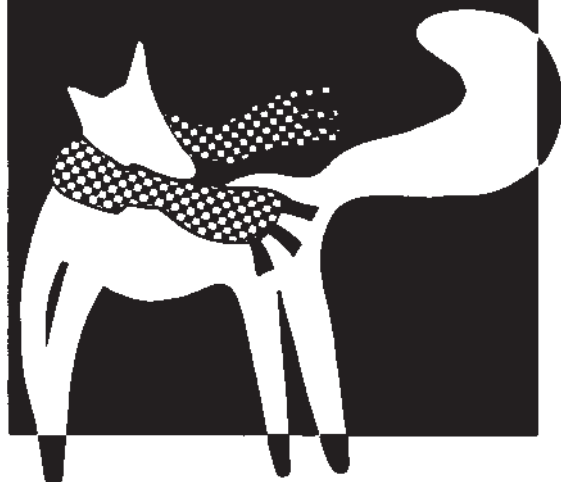
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**Jews Rock!** A Celebration of Rock and Roll's Jewish Heritage presented by the Ohringer Family Education Day



Jewish Federation Community School families and members of the community met at The Caspe Terrace on Sunday, November 16, for a memorable event.

Tifereth Israel Synagogue's Minyan and Bible study group gathered the children to hear Rabbi Brian Leiken lecture and sing about Jewish influence on Rock and Roll. By the end of his performance the kids were on their feet singing along. They learned how their Jewish tradition was important to the heritage of music shared by the world.

A multimedia presentation included movie clips starting with the "Jazz Singer" in the 1930s, a news story featuring an interview with Bob Dylan (born Robert Zimmerman) and showcased Janet Macoska's photos. Rabbi Leiken spoke about the history of Rock and Roll as a part of the Jewish experience and commented on how Rock and Roll music can be embraced beyond the bar mitzvah for future generations.

Exhibited were 25 large prints of photojournalist Janet Macoska that included Gene Simmons, Paul Stanley, Ashley Tisdale, Matisyahu, Paula Abdul, Billy Joel, Melissa Manchester and Vanessa Carlton.

Students made musical paper tambourines and bookmarks in honor of the upcoming National Jewish Book Month and sang karaoke of popular songs.

Over 200 books were on sale at the Annual JFCS Book Fair fundraiser Jews Rock! A Celebration of Rock and Roll's Jewish Heritage, which are still available for purchase from the JFCS office, 277-5566.

**Federation, Project Elijah Foundation and Mazon Erect Sukkah at the Iowa Hunger Summit**

The Second Annual Iowa Hunger Summit was held in Des Moines on October 14, 2008. The Iowa Hunger Summit was established to bring together Iowans from diverse backgrounds and various parts of the state to enhance a sense of unity among Iowa organizations, businesses and other projects working in an anti-hunger capacity; and to encourage greater linkages between and partnerships among participants, all toward stepping up and widening the state's activities to alleviate hunger.

Eric Schockman, President of Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger, gave the keynote address. Those in attendance dined upon foods designed to feed the hungry including Elijah's Kosher Manna, produced by the Project Elijah Foundation. A reception was held that evening at the home of Alan and Janice Zuckert in which Des Moines clergy and Federation board members had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Schockman.

This year the Hunger Summit fell during the holiday of Sukkot. As a method of educating Iowans about this important Jewish holiday and its ties to feeding the hungry, the Jewish Federation constructed a demonstration Sukkah outside of the banquet hall. The Sukkah was not only present during the hunger luncheon but also during the World Food Prize three day conference, known as "The Borlaug Dialogue."

The Sukkah was the perfect spot for the Jewish Federation, Project Elijah Foundation, and Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger; to distribute their materials regarding the various programs that each of these organizations run to combat hunger.

Former Senators George McGovern and Robert Dole received the 2008 World Food Prize for their inspired, collaborative leadership that has encouraged a global commitment to school feeding and enhanced school attendance and nutrition for millions of the world's poorest children, especially girls. Since the establishment of the McGovern-Dole feeding program more than 22 million children in 41 countries have been fed. What a fitting tribute to two men who have helped so many.

The World Food Prize, under the marvelous leadership and guidance of Ambassador Kenneth Quinn, has become the most significant observance of World Food Day anywhere around the globe. John Ruan, III and the Ruan family have been instrumental in the continuation and growth of this extraordinary program. The vision and practices of Dr. Norman Borlaug, founder of the World Food Prize, will endure for many years to come.



1. Rabbi Levi Goldstein, Neil Salowitz, Debra Salowitz, Cantor Debra Bletstein;  
2. Neil Salowitz, Rabbi Yossi Jacobson, Rabbi David Kaufman, Eric Schockman, President of MAZON, Rabbi Beryl Padorr; 3. Eric Schockman, Janice and Alan Zuckert;  
4. Project Elijah's Julie Kaufman, Exec. Dir., and Alan Zuckert, Chairman and Founder;  
5. Phil Blumberg staffing the informational sukkah.