

- ★ Join us at Nevele Grand Resort this June
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- ★ Letters from our Scholarship Recipients

NACHAS FROM JERUSALEM

Saturday, Shabbat, is a spiritual and holy day in Jerusalem. The street, in front of the King David Hotel, where Carmie and I stayed recently, is normally crowded with cars, buses and taxicabs and is now strangely empty. One feels the peace of Shabbat as nowhere else in the world.

That Shabbat, a lovely young woman, joined Carmie and me, at breakfast, and then we made our way to a beautiful small synagogue in the Yemin Moshe area, near the Windmill, where Carmie's mother and grandparents prayed. The young lady was Michel Berris, one of our scholarship recipients, who I have proudly described to some of you in the past. She is a graduate of MIT where she received her BS and MS, with honors, in Mechanical Engineering. With your help, she is now at the Technion University, where she is enrolled in getting her PHD, majoring in medical and surgical robotics and at the same time attending medical school.

She asked us to convey her very deep appreciation to all of you for the financial help she received, which she said, made it possible for her to continue her education.

Normally, Sunday in Israel is just another school or workday. However, that weekend was Purim and in Jerusalem, a walled city, there is a fourth day of celebration. As a result five more of our scholarship recipients, who had a day off from school, came to Jerusalem to meet with us. I kept thinking, how proud you all would have been, had you been there. Each one, in turn, told us of their love of Israel and thanked us, in the warmest way, for making their life-altering experience possible.

Time does not permit me to put a face on each of the students. But I would like to share the comments of a few.

Brett of Fredericksburg, VA: Graduate of University of Virginia, getting his Master's at Hebrew U. Preparing for a foreign policy career. Brett told us of growing up as the only Jew in a small, Southern town with a weak Jewish identity and an almost non-existent connection to Israel. Since living in Israel this past year, he has had a personal awakening with regard to his Jewishness and his devotion to the Jewish People, He has

immersed himself, by virtue of a liaison with the IDF, with learning about security threats facing Israel, and hopes to make a contribution. When asked about a high point, he said he was told that "he was the reason the State of Israel is here."

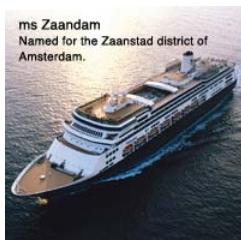
Naomi of Chestnut Hill, Mass: Academic star, graduate of Harvard, doing research at Weizmann Institute. Maybe someone here can explain to the rest of us, what she is doing? "Mathematical applications to molecular cellular biology using high resolution imaging." That's a mouthful! When asked about her most dramatic experience while in Israel and how it affected her, she described her emotions after a bus blew up near her. With great courage, she followed the example of the Israelis, shock and grief and after the victims went to the hospital and things were cleared up, they returned to what they were doing in a "normal" way! She also described the openness of Israelis...a chance or casual meeting with strangers results in an invitation to "come share a Shabbat with us." Loves Israel, loves the people! Major goal, to maintain a constant connection with Israel and to be involved with the Jewish community.

And if time permitted, I would share the stories of Raissa of Nashua, New Hampshire, of Penina of Highland Park, New York, and Ariella, of Fairfield, Connecticut. Yes, the thirteen students who you have helped this past year, are attending different universities and had diverse experiences during this difficult period but they share the same message." We couldn't have come to Israel without your help. Thank you and bless you for you have truly changed our lives."

The scholarship committee will meet next month to select the most outstanding students to receive a grant from the League. Last year we received 85 applications and I know we will exceed the number this year. Help us to say "Yes", to even more of these bright and bold students. They return to America, strengthened as knowledgably Jews and bring the message of ardent support of the State of the Jewish people. **You will find a pledge coupon on page 5. Please be generous and strengthen our future!**

JOIN THE AJLI ABOARD THE ms ZAANDAM

The musically themed *ms Zaandam* offers a unique shipboard atmosphere. Her décor includes artifacts and memorabilia representing various musical genres - from a Baroque-style Dutch pipe organ in the atrium to guitars signed by rock icons The Rolling Stones. Of course, guests enjoy Holland America's signature offerings, such as world-class cuisine in the Rotterdam Dining Room, which spans two decks and features Rosenthal china, starched linens, silver and fresh flowers.



A deposit of \$500.00 per person is due at the time of booking, with a final payment due on August 11, 2005. To insure the cabin of your choice, reserve now. Full refunds will be given until September 26, 2005, if necessary.

For further information call Hy Brown at 561-272-2314. For reservations call toll free: Walter Schaffrick 800-683-7447 ext. 77354, email: walt@cruisesonly.com.

Cruise Rates Include All Taxes

Inside Run of Ship*	\$1299 pp double
Category E Ocean View Deck	\$1489 pp double
Category D Ocean View Deck 2	\$1549 pp double
Balcony Run of Ship*	\$1899 pp double

*There may be some cabin assignments available in these categories; however, availability is minimal.

See enclosed brochure and registration.

**Space is VERY limited.
Send your deposit NOW!**

Join the AJLI aboard the "ms Zaandam" for a 10 night cruise - we will depart on December 11th from the port of Ft. Lauderdale. We will cruise to Half Moon Cay-Bahamas, Oranjestad-Aruba, Willemstad-Curacao, Gatun Lake, Panama Canal, Colon-Panama, and Puerto Limon-Costa Rica.

Included is a one-hour cocktail party and a complimentary meal in our private restaurant, The Pinnacle Grill.

NEW YEAR'S CARDS FOR SALE

Order your New Year's Cards now. Only \$10.00 for 10 cards with matching envelopes—FREE shipping.

YES, I would like to order some Greeting Cards:

Number of packages _____ @ \$10.00 each = \$ _____

INDICATE TYPE OF CARDS YOU WOULD LIKE

New Year's Cards # _____ Blank Greeting Cards # _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State Zip _____

Please mail this form along with your check made payable to American Jewish League for Israel to: AJLI, 450 7th Avenue, Suite 808, New York, NY 10123.

JOIN AJLI AT NEVELE GRAND RESORT THIS JUNE

FUN, FOOD, FRAILACH and FRIENDS

This coming June 5th, come away with the AMERICAN JEWISH LEAGUE FOR ISRAEL for a vacation filled with fun, entertainment, learning experiences and endless activities at the Nevele Grande Resort and Country Club in Ellenville, NY. The AJLI convention meets from June 5-9, 2005.

Here on 1,000 acres in the nearby and beautiful Catskill Mountains, one will find a 27-hole championship golf course, 4 racquetball courts, 23 tennis courts, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, boating, shuffleboard, bars, night club, hair salon and loads of other activities like bingo, aerobics, mah-jongg, canasta, bridge, yoga, and softball. If you want to relax and read a book, there are a lot of comfortable areas to just veg out.



For our 2nd year join the AJLI and Elderhostel's Charter program. This year's program includes the following topics: Broadway's Fabulous Fifties, Yiddish Theater, Religion. The Constitution and the Supreme Court.

The evenings will be filled with delicious **Kosher** dinners in our own dining room, followed by a different variety show each evening with music and dancing both before and after each exciting show.

All this and much more for the low, all-inclusive rates especially for the AJLI. The package is for 5 days and 4 nights in deluxe tower accommodations.

**RESERVATIONS WILL GO FAST,
SPACE IS LIMITED, SO PLEASE
SEND YOUR DEPOSIT AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE!**

Open to all members and their friends—First-come First-Served.
Use separate sheet of paper for additional guests.

AMERICAN JEWISH LEAGUE
FOR ISRAEL - NEVELE GRAND RESORT

RESERVATION FORM
JUNE 5 TO 9, 2005

NAME:.....

ADDRESS:.....

CITY:..... STATE:..... ZIP:.....

TELEPHONE: HOME:..... BUS:.....

DEPOSIT ENCLOSED:..... PERSONS @ \$150 EACH = \$.....

OPTIONAL ELDERHOSTEL:..... PERSONS @ \$125 EACH = \$.....

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$.....

IF OTHER THAN M/M, I WILL SHARE WITH:.....

I WOULD LIKE TO BE SEATED WITH:.....

Send check made payable to: American Jewish League for Israel to AJLI, PO Box 33532, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33420-3532

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As I commence my second year as Executive Director of the American Jewish League for Israel, I look back at many accomplishments in 2004 and prepare to meet future challenges.

Our Lunch Forum series began with **Kenneth Jacobson**, the Senior Associate National Director of ADL. **Elan Steinberg**, Executive Vice-President of the World Jewish Congress and **Seymour Reich**, the former Int'l President



Jeff Scheckner

of B'nai Brith rounded out the spring Forum series. We also held a regional Israeli style dinner at the Boston area event with a presentation by **Ilan Segev** of the Boston Israeli Consulate. **Zelig Chinitz**, Advisor to the Jewish National Fund and **Neal Berro**,

Associate at the America-Israel Friendship League spoke at our two fall Forums. Currently, we are enlisting speakers from Americans for a Safe Israel, American Jewish World Service

and AIPAC for our spring forums in New York (see page 5) and a regional event is planned for the Philadelphia-Southern NJ area.

In 2004, I had the opportunity to represent AJLI at a number of regional meetings and spoke on behalf of our organization at several events. I had success in contacting many prior and lapsed members, and encouraged many individuals to rejoin (some were not members for many years)

Last summer, we needed new office space after our home the UJA-Federation underwent massive reconstruction. With rents in Manhattan excessively high, it was a challenge to find appropriate space in a good location. With the help our President, Martin Kalmanson, Board members Bob Chamow and Harold Bornstein and others, we managed to secure space at a reasonable rent.

RECENT FLORIDA EVENTS

Reported by **Vivienne Ivry**

This winter AJLI in Florida enjoyed two well-attended functions. The first, in February, was the New Members Brunch, hosted by **Tina and Morris Horowitz**. Eighty-five members and guests snacked on platters created by this generous pair, and were then treated to a most enlightening and descriptive talk by **Tracy Altman** from Lawrence, Kansas, one of our scholarship students. She described her joy at being in Israel and studying with Israelis and others at Hebrew University. She has brought this very apparent joy home with her, being a continuing advocate for AJLI and Israel and will become a Jewish educator when she has fin-

ished college.

Our second and most successful event was the luncheon held in honor of SouthEast chapter president, **Rita Kreisberg** at Benvenuto's. The event was chaired by **Hy Brown** who arranged musical entertainment by Larry Brendler and a well-stocked raffle. We were also treated to some very special entertainment by Rita's son and daughter who wrote and read a very clever poem describing this remarkable lady's many "careers", many of which like AJLI received her heart and hard work with much thanks.

We all enjoyed, and look forward to repeating it all again next season.

UPCOMING LUNCH FORUMS

Notable Speakers to Present at New York AJLI Lunch Forums

Ruth Messinger, Executive Director of the American Jewish World Service (AJWS) presents on **Wednesday, May 4**. AJWS is a not-for-profit organization that works to alleviate poverty, hunger and disease in the developing world and build Jewish life in Russia and the Ukraine. AJWS provided significant assistance to the war ravaged Darfur region of the Sudan. Ms. Messinger was in public service in New York City for 20 years, served as Manhattan borough president and ran against Guliani for mayor in 1996. She is active in many organizations and is president of Surprise Lake Camp. For the last three years, Ms. Messinger was named one of the 50 most influential Jews of the year in the Forward newspaper. Ms. Messinger was recently honored by President Bush for her organization's massive efforts to assist areas devastated by the tsunami (www.ajws.org).



Ruth Messinger

fighting terrorism and achieving peace in the Middle East. The New York Times cited AIPAC as the most important organization affecting

America's relationship with Israel while Fortune magazine has consistently ranked AIPAC among America's most powerful interest groups. Esther attended Hebrew University and she is responsible for overseeing AIPAC's political development and grassroots efforts in Connecticut (www.aipac.org).

The Forums which begin at noon convene in the conference room of the Jewish National Fund (JNF), at **42 East 69th Street** (between Park and Madison). The nearest subway is 4,5 and 6 train, Hunter College-68th Street stop. Our prior location for meetings, the UJA-Federation building, is undergoing renovation.

The cost for lunch for members is \$10 and \$13 for non-members. For security purposes and to ensure the proper amount of food is ordered, **reservations must be made at least three days prior to the event**. To make a reservation, please contact Jeff Scheckner at 212-371-1583 or ajlijms@aol.com. In the Fall, AJLI will feature presentations from Birthright Israel, the America-Israel Cultural Foundation and Americans for Peace Now.

A former Scholarship Recipient, Esther Bliner, the Connecticut Regional Director for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) presents on **Thursday, June 2**. AIPAC is at the forefront of stopping Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons,



UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP FUND

YES, I want to change lives and insure the future!

All contributions are tax-deductible!

\$25,000* \$15,000** \$5,000 \$1,000 \$500 \$100 \$50 Other _____

Name _____

Telephone Number _____

Address _____

Fax Number _____

Email _____

*\$25,000 for a named scholarship in perpetuity – payable in 5 years

**\$15,000 for a named scholarship for 10 years – payable in 3 years.

Mail to: AJLI, PO Box 33532, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33420-3532

ISRAEL CELEBRATION DAY EVENTS IN NYC

Date: Wednesday, May 11

**Time: 7:00 P.M. - Location: CROBAR
530 West 28th Street, New York City**

The formal ceremony for *Yom Hazikaron* includes Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Israeli Consul General Aryeh Mekel, and Dr. Ruth Westheimer (who fought in the *Haganah*).

Demonstrations of Pride for Yom Ha'atzmaut follow. There is a large party after, with an Israeli DJ playing Israeli and western hits. The American Jewish League for Israel (AJLI) is proud to be one of 50 Zionist and Jewish organizations as a partner in the *Yom Ha'atzmaut* 2005 Celebration. This annual event is a demonstration of the heights we can reach as a community when we come together to celebrate Israel's birthday, commemorate Israel's fallen and honor her independence.

On Sunday, June 5 at 11 A.M., the annual Salute to Israel Parade takes place in New York City. This will be the 41st annual parade honoring Israel's 57th year of Independence. This year's theme is saluting Israel's 57 years



of statehood and celebrating 350 years of Jewish life in America - Two Golden Lands... The Promised Land and The Land of Promise. The Parade is a unique opportunity for all our long-standing and illustriously established Jewish community in America to show its passionate connection to Israel. The Parade is the world's largest gathering in support of

Israel and sends a clear message to our American political leaders, expressing the Jewish community's strength and commitment to Israel. The Parade features 100,000 costumed marchers representing public and private schools, groups from Jewish organizations and community centers, high school marching bands and professionally designed floats sponsored by private companies and Jewish organizations. Drawing over one million spectators, this highly visible event attracts press and media coverage. The parade begins at 11 A.M. at 57th Street and 5th Avenue and proceeds up 5th Avenue to 79th Street.

For more information call 646 474-5388 or e-mail parade@salutetoisrael.com.

LETTERS FROM PAST SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

I just wanted to send a note to you and the AJLI. I have gotten readjusted to America. I dived right back into my studies here at UC San Diego and all my extra-curricular activities and my planning for post-graduation and have only recently been able to come up for air.

My Israel experience is never too far away from anything I do. Last year changed me and allowed me to grow in a way that I will be forever grateful. And I could not have done it without the help of you and your or-

ganization. You mentioned a conference that you will be having in spring. I am applying for a program at the American Jewish World Service to do community service work in Honduras, and wanted to make sure that the schedules are not conflicting. I want to be able to thank your organization and to give back in any way I can, **for you guys gave me the gift of a lifetime.**

Shira

LETTERS FROM PAST SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Thoughts on Jerusalem

The Middle East dominates American foreign policy discussion. Despite my home university's suspension of study abroad programs to Israel, I am spending my junior year at the Middle East's best university, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

When one leaves for study abroad in Europe, his friends say "Have fun" instead of "Be careful" or a more blunt "Don't get blown up." Such are the farewells to travelers to Israel. So why come here? Perhaps I am in Israel because I fear boredom, and surely there is no better way to study the Middle East than to actually be in this fascinating region.

Many different types of people live in this vibrant country that is smaller than Lake Michigan. At any bus stop, one can see a full-bearded ultra-religious Jew wearing all black standing near a young secular college girl wearing virtually nothing at all, who is waiting next to an Arab woman wearing a veil, and she is standing next to a clean shaven eighteen-year-old soldier wearing his M16. When the bus arrives, all are scrutinized by a security guard before boarding. Terrorists target buses, and they know how to disguise themselves to blend in with Israelis at bus stops.

To students at the University of Texas, understanding Israel's daily reality is difficult without actually being here in Israel. Do you take into consideration the effect of an explosion when you choose a seat on the 40 Acres bus? When you see an unattended backpack on the West Mall, do you quickly walk away just in case a bomb is inside? When you enter Jester cafeteria, do you instinctively hold your arms away from your body so that a guard can pat you down? Do you scan the crowd on Sixth Street for a potential suicide bomber? If Austin was Jerusalem, you would.

Yet paradoxically, I do not equate being in Israel with being in harm's way. I feel safe here. More than six million people live here and go about their lives, despite the security situation. Most young men and women here serve in the army (as required by law), thus equally distributing the burden of Israel's security upon the shoulders of every citizen. My Israeli roommate served for three years as a paratrooper, and the army will summon him when his turn comes

for reserve duty. Because of soldier-citizens like my roommate, Israel remains vigilant against external and internal threats while continuing to thrive as an open and democratic society.

There is much more to this country than what is reported on television. Israel has only one real natural resource: the brain power of its citizens. Outside of Silicon Valley, Israel has the world's highest concentration of high-tech startups. A popular example is Mirabilis, the company that pioneered instant messaging technology, like the kind used in AOL's Instant Messenger. The Centrino wireless Internet technology was developed at Intel's R&D center in Israel.

Environmentalism here is clearly more than a political slogan. Although mostly desert, Israel is the only country to begin the 21st century with more trees than it had at the start of the 20th century. Even the water level of the Sea of Galilee is important enough to make the evening news.

After the tsunami Israel immediately offered humanitarian assistance to tsunami ravaged Southeast Asia. The Jewish state generously delivered aid to Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim country.

Many hesitate to come to Israel because of the security situation. This beautiful country is nothing like the war zone many perceive it to be. Instead of spending a summer in Europe, come explore the land of the Bible. Learn about the people and the politics in the Middle East's only Western-style democracy. You will be glad that you came.

Fear will never interfere with my short life. I love this land, and nothing can ever prevent me from being here. To quote Frost, "I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep." Should God want me, He knows where to find me.

Daniel P. Rubenstein is a Middle Eastern Studies junior at The University of Texas at Austin and is on the One Year Program at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Rothberg International School.



The Newsletter of the American
Jewish League For Israel
www.americanjewishleague.org

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Israel in Crisis

HOLD THE DATES

May 4, 2005

AJLI Lunch Forum featuring **Ruth Messinger**, Executive Director of the American Jewish World Service. Forum to be held in the conference room of the Jewish National Fund (JNF), at **42 East 69th Street** (between Park and Madison) at Noon.

May 11, 2005

Yom Ha'atzmant 2005 Celebration
Time: 7:00 P.M. - Location: CROBAR
530 West 28th Street, New York City
Building on the success of last year's event that drew over 3,500, this will be the largest Israeli Independence Day gathering in Manhattan.



June 4, 2005

AJLI Lunch Forum featuring **Esther Bliner**, the Connecticut Regional Director for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. Forum to be held in the conference room of the Jewish National Fund (JNF), at **42 East 69th Street** at Noon.

June 5, 2005

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June 5-9, 2005

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December 11, 2005

Sail away with AJLI aboard Holland America's Luxurious ms Zaandam for 10 nights. Cruise to Bahamas, Aruba, Curacao, Panama Canal, Panama, and Costa Rica. Book EARLY for better cabin choices.

Come join us for these great events!