



HAKOL

הקול 'The Voice'

Leon Botstein and Al-Quds University: An Interview



-Illustration by Eli Halpert

Men [and women] are admitted into Heaven not because they have curbed and govern'd their Passions or have No Passions, but because they have Cultivated their Understandings. William Blake

Leon Botstein is a champion of the liberal arts and a modern day polymath. He serves as Music Director for the American Symphony and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestras, as well as Artistic Director for the Bard Music Festival, and was also a Grammy nominee for his work with the London Symphony.

In the world of academia, he made his mark early on when, at the age of 23, he became the nation's youngest college president at New Hampshire's Franconia College. In 1975 he moved to New York to become President of Bard College, a position he presently holds.

Botstein is a determined supporter of a liberal arts education as an important component to reaching one's intellectual and creative potential. He challenges any aspect of a status quo that limits this development.

My personal introduction to Botstein was in 2006, at a session for parents of new students, of whom I was one. During a Q&A session, a somewhat aggressive parent expressed concern over her child getting the classes he desired. He was, she said, highly focused, and knew exactly what he wanted to study. Botstein beamed enthusiastically. He stated how much he enjoyed getting students who know what they want to do in life. He went on to tell the somewhat horrified mother that Bard will do everything it can to disrupt this young man, push him off his mark and into strange new areas that he had never considered.

-cont. on page 6

Chanuka Festivities 5770

Chanukah room at the Millicent Rogers Holiday Craft Fair: Saturday December 5th, 12-3pm. For more info: 758-2462.

Public Lighting of the Chanukah Menorah and Farolitos on the Taos Plaza: Monday, December 14, 3:30 pm.

Come join with Town Leaders and other Taoseños to usher in the second day of Chanukah with candle lighting, singing, and cider. A great way to share the warmth and light of this miracle holiday.

TJC Family Chanukah Party on Monday, December 14, 5pm (after the Plaza lighting). Again this year, we'll have lots of latkes, dreydels, story-telling, party favors and more!!! Children of all ages are welcome with special encouragement for toddlers and pre-schoolers who always enjoy the event.

Admission is \$7 per family (TJC members), \$10 non-members.

PEACE CHANUKAH 2009

The TJC is pleased to host the Eighth Annual Peace Chanukah on Thursday, December 17 at 6pm.

Don't miss this opportunity to be part of a remarkable interfaith holiday tradition (one of the first of its kind in the US) in true Taos style! Last year's program featured local leaders of a dozen different persuasions, and climaxed with the blowing of the Shofar and lighting of several hundred candles set in a galaxy of personal Chanukah Menorahs brought by those gathered. What a wonderful occasion to experience the magic of the holidays in the spirit of peace and tolerance with our children and neighbors.

As we open our doors to all on the 6th night of Chanukah, let us declare with Isaiah that this is "a house of prayer for all peoples."

Suggested donation: food or toiletry items for the Shared Table and the Taos Men's Shelter. Save the date and bring your Menorah (the TJC provides candles)!

Hakol

is the voice of the Taos Jewish community and its friends, published quarterly by the Taos Jewish Center. Submissions for consideration, letters to the editor, and requests to be added to our mailing list may be sent to: *Hakol*, PO Box 149, Taos, NM 87571, Tel. 575-758-8615, or e-mailed to tjc@newmex.com.

Contributors: Leah Alexander, Leon Botstein, Kathleen T. Burg, Beth Goldman, Ariana Kramer, Jim Levy, Eli Halpert, Karl S. Halpert, Kotzker de Taos, Susan R. Ressler

Karl S. Halpert, Editor
Susan R. Ressler, Associate Editor
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TAOS JEWISH CENTER is dedicated to fostering a positive Jewish identity by providing programs and services that enrich the lives of the people it serves in Northern New Mexico. The Center is open to all who wish to explore and participate in these experiences that reflect and incorporate Jewish ethics, culture, and observances.

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Editor's Message

Dear Readers,

As I write, the days grow short and daylight, precious as air and water, grows less. It is a time prone to introspection, and for many, a feeling of lack and despair illuminated by the enveloping darkness. This is not an irony; the inner landscape takes a portion of the outer world's center stage as we travel home from work in the darkness and our evenings quickly give way to night.

It is a time when the winter chill pervades those for whom heat is a luxury, and the holiday season presents an annual showcase for lack and scarcity, perhaps a reminder of better times lost or a life of means never acquired.

Chanukah is our Festival of Light, and occurs during the darkest, shortest days of the year. The symmetry of this is not accidental. We are asked to create light out of darkness. It is incumbent upon Jews, as the foundation of Talmud, that the spiritual path not be that of a lone mystic; rather, the commune with G-d is defined in large part by one's interaction with others. This is why the concept of citizenship is so central to Jewish thinking, and perhaps key not only to Jewish survival throughout the centuries of being "strangers in Egypt," but to hopefully leaving the world a better place, bearing witness to the possibilities of kindness and compassion.

Twenty-five hundred years ago, the Rabbis decided that Talmudic law would define civic behavior, which would be distilled into a few basic tenets. First was *acharei rabim lehatot* (to follow the will of the majority). Second was that if a law was established that could not be followed *and respected*, it would be null and void. Third was that the code applied to all, from the rich to the poor, from the celebrated to the obscure. This simple premise, along with Hillel's Golden Rule, forms the basis for today's ideal of democracy, a rather stunning and remarkable feat considering it came from a tiny tribe with historically little to no political basis from which to make such proclamation. Much of the modern world's moral code and its legal structures are defined by these principles.

Chanukah is a minor holiday, amplified by its timing with Christmas and New Year's Day. However, acts of charity and a *rekindling* of one's commitment to citizenship are as sacred, as important, as prayer. President Botstein, in his *Hakol* interview, extends that responsibility to private institutions, affirming that they too must act in the public interest - a Talmudic premise in its simplicity and practical application.

The TJC once again sponsors the Eighth Annual Peace Chanukah celebration, on Thursday December 17, at sunset. This is a truly extraordinary affair: a hundred menorahs lit and the shofar blown, along with prayers for peace from our Christian, Islamic, Pueblo, Buddhist, and other neighbors - all in our own *Beit Yisrael*. It is impossible not to feel good after this event. I would implore readers, if you only come to one event this season at the TJC, come to this one. It is a wonderfully spontaneous interfaith phenomenon, where the power of prayer for peace is illuminated throughout the world.

I hope readers enjoy this issue of *Hakol*. We are fortunate to have an insightful interview with Bard College president Leon Botstein, who is doing landmark work in Jerusalem, and we feature a personal reflection from Jim Levy on a portion of his half-century in Taos, which I believe is among the finest pieces of writing we have yet published.

Happy Chanukah and *l'hitraot* from all of us at *Hakol*. ♦

Karl S. Halpert

The Jewish notion of G-d is distinct... in other faiths the communal dimension is the only relevant one, for Jews, G-d is defined by the behaviour and free will of the individual. In our thinking, there is no predefined concept of what behaviour G-d believes to be right or wrong. Rather, it is each individual that - by his or her individual behaviour - defines G-d's image. Jews do not know what G-d wants or doesn't want. We do not know what his will is regarding a particular question. Every day, Jews deface, destroy and reshape G-d's image, by their individual actions. Rabbi Israel Singer

The Taos Jewish Center is a beneficiary agency of the Jewish Federation of New Mexico.

Taos Jewish Center News

High Holidays at TJC A Great Success

Based on the questionnaire and verbal responses, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur were a great success. Most attendees found them both stimulating and enjoyable. In the responses to the questionnaire, Rabbi David Stein received a very high approval.

Based on this positive response, the TJC Board has offered Rabbi Stein another contract to serve as the TJC's High Holiday Rabbi for the next two years.

Community participation this year was fantastic. The Ritual Committee will be looking for even more participation next year, to help with the service and preparation. If you are interested, please feel free to contact the Taos Jewish Center at 758-8615 or tjc@newmex.com. Another way to assist is through dedicated donations that are ear-marked for the High Holidays.

The Ritual Committee invites new members and your suggestions. The Committee is primarily responsible for the High Holidays and the Community Seder. To participate or give input, please contact the Taos Jewish Center or one of the Committee co-chairs, Richard A Wallach (758-7294) or Gary Atias (751-9587).

For those interested in the statistics, we received 29 responses to the High Holiday questionnaire. The scores on the numerical questions averaged above 3 on all, with several ranked at 4 or higher. The majority of attendees said they attended three or more of the six sessions, with several persons attending all sessions.

Thank you and see you all soon, The TJC Ritual Committee. ♦

2010: A Kaleidoscope of Jewish Experience & Identity

For the 2010 year, the TJC's Program Committee will develop a series of programs that focus on exploring the diversity within Jewish experience and identity. What does it mean to Jews to be Jewish? How is the Jewish experience expressed in contemporary times? For that matter, who is, and who decides who is, a Jew? These are some of the questions we will discuss over the course of the next year. Beginning with the Rudd-Efroymson debate on February 4th, we will take a look at the relevance Israel and Palestinian-Israeli relations have to the Jewish community. Since 1948, the Jewish people have had an official, world-recognized homeland for the first time in 2000 years. It is not clear if this will be a reality down the road. Within the Jewish community, there is a wide range of perspectives about this. For some Jews, the state of Israel feels like a lifeboat. For others, it is an embarrassment. Both emotional frameworks come directly from Jewish philosophy, experience, spiritual teachings and cultural reference points. We hope the Rudd-Efroymson debate will provide a glimpse into the diverse Jewish framework through which people understand the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As we move through the year, other areas of Jewish experience and identity will be explored. If there are specific themes or ideas you have for an event, please contact Peter Wengert, Program Committee Chair at 751-1442 or email pwengert@taosnet.com. ♦

Become a TJC member and receive *Hakol* free as a benefit.

For non-member subscription information, see p. 15.

Hakol is also online! Visit our website at www.taosjewishcenter.org

Vision Statement:

The TJC is a Jewish community that embraces and invites all to build relationships in a vibrant, welcoming home.

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Hakol Submissions

We invite community members to send us your letters, essays, creative writing and visual art for publication in *Hakol*. We are a quarterly journal of news, art and commentary. Our deadlines are always the 15th of October, January, April and July.

Letters to the Editors should be 300 words or less, and essays such as short stories, memoir, Jewish travel and political commentary between 400-800 words. Please do not add fancy formatting or attempt design layout.

Photographs or drawings should be jpeg files at 300ppi resolution. Please do not email us small picture files, as print quality requires higher resolution. If you send us your photos, we will be glad to scan them for you and will treat them with the utmost care. Please include an SASE for their safe return.

Please send your submissions on a CD to *Hakol*, PO Box 149, Taos, NM 87571, or e-mail to tjc@newmex.com. We reserve the right to edit and publish at our discretion.

From TJC Executive Director, Beth Goldman

And When I Die

Preparing for death is an ominous task, both spiritually and in practise. It can be a life-long pursuit, or one we never take on. Instead we live our lives peeking through the window, catching a glimpse of our immanent death and the deaths of those we love, but ultimately afraid to open the doors and explore the mysteries of our mortality. When I was in my 20's, I was afraid to think about death; talking about it made me more uncomfortable than just about anything I could imagine. To me, there was no reason to dwell on dying, or even contemplate the reality; it was depressing and morbid, something to ignore at all costs.

In my 40's, I was forced to take another look as I struggled to make sense of my sister's chronic condition with Multiple Sclerosis. Visiting Sue-Ellen in a nursing home for ten years, gave me occasional insight into illness, suffering, and death. Perhaps her suffering would not be in vain if I developed a deeper ability to truly experience the glory of my life. In fact, I began to feel that I honor her every time I hold this awareness. I began to make sense of death and illness in this way. Perhaps that is why people become ill, die in their youth or suffer painful debilitating illnesses: so that we, the living, gain what we need to step into our lives with eyes wide open and hearts softened.

During the past five years, I met with yet another opportunity to learn through illness and death, as my family and I cared for my mother during her journey with Alzheimer's. Why was she afflicted? Why Alzheimer's? I don't know, but in the questioning and in the caring, in her dying, I was again coaxed to go deeper, to loosen the reigns, to rediscover that life and death are not on two ends of the spectrum, but rather, they happen simultaneously. In this exploration, I learned that I can only ultimately prepare for death through living. Our tradition tells us to prepare for death every day by living with wonder and gratitude; by living a life of torah, *mitzvot*, and *Gemilut Hasadim* (acts of loving-kindness); by giving *zedakkah* and *Tikkun Olam*, repairing the world.

In Judaism, the actions we take after our loved ones die are not arbitrary. Jewish customs for death and mourning help the living regain a foothold in life, but only in due time. Putting things in order while we are able increases our connection with life, and our respect for the loved ones we leave behind. When our affairs are in order, family members are able to be present with their mourning and not so occupied with making important and difficult decisions such as burial. It is difficult to take the first steps towards creating a will, but doing so is, once again, an opportunity to engage in life and to raise our spiritual awareness. When is it appropriate to begin the process? There is no set answer for this, but our 30's is not too soon.

The following is a list to help you begin the process of putting your affairs in order. This does not replace legal advice; we suggest working with a lawyer when preparing most of these documents.

* Living Will or Health Care Directive: allows a competent adult to direct the providing, withholding, or withdrawal of life-prolonging procedures in the event of a terminal condition, an end-stage condition, or a persistent vegetative state. A sample form for New Mexico can be found at: http://www.halt.org/living_wills/new_mexico.pdf.

*Ethical Will: a way to share your values, beliefs, and blessings with your family and community. Samples of ethical wills can be seen at: www.ethicalwill.com.

*Burial Plot: historically, the first obligation of a Jewish Community is to establish a cemetery - even before a school. It has been Jewish custom to purchase a gravesite during one's lifetime as Abraham acquired a family burial site near the cave of Makhpela (Genesis 23:3-20). Because Jewish Law prescribes that a burial should take place as soon as possible, having a prepaid plot eliminates stress during a hectic time. If there has been no planning, a family will have to quickly make major critical decisions. Contact Roger Lerman for information on burial at Eretz Shalom Cemetery in Taos. You can reach Roger at rl@taosnet.com.

*Last Will and Testament: your wishes for the distribution of your assets (your home, bank accounts and stocks, for example) upon your death. In preparing the will, reflect on your life values and what kind of legacy you wish to leave. Contact your favorite charitable organization and talk to them about how your gift would help their work.

*Living Trust: a written legal document that partially substitutes for a will. With a living trust, assets are put into the trust, administered for you during your lifetime, and then transferred to your beneficiaries when you die. The greater the value of your assets (particularly if you own real estate), the greater the need for a living trust.

When beginning to prepare your end of life documents, consider your Jewish community and contemplate the value of naming the Taos Jewish Center in your will. Bequests can include gifts of cash, stock, real estate, personal property, artwork, jewelry, etc. Additionally, let your loved ones know now, that at the time of your death you would like donations to be sent to the Taos Jewish Center or the Chesed Project. This may seem like a trivial decision of little value, but small tributes (donations) from friends of departed TJC supporters have already brought a few thousand dollars to the TJC. If you take these steps today, you will help build a secure Jewish community for our children and grandchildren in Taos. Advise the TJC of your intentions by meeting with the Executive Director and/or by sending a copy of the documents to the TJC. ♦

**And when I Die* was written and sung by Laura Nyro in 1973.

Holiday Gift Bonanza

"Such a Deal"

Online auction at: www.taosjewishcenter.cmarket.com

Bidding Opens Friday November 27th at Noon

Bidding Closes Sunday December 13th at 9pm

Gift certificates galore and more...

1,2,3 easy shopping, with proceeds benefiting our community.

You will find the perfect gift for everyone at

www.taosjewishcenter.cmarket.com

Chanukah begins December 11th;

Proceeds Benefit the Chesed Project and TJC.

Chesed Project: The Benefits of Restorative Yoga

When we pay close attention to the inhaling and exhaling of our breath, we are slowed down to a state of mindfulness, or intentional awareness. The practice of conscious breathing, or Pranayama-Sanskrit, originated in India thousands of years ago and is essential to the practice of Yoga, a mind/body discipline that promotes health and well-being. This awareness of the most basic component of all life - the breath - accompanied by specific Yoga positions, works to strengthen our bodies in amazing ways. Often the results manifest in a sense of victory over seemingly impossible odds, as our physical body strengthens in ways we feel may have been lost forever. This defeat of an opponent (physical limitation) makes me think of the story of Chanukah. Like that observance, Yoga, done with intention, can be a victory over great odds. Cathy, age 86, declares, "I have regained control over my body's mobility!" Yoga's special gift leaves us well nourished and filled with gratitude and pleasure; like a slice of fresh-baked bread, it satisfies, especially in the dark advent of winter when we instinctively move toward the light.

Restorative Yoga (a modified version of traditional Yoga positions) is practiced at the TJC through the Chesed Project. It can best be described as a conscious body/mind relaxation practice for those whose bodies cannot do regular Yoga because of age or illness. It is an easy yet effective way to keep the body supple, as through the years, muscles tighten. Supported with cushion, pillows or a chair, Restorative Yoga allows the body to relax and open, releasing tension and stored-up toxins which can cause illness. Each exercise begins with a little stretching that warms the muscles, and a few minutes of gentle movement. This gives the body a chance to shed its restlessness and busy-ness before settling into a place of stillness. Restorative poses offer benefits to both body and mind, for conditions ranging from insomnia to asthma to chronic pain to migraines to depression. That is one reason why more than 1.6 million Americans over the age of 55 practice Yoga or some other body/mind exercises.

Michele Marion, Chesed's beloved Restorative Yoga Facilitator since 2005, observes that, "...restore means to put back, to renew."

Cathy, a participant says, "I can see the changes that happen. My balance has returned. I had absolutely no Yoga before. I did play tennis and golf, but I never knew how to breathe and Michele taught me how. Now that I have a pacemaker, I find I know how to use my breath more effectively. When I first began the class, I had arthritis in my legs. Yoga has reduced its effects." Cathy declares, "If I can, you can!"

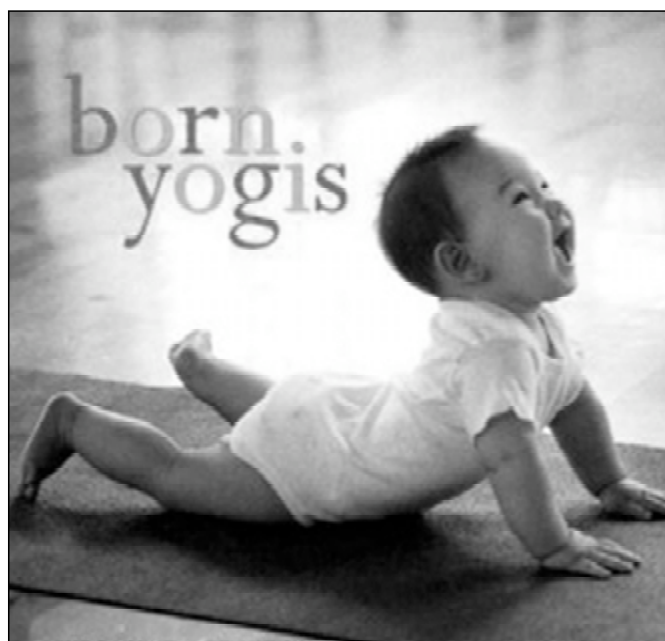
Deep relaxation is the true gift of Yoga practice. The gentle inhale and exhale of breath energy throughout every part of the body allows one to move into a state of complete stillness while the mind settles down through its attention to the flow of inner energy. Thoughts and emotions soften and lose their influence. One becomes centered in the awareness of your true "Self," where wisdom, insight, and freedom are present. As Sri Aurabindi said "All life is Yoga." Or in the words of Taos writer Iris Keltz, "Yoga makes me stand taller."

Restorative Yoga takes place every Wednesday from 1pm to 2pm at the Taos Jewish Center. Please join us. A modest donation of \$4 per class is requested.



In September, 2009, Leah Alexander, Honoree of the TJC's 2007 Annual Anniversary Celebration and mainstay of the Chesed Project's bi-monthly Scrabble game, fell and broke her hip. After a hip replacement, she recuperated at the Taos Living Center for one and a half months. I would like to acknowledge all the wonderful, caring women who daily brought her delectable home-cooked meals, individually tailored to Leah's dietary restrictions. These women are: Ana Kleniki, Jackie Keating, Ziva Moyal, Jenny Goldberg, Phyllis Hotch, Beth Goldman, Anna Walters, Robbie Scott, Beth Levine, Carol Vollmer, Jean Barton and Wally Burton-Kuerschner. *Thank you for your loving kindness!* ♦

Kathleen T. Burg, Chesed Project Director



Chesed Project Events Ongoing at the TJC:

Rosen Method (gentle) Exercise set to music:
Tuesdays from 9:30-10:30am (with Susie Verkamp).

Memoir Writing: Every Tuesday, 1:30-3pm; all are welcome!

Scrabble: 2nd & 4th Thursdays, 1:30pm-3pm.
Brain Game! Bring your board!

Restorative Yoga (limited movement): Wednesdays,
from 1-2pm (with Michele Marion).

Caregivers Support Group: 2nd Tuesday of the
month, from 5-6pm.

Artstreams: from the well of memory: last Wed. of
the month at museums, 1-2:30pm. Call to participate.

For more information about cost, schedule, new
events or to register or confirm, call Kathleen at 758-8615.

“Signs of Respect,” from Ariana Kramer

This year at High Holidays, I was acutely aware of standing up and sitting down. In particular, I noticed that when the Torah comes out we stand up, and when the Torah is “seated,” we sit. We also parade the scroll around the room so each person can touch and kiss it vicariously through a garment corner or book. I spent much of the services wondering about these details.

A few weeks prior to Rosh HaShana, I visited with my Great Uncle Steve and Great Aunt Tucha at their home in San Diego. It was the first time I'd been to their home since I was a young girl. Usually our family gatherings were at the home of my grandparents in Santa Barbara, and the San Diego clan came to us. This was an opportunity to delight in my Uncle Steve's backyard orchard, learn about my Aunt Tucha's Peruvian family, and see their family photographs. Since my Grandpa Henry died a few years ago, I have turned to his brother, my Great Uncle Steve, to get my fill of family history. We've had engaging conversations over email and the phone, and I have learned a great deal about the Jewish part of my family and his perspective on it. For instance, Uncle Steve preferred his father's side of the family over his mother's. I think my grandfather was the opposite. Consequently, that family branch has remained mostly a mystery to me.

The last morning of our visit, after days of delicious family meals with multitudes of relatives, it was just the three of us in the house: Uncle Steve, Aunt Tucha, and myself. “Ariana, come here.” Uncle Steve called out, “I have something to show you.” I joined Uncle Steve at the dining room table, and he proceeded to pull out a very worn leather wallet. “This,” he said, “is from my father's father. My Aunt Nettie gave it to me.” “Apparently,” Uncle Steve continued, “it was something he always carried with him. It was with him when he died.” Inside the wallet was the identity card of my Great Great Grandfather Hugo Kramer, along with photographs of a woman (his wife or daughter), and a *siddur* in German and Hebrew. There were

also a few letters. One, in beautiful old German script, was written to his mother. “Ohhhhh!” I said. “Is it possible for you to make copies of these for me?” “I'll do one step better than that,” Uncle Steve said. “I will loan this to you, and you can make your own copies.” I felt giddy. “I'm doing this because I trust you,” he said. “But you must be sure to get it back to me safely.” I agreed, but not after feeling the weight of the responsibility.

I held Grandfather Hugo's wallet close to me for High Holidays this year, and with it touched our Torah scroll. Both come from another world -- a pre-holocaust European Jewish world. Introducing Grandfather Hugo's letters to the Torah scroll, I realized, “Why! They're related!” Both are written from my ancestors, both have been handed down the generations for safe-keeping. They are literally, my elders, in written form. Then, I recognized something very familiar about the way we stand and sit and pass the Torah scroll. When I was young, it was considered polite (if by some, Old World) to stand when an elder entered the room, and only after they were seated, to sit. Among my Hispanic and Pueblo neighbors and older European family members, this custom was still at times observed. In more recent years, at some Native American gatherings I have noticed the hellos and goodbyes are done ceremoniously -- each person greeting every other person. Or, the leader makes a laborious journey around the room to shake each person's hand. The effect is that an immediate and real bond is quickly formed among all persons present, a bond that words alone can not create.

This year I remembered the Torah is our oldest tribal elder. We dress her. We dance with her. We greet her. We stand and sit to honor her. Someday, if she is too old and worn to carry, we will bury her. And all the while, she will tell us her stories. The ones we love to remember, and those we wish she would forget. Gathered together like grandchildren at her feet, we listen and receive her blessings. ❖

-L. Botstein, cont. from page 1

President Botstein extends his passion for higher learning by bringing it to pre-college students and those with limited access. Bard offers college curricula for high schoolers at Bard College at Simon Rock and in New York City.

Bard operates its Prison Initiative with full associate and bachelor degree programs in five prisons, three of which are maximum-security. It is a two-way street, with Bard campus students volunteering as tutors and conducting workshops. Re-incarceration is reduced from 60% to 15% among those in this program, according to the BPI website.

In 1996, Bard partnered with St. Petersburg State University to form Smolny College, becoming a pioneer in liberal arts education in Russia.

This past fall, Bard embarked on perhaps its most challenging and controversial program to date: its partnership with Al-Quds University in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Abu Dis. The partnership, led by Botstein and Al-Quds President Sari Nusseibeh, seeks to provide Palestinian students with access to a liberal arts curriculum. It also includes a high school program with an emphasis on a progressive approach to middle and secondary education, and a Master of Arts in Teaching, a two-year program for aspiring

Palestinian teachers and educators, modeled after Bard's teaching structures.

Critics from the West, including some American Jews, complain that it is wrong to support a Palestinian institution in Jerusalem, especially one with a history of radical politics and open hostility towards Israel. Palestinian critics see Bard's presence as colonialism. Proponents see the partnership of the two seemingly disparate institutions as a bridge to a better life for the students, and serving the greater cause of peace.

“In Palestinian schools, students are taught the so-called right answer to every question,” Mukhles Sowwan, who runs the Nanotechnology Laboratory at Al Quds University, said. “But real education is more about questions than answers. We need to teach our students how to think creatively and critically, and I hope Bard will help us with that.”

I was fortunate to be granted an exclusive interview by a very busy President Botstein, and am pleased to offer *Hakol* readers a glimpse of his outlook. A highly effective communicator, the clarity of his vision is both compelling and inspirational.

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¿ PARADISE LOST?

In response to the Town of Taos' 2009 public relations campaign dubbed "The Summer of Love," Jim Levy has written the following piece reflecting on the years 1969-70.

We at Hakol are pleased to present Jim's work, the first of a two-part series. -- The Editors

Taos was a paradise to me. Life was sensuous and joyful. When my mother brought my two sisters and me here for our vacations -- this was five summers between 1947 and 1952 -- phone numbers were three digits and there were no stop lights, gorge bridge or ski valley. I spent my days in a timeless round of racing sticks down *acequias*, swimming at the Ponce de Leon hot springs, and riding my horse to the Pueblo. In the soft evenings, cutting past the Indian dances in the Plaza, I joined my gang at the baseball game, where we crawled under the bleachers looking for g-d knows what. I roamed day and night through the hills and town like a gypsy boy. When I first arrived, age seven, I played childish games with Hispanic neighbor boys. By the time I left, age twelve, I was lusting after their sisters taking smoke breaks in the back doors of restaurants.

I returned briefly in the summer of 1962. I thought about working on the construction of the new bridge that would span the gorge, but decided that would exhaust me too much to write the Great American Novel. I ended up working for Mr. and Mrs. Street as a bartender at the Taos Inn. Although phone numbers were now seven digits, the essence of Taos had not changed. It remained "a valley of sleepy Indians, eccentric artists and hardworking Spanish-Americans living in harmony under radiant light and summer rains."

So it was something of a shock when I returned in 1969 and found that paradise had become a community divided by attitudes to the latest wave of newcomers -- the dreaded hippies. As a boy, I had had friends among the Martinez, Reina, McCarthy, Pond, and Ramming clans and I expected to be welcomed back, but I found that many of them looked at me with suspicion. They were aghast at the drugs, violence, and nudity of the "long hairs." It was rumored that 5000 counterculture creatures had already settled in and there was a persistent rumor that 25,000 more were on their way. The majority of Taoseños wanted to rid the county of the ones already here and stop the others from coming. Furthermore, I was expected to take sides. But that was not clear at first.

We -- my wife Deirdre, her two children, and I -- came to Taos in a VW van in May 1969 with a white rat named Fortunata smuggled in from Mexico rolled in a sleeping bag. We had been living for a year in Ajijic on Lake Chapala. The scene in Ajijic was crazy, but in a Mexican village there was only so much trouble you could get into. In Taos, we found more ways. It didn't take us long to realize that hippies were not welcome in Taos. People were expressing their feelings about the newcomers in subtle ways, like the sign taped to the side of a pick up truck: *Destroy the Hippies*. Others took a stab at humor -- a sign on Spivey's Café read: *Keep America Beautiful. Take a Hippie to a Carwash*. The week we arrived, *The Taos News* reported that the Town Council had cancelled Fiestas because of the possibility of "an influx of undesirables," and the Taos Municipal Education Association had passed a resolution that stated that the hippies' "presence among our people poses a real and verifiable danger to the morals, health and beliefs of our youth, because of their known excesses in drug addiction, sexual and obscene behavior, personal filth and general exhibitionism." It didn't occur to us that they were speaking about us.



- "Taos, NM, All American City 1994," photograph © Susan Ressler, 2009

Harvey Mudd, who had moved to Taos in 1966 and bought land, loaned us an old small adobe in Arroyo Hondo. The village was poor; the roads were dirt and had no names -- the few that had names had no signs. Although Deirdre and I had BAs and teaching credentials from Berkeley, we didn't mind living without indoor plumbing or a phone -- in fact we thought it was glamorous. We used a two-seat outhouse and carried water in buckets from the Rio Hondo. Like our counterculture neighbors, we "returned" to the land -- a purely hypothetical return because my family was Jewish from Los Angeles via Newark and Germany, and Deirdre's was Catholic from New Jersey via Ireland. My father was a Freudian psychoanalyst and her father was middle management for Bendix Corporation. Fortunata, the white rat, was joined by three ducks, two ducklings, seven De Kalb hens, nine chicks, a monster of a rooster who scared us all, three dogs, two cats, a horse and a pig. We bought the pig from Manuel Ortiz -- the runt of the litter weighing in at five pounds. Manuel didn't expect her to survive and asked three dollars for her. Our plan was to fatten her up and have her for Christmas. On a steady diet of mash, which we gave her, and dog food, which she took without asking, she grew into an immense animal, all sweetness and appetite. We named her Mariposa and had to put latches on the kitchen cabinets because she liked to burst into the house like a butterfly and eat whatever she could find.

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LEON BOTSTEIN Interview, *continued from p. 6*

October 22, 2009

KH (Karl Halpert): Bard has a history of expanding its curricula to places very few institutions will go, such as the Bard Prison Initiative. It appears that the partnership with Al-Quds is a natural outgrowth of your views on extending education for those with limited access. Can you comment on this?

LB (Leon Botstein): *Bard's forays out of the confines of an undergraduate liberal arts residential program reflect our conviction that private institutions must act in the public interest. The initiatives we have sponsored are ones we feel are necessary and ones we think we are qualified to do well. First among these is the improvement of secondary education, hence Bard's two public high school early colleges in New York City and Simon's Rock in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. These schools have provided us the expertise to work with Al-Quds in developing its model high school. The opportunity to reach underserved populations defines the Bard Prison Initiative, the Master of Arts in Teaching program, and the Paramount Bard Academy, a charter school in Delano, California. The same logic applies to Smolny College in Russia and many of our undergraduate and graduate programs in the arts*

KH: And how did this relationship with Sari Nusseibeh begin?

LB: *I am in my seventh season as music director of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, the radio orchestra of Israel. David Harman, a mutual friend, introduced me to Sari, who was looking into establishing partnerships with American institutions.*

KH: It may be early to say, but how does Al-Quds balance fostering free speech, free thought, and open discourse in such a hostile environment?

LB: *Bard and Al-Quds share the ground rules that govern college and university life, which thus far have triumphed over political differences and contextual contrasts. Both institutions are committed to the principles of academic freedom and the criteria of scholarly and scientific judgment. So far there has been every reason for optimism about the efficacy of these shared commitments.*

KH: How have the first few weeks been? Have there been unanticipated developments? Surprises?

LB: *The first weeks have gone very well. I will be visiting in late November. The recruitment of undergraduates for the Honors College began a little slowly, but we have a good entering class. In contrast, the recruitment of candidates for the Master of Arts in Teaching program went better than expected.*

KH: Clearly there is both support and criticism for the program, but is there a prevailing sentiment among local Israelis for this partnership?

LB: *I have only an anecdotal sense of the response from Israelis. David Harman, who is key to this program, is himself a prominent Israeli. The other Israeli academics and musicians I have talked to are very supportive. I do have friends who are on the right side of the political spectrum who are skeptical, but they smile benignly at my naiveté.*

KH: The history of the Holy Land and the reporting of current events is highly subjective, even - (especially!) - among Jews alone, let alone Jews and Palestinians. How does the school minimize promoting one perspective over that of another?

LB: *Regarding competing interpretations of history and current events, the principle we follow there is the principle we stick to here. One has to have the discipline to hear out and understand your opponent's point of view and storyline. There are varying competing narratives, as it is now fashionable to call them, about 1948 among Jews and Israelis. There is the same diversity in the way 1948 is understood and discussed among Palestinians. One has to hear the other side with some empathy, even when the other side may be, in your opinion, distorting the facts. Disputed and contested narratives are what the problem is all about. Agreeing to disagree, but with understanding and even a bit of empathy, is the goal.*

KH: You are a strong proponent of the liberal arts, not just as an ideal, but as a practical means towards reaching one's potential in life. A case in point: you have stated that you believe the design of the new Science Center at Bard was influenced by the fact that the architect is also a pianist. Can you elaborate on this and discuss how the liberal arts can help the Palestinian students, and perhaps Israeli-Arabic relations?

LB: *In my view, the liberal arts provide the education necessary for critical inquiry and informed dialogue and debate. One aspect of the liberal arts is learning how to understand that which is not intuitively familiar, whether in science or history. Therefore I believe the liberal arts to be an excellent foundation for the exercise of citizenship. It also is an important background for the cultivation of civility and therefore the use of language as an instrument for peace and negotiation, not hate and violence.*

KH: Has it been difficult to maintain the Al-Quds-Bard relationship in an academic context as opposed to a political one? Or is its existence in fact unavoidably political?

¿ PARADISE LOST? . . . *continued from p. 7*

We planted a garden of squash, peas, beans, and corn. We learned about the *acequia* that ran behind our back door and the skunks that lived under the house. We wore overalls and wielded our shovels and hoes in imitation of old Ben Garcia, the *majordomo* who walked the ditches every day of the year.

The situation between locals and hippies was best described by an Hispanic intellectual I got drunk with one afternoon. We were sitting in the bar at La Cocina restaurant on the plaza, where all the prominent deadbeats hung out. He asked me where I was from. "Here," I said.

"I mean before here."

"I came in 1947."

He was not impressed. Then as now, it was important how long you had lived in Taos. Unless you were born and raised here, it was never long enough; you were what is known as a newcomer.

After second drinks we discussed the socio-economic history of Taos. I said that Taos had always had a foundation of farming and

ranching, and despite the art and the skiing and the curio shops, agriculture still defined it. "Taos is," I announced, "conservative in the best sense of the word." He didn't disagree with that, but said that what we newcomers didn't understand is that Taos, underneath its rural ways, had always had a record of alcoholism, marijuanaism, domestic violence, and above all (leading the nation year after year) driving under the influence. He seemed proud of these achievements. The long-hairs, he added, have just joined the parade, adding some new ingredients like LSD and nudity. "The difference is," he said, "they do it openly. That is their mistake."

The third drink produced a succinct version of local history from my new friend. "Happy aborigines were living here peacefully when the Pueblo Indians came and displaced them. Then the conquistadores and Franciscans showed up and ruined the Pueblo's idyllic existence. Anglo trappers and traders arrived and undermined the bucolic Spanish-American farming community. East Coast artists and dilettantes, while romanticizing Indians and indenturing Hispanics, turned the

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-L. Botstein, cont. from p.8

LB: *The Bard Al-Quds relationship will constantly need to be defended and explained because of the political environment. It will be criticized by all sides, particularly from the political extremes of both the Israeli and Palestinian communities. Not everyone is interested in peace, negotiation, and compromise. There are those for whom ideological commitments make tolerance impossible. Our program is unavoidably political. Although it is not popular to make this point, on the American side we have to make it clear that the program, while it does not have a political agenda, is clearly committed to a peaceful resolution, which by implication suggests a two-state solution. The success of this partnership is not dependent on anything but peace.*

KH: How does this program differ from that of the Brandeis association with Al-Quds?

LB: *The Brandeis association with Al-Quds, as I understand it, was one of technical support and some exchange. What distinguishes Bard's relationship with Al-Quds is that it is founded on a formal memorandum of agreement between two sovereign institutions. It is wide ranging and comprehensive, and involved the creation of dual-degree academic programs, so the enterprise is a full partnership.*

KH: Who or what is financing this endeavor?

LB: *This endeavor is being financed by private U.S. foundations, private philanthropy based in the United States, the U.S. State Department, and private Palestinian philanthropy. The first grant was from the Open Society Institute foundation created by George Soros.*

KH: What are your goals for the partnership?

LB: *My goal for the partnership is to make a lasting improvement in the educational infrastructure to which the Palestinian population has access. ♦*



The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts (detail), Bard College, is one of architect Frank Gehry's innovative buildings on campus. Photograph © Peter Mauss/Esto. "Looking at the Fisher Center, it's hard not to see it as a grand success in a cultural landscape littered with no less grand projects that may never be built." Verlyn Klinenberg, Wired New York - Forum.

Todah Rabah

To everyone who helped with *A Light In My Soul*, including: Gayle Martinez, Marc Kaplan, Margarita Denevan, Marianne Furedi, Ariana Kramer, Rebecca Borrego, Melody Will-Naegel, and Rebecca Borrego.

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Thank you Stuart and Leah of Wild Earth Llama Adventures, and Jonah Solloway of Taos Mountain Outfitters, business sponsors of the Roy Sharfin Memorial Llama Trek. Thanks to all of the hikers for coming out and for soliciting support through sponsorships.

Baby-Namings and More

Baby-namings, Brits, Anniversaries or Birthday Parties: call the TJC to rent our space for your special occasion. Special member rates. Call for more information.



Peace Coffee . . .

In 2003, JJ Keki, a Ugandan coffee farmer walked door to door asking his Jewish, Christian, and Muslim neighbors to put aside old differences and come together. The coffee farmers were struggling to make a living; with the help of Laura Wetzler from the US-based organization Kulanu, they formed the Peace Kawomera Cooperative. Farmers now sell directly to Thanksgiving Coffee Company, and receive prices four times higher than before. This has enabled them to send children to school, start savings accounts, and reinvest in their farms. Together, the farmers have succeeded in doing something that none could have done alone.

You can help this effort, and support the Taos Jewish Center, by purchasing "Delicious Peace" coffee at the TJC.

SAINT OF THE SLOPES

Kotzker de Taos

A TZADDIK in Taos? Impossible! Can't be! But maybe, just maybe, some thread of truth would be revealed, talking to the old man who lived on the mountain: Shimon Fridkovsky. How he got here, when he arrived and why, none of that was my concern. If only he would shed light on the Taos Tzaddik, that would be satisfying; maybe it would even clear up, perhaps eliminate, much confusion and doubt on the subject.

It was after the Great Recession in the early years of the 21st century. I drove up as far as the old road allowed and began walking, following a sketchy map drawn by my neighbor who, to stay healthy, made a daily trek in the vicinity of Shimon's cabin . . . a rough construction of large timbers and concrete. The door was ajar and I pushed it without knocking. It swung wide. There the old man sat on a high stool in the center of the room, chipping away at a granite stile.

"Come in. Come in." He looked up briefly, then continued working. "Sit down somewhere, son." Obviously he regarded my white hair as just another middle class affectation. "I've been fighting this stone for months. Can't figure out what it wants to be. Inside something is hiding. But that's an old story." He looked up. "What can I do for you?" When I told him of my interest in the Tzaddik, he said that few came by to ask. "Your time is precious and I..." "No. No. No. Please. Oh yes. A Tzaddik in Taos," he chuckled -- as unlikely as a TZADDIK IN PELTS. You know the expression: A righteous man in furs -- it doesn't go together. And yet, it happened, and we were here to witness such a contradiction, such an anomaly. That one of the LAMED VOVNIKS, one of the thirty-six righteous in all the world, would show up in our tiny town, in the foothills of the Blood of Christ Mountains in the Southern Rockies, makes no sense. In fact, it's crazy. The contradiction strains all credulity. Why here? How here? The few of us reeling from the shock -- what were we to make of it? Since it all happened on our doorstep, so to speak, the obligation to make it fit -- this "coming" -- fit into the life of our community that was the obligation felt by all of us.

Some suspected that one day, men, or perhaps one person would come, a man (a woman?) of genuine faith, full of that devotion we all dreamt about; truth that only existed in stories. Such a person would come and we would bask, warming ourselves in the radiance of such a presence, whose influence would be so great many of us would begin giving away our riches, our abundance, yes, even large sums of money simply to beautify and enhance our *mitzvot*, our TZEDAKKAH charity. Sabbaths would suddenly be luxurious; only the best wines and schnapps and delicacies laid out for everyone on the festivals. No questions asked. No worry about tomorrow.

Suddenly, the Divine glow was so bright all of us were convinced these were the days we prayed for -- the Holy Time was approaching -- the great blessing was imminent. Miraculously, we all stopped doubting. Following the HALACHAH seemed natural. Whatever we did, small deed, great deed, seemed insufficient. Enough was never enough. Without discussing the matter, it now seemed like the norm to exceed all the usual requirements. Not only would we not stop giving from our hearts and minds and wallets, we could not stop. Momentum had been established, and there was no stopping. No turning back. We now searched for the street beggars, rather than averting our eyes from the usual loiterers. We brought food, hot meals, when we visited the old and infirm. We sat and read stories to the abandoned, unloved children. And even a few mates were located for the widows who attended community dances.

No longer were we talking great tales, boasting to one another of our accomplishments. No longer were we speaking from two hearts: one of peace and friendship, the other full of animosity. No longer did our mouths utter that not felt by the heart. At last we were free from evil tale-bearing, for a Tzaddik was in our midst. Up until we realized the arrival of this remarkable person, we were unable to hold back our tongues -- no obstacle would silence our evil tongues. Little did we suspect that our hearts -- once given freedom -- could contradict words we only mouthed.

For the Tzaddik, the contents of any day, every day, all day, was preparation for his last earthly hour, for his meeting with the MALACHA MAVET, the Angel of Death. Mankind is weak and poor, he said, too weak and too poor. Taos Mountain became his Sinai. He would remain on the slopes always. That is where we could always find him -- meditating -- studying -- praying. No compromises in that life. His soul might be in need of perfecting, but he would not hear of a life devoted to self as long as children anywhere were hungry, and cold, and unloved. He

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Milton Supman: 1926 - 2009



If you were a child in the 1950's and 1960's and your family had a television, you watched *Lunch With Soupy Sales*. The pie-in-the-face shtick - that was Soupy. Gags, puns, improvised comedic sketches and unabashed foolishness almost always ended with that pie, his trademark. He estimated that he took 20,000 pies in his career. As a child, his two older brothers called themselves *Hambone* and *Chicken Bone*, and he decided he would be called *Soup Bone*, which was shortened to *Soupy*. His career began in the Navy, where he would clown and entertain on the ship's PA system. From there it was nightclubs, radio disc jockeying, and ultimately the nation's first dance show broadcast from Cincinnati with *Soupy's Soda Shop*. A huge fan of jazz, Sales had a late night show in Detroit called *Soupy's On*, where he featured the top jazz artists of the day as they traveled through town: Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington and Miles Davis, among many others.

Soupy Sales died of cancer at 83 in New York. ♦

-Kotzker cont.

dismissed the foolishness of the world.

The Tzaddik in our midst was that living manifestation teaching us that the evil tongue denies the very existence of the All-Mighty, All-Loving, Divine creator of the universe. We learned that our past behavior required some serious re-examination -- some serious re-assessment. We had been eating and drinking to gain strength to earn money in order to afford more eating and drinking. We had been going around in circles, only to discover that where we eventually arrived was the place from where we began.

We all had access to the Tzaddik. He had no office hours. He had no office. Wherever we encountered him, that place became his office -- a place of consultation. He seemed to have a mystical presence. Everything about him -- clothes -- *talit* -- his books -- the way he moved and

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Tributes

Mazal tov, Stuart and Lia Rosenberg, on your marriage. May you share a future together filled with happiness and love.

Mazal tov to David Astor, on the occasion of his 90th birthday, from his loving nephew Karl Halpert.

In honor of Bette Myerson, an extraordinary human being, from Laurel Friedman.

In honor of Bette Myerson, from Mrs. Raymond K. Myerson.

In honor of the Yahrzeits of grandfathers Abraham Louis Venner and Harold Karl Halpert, from Karl Halpert.

Condolences to Bob and Lynn and family, on the passing of Bob's dear mother, Evelyn Freudenheim.

Condolences to Marc Kaplan and his family, on the passing of Marc's oldest brother, Gene. May his memory be a blessing.

In memory of Barbara Tzeses from Sara and Arthur Gordon.

In memory of Barbara Tzeses from Mark and Sue Landy.

In memory of Barbara Tzeses from Carol and Darcy Weisner.

In memory of Barbara Tzeses, loving mother of Beth Goldman and Lynn Levin, from Barbara's dear friends.

In memory of Barbara Tzeses from Bette Myerson.

In memory of Barbara Tzeses from Bonnie Korman.

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Eli Halpert is an award-winning artist, and many have noticed and commented on his unique illustrations appearing in Hakol over the years. Eli recently graduated from Otis College of Art and Design with a BFA in Communication Arts. He lives and works in Los Angeles as an illustrator specializing in character design. Visit his website at www.elihalpert.com.

¿ PARADISE LOST? . . . continued from p. 9

place into a picture postcard. Somewhere along the line everyone conspired to make Taos into a tourist trap. Then some megalomaniac Swiss mogul built a ski resort that attracted rich Texans. Now the hippies have come and are exposing the whole mirage with their cheap dope and free love."

Despite his mixed metaphors, he was right; the hippies had definitely thrown a monkey wrench into the land of three cultures living in harmony. No one believed this myth. In reality, the three cultures passed each other warily, did business with each other, joked with each other, lived side by side in an uneasy relationship of bed-rock indifference. The hippies added a fourth culture, one slower than the others to recognize the relationship between hard work and survival. They filled the hot springs and clogged the food stamp office. The highways were lined with hitchhikers: the thin preacher who said there were tunnels from Hondo to Los Alamos, the young couple with three filthy children, the girl with two dogs, the old dooper who was drinking himself to death -- we gave them rides, and when our car broke down, we jugged them on the side of the road. In Arroyo Hondo alone, there were three communes: New Buffalo was thriving in lower Hondo, and Michael Duncan had opened his land in upper Hondo to all comers who were forming Morningstar and Reality Construction Company. Within the county limits, there were also the Hog Farm near Rodarte, the Family in Ranchos de Taos, and Lama Foundation north of San Cristobal -- each had an individual identity, a core of like-minded people mingling with drifters who shuttled from one to another -- not to speak of the communes across the Colorado border: Drop City and Libre and others I can't remember.

We got to know the communes well. We went to Lama Foundation for Sufi dancing and Hindu-like *satsangs* with visiting luminaries. Baba Ram Dass was a star; he came through a couple of times a year and gave talks and published *Be Here Now* which became a hippie bible. He had been Dr. Richard Alpert, a professor at Harvard whom Timothy Leary had converted to mushrooms and Shiva. Deirdre and I went to see him several times. I had feared a half day of tedium and was enthralled by his humor and ironies. He called himself "a mouth piece" and he came across as just that, a slick lawyer for the spirit, a gay Jewish jokester. (Back then, he called himself bisexual.) He was honest and bright and joked about acid, money, masturbation, any topic at all, especially his straight past and rigid father. Above all, he made his listeners feel that we were on a path to somewhere, that we were doing something significant, not just growing maize and smoking dope. He didn't pretend to be holier than us and he admitted to being ambitious, even now, more than

ever, in the new age.

We were invited to a peyote church ceremony at New Buffalo. I had thought the peyote church was just an excuse to get high but it turned out to be a blend of Native American and Christian beliefs that its members took very seriously. The ceremony was held in a teepee at New Buffalo, led by an old Pueblo man who was assisted by Christian hippies. A man from Morningstar tended the fire all night; one from Buffalo was in charge of the peyote buttons. We were expected to spend the entire night in the teepee but I didn't come

close. The peyote made me sick and I took several trips outside to vomit. I remember the fire smoking and a rattle rattling and a drum thumping and my head throbbing. I don't remember much else, other than coming out in the morning to greet the sunrise and vowing never to go back.

One day, two guys from Reality rushed up to me while I was splitting wood and told me that a friend had blown his fingers off while trying to un-jam a shotgun with a comb. One was tall, the other short; there was something odd about them, as if they were giggling. We drove up to

Reality and met Steve, who had wrapped his hand in a cloth. After we looked for the missing fingers and couldn't find them, I drove the three of them to Holy Cross hospital accompanied by Glenn Weathers, the State policeman, with siren and red lights. A doctor stitched up the stubs of two fingers and gave him a bunch of pain pills.

Back at Reality, we sat in a circle drinking bad wine. (When the history of the hippies is written, people will be surprised how much alcohol was consumed.) The short friend was friendly and a bit dumb. The tall one had an edge. He cooked meat from a deer they had shot five days earlier and hung from the north side of the house.

"Is this a buck or a doe?" I asked.

"I don't know what you're talking about," the tall one said, -- paused, grinned -- "a doe." After dinner they passed around the pain pills.

"Fellas," I said. "I think Steve is going to need those." They laughed. No one cared, not even Steve; and they laughed even louder when remembering how they had looked for his fingers. They said that was the best part. They forgot the story about un-jamming the shotgun with a comb and said that they were practicing their fast draws and one of the guns went off. When I left they gave me a large piece of venison.

In September, our children entered Da Nahazli school. It was a hippie school founded the year before by the Tatarskis, a couple of Russians who were Americans really, but with Russian names and old-world courtliness. They had fled San Francisco to create a school

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- "Art is Love, Taos, NM" photograph © Susan Ressler, 2009

-Paradise Lost cont.

for their two kids, who thanked them by becoming the spoiled brats of the place. The educational philosophy was a hodge-podge of ideas taken from Montessori, Waldorf and Summerhill. The upshot was, the kids were not required to attend classes. What classes were offered emphasized art and ancient cultures, but even these subjects were too rigorous; kids and teachers alike spent half their time swinging in the tires that hung from high cottonwood trees in the back yard, where our son and his pals dug a warren of underground tunnels and spent the next two years in them, dirty and happy.

Parents and teachers had a lot of say about how the school was run. Meetings were held in the evening to discuss the cost of tuition, the size of classes, whether lunches should be vegetarian or organic or both, whether math should be taught or banned. Being nearly as undisciplined as their children, the adults started the meetings around six in the evening and let them run past midnight, the stench of body odors gradually overwhelming the stench of patchouli oil. Ignorance battled it out with inefficiency; much was debated and little accomplished.

Deirdre and I started teaching at the school because we felt our kids were not receiving an education. Her classes were popular because she was sweet and fun and eager; mine were popular because I said that the kids had to attend and do the work. This created an ideological uproar in the school, but I argued that the kids liked the discipline; it made them feel grown up. My feeling was, if the kids could make their own rules, I could too.



- "Art Studio, Taos, NM" photograph © Susan Ressler, 2009

It was a high time in northern New Mexico. Over the winter we went to wild hippie dances held in Quonset huts, dancing crazily to drive out the chill. The music was considered hard rock (we didn't suspect what was still to come), a local band playing their versions of Creedence Clearwater and The Who and Janis: *Suzie Q* and *Pinball Wizard* and *Bobby McGee*. We staggered out of the crowds into the winter nights stoned, wiped out with dancing and music and smoke, heads spinning; stumbled out at midnight into ten degrees below zero, hot breath freezing in the air, the stars on top of us, the snow crunching underfoot, dogs barking, two Hispanic men leaning against a wall smoking, pickups cruising by, taunts, shouts... then, recovered,

back in to dance, the myriad drugs kicking in: *Nights of White Satin*, *Bad Moon Arising*, *Honky Tonk Woman*. I was consumed with lust for the hippie girls, especially the beautiful twins, about twenty years old who slept with everyone -- innocent and pure angels dispersing joy.

The winter was hard. The spring was worse. As the snow melted, the roads filled with mud and water. Gary Walker and I pulled George Robinson's truck out of the deep water-filled ruts with a chain hooked to a tractor; afterwards we stood yakking and throwing stones into the ruts. Then George and Gary pulled my old van out; and so forth. Neighbors helped each other because it was us against the elements. One night I was on my own when I sank into a deep rut. I attached a handyman jack to a tree, ran a chain from it to the van, and then jacked it backward onto "dry" ground. I used that trick again to pull a hippie from Arkansas out, his long old Olds was half under water and had two flat tires.

From my journal:

Sunday afternoon and nothing to do. The blue sky travels overhead like newsheet. The dope dealer comes by in his VW. A state policeman starts up the hill to Reality Construction commune. Marcos Ortiz is fixing the hydraulic lift on his tractor. Mrs. Chacon opens the grocery store. Mathew is splitting cedar for the cook-stove. Indio opens fire on the state policeman's car. Nonnie, Carlos and Ramon smoking at the back of the church. The state police man rolls out of his car taking his rifle with him. Cave Dave is sitting on a rock in the canyon. Two hawks float over the cottonwoods. Dennis Long's band is starting a new song in the shed behind his house. The peyote feast is breaking up at New Buffalo commune. Ida Martinez has her Self-help women over to sew. The state policeman has attached a scope to his rifle and is scanning the hill-side. Hoski, Edward, Peter and Chris shut off the irrigation ditch and are snatching the drowning fish up from the mud. Ruth is balling Fast Ed in her front room. Morningstar is playing basketball against a Raza team from Arroyo Seco. Steve is hitchhiking to town to watch the football game on TV. The state policeman hasn't seen anything in his scope so he gets back into his car and continues to Reality. Manuel is hunting rabbits. Father Prieto is going over the parish accounts with Clodoveo Chacon. Three cars of Chicanos block a pickup full of hippies and begin beating them over the head with two by fours. The state policeman starts walking across Reality's alfalfa field. Mathew stops splitting cedar and lights a joint. Max Finstein walks across the alfalfa field to meet the state policeman. Melanie Miles is playing with the ducklings in the front yard. One of the hippies is running down the road and the others are bleeding in the back of the truck. Fred and Jerry are laying plans to blow up the KOA billboard which has been steel beamed into place since they last sawed it down. Tony Garcia has eluded his wife and is headed for Celso's bar. The state policeman is saying to Max, Tell Indio not to shoot at cops -- it's dangerous. The Chicanos return to their three cars and roar off. The sun jerks a little further across the sky. Three hippie kids sneak into Mrs. Chacon's store to steal candy. The radio in the state policeman's car is trying to raise him. Finley is beating his horse on the hill-side below Morningstar. Tahiti is blow-torching bronze discs together.

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Jews have lived and prayed in Taos for decades and we now have a place to call home. Since opening in June 2002 more than 3,000 people have walked through our doors joining together in song, prayer, study, and celebration. Your charitable contribution will sustain our growing Jewish community and provide a home for Jews in Taos for generations to come. Consider giving through any of these creative planned giving vehicles.

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•**BEQUESTS**- Join the Taos Jewish Center Heritage Society by including the TJC in your will, or living trust.

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Please call the TJC today for a free brochure on the many ways you can help your Jewish Community
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A Story in Rhyme, by Leah Alexander

In September I fell
And broke a hip
Hardship.

A ship of tears,
A ship of fears.
A lifeline saved me, friends, too.

The ambulance crew
Knew what to do.
Morphine they gave
And carried me up, less than brave.

To the hospital, then.
Where men
Looked, examined, concurred
A hip they'd install
And I'd be cured.

Not so fast, my body said.
I stayed in bed.

My son came from New Jersey way.
For 10 days he did stay
And gave me much of
What I'd taught him: Love.
I was amazed at what he could do
To see me through.

And then the Living Center and PT
They gave to me.
"Physical Torture" some say
Began to see me on my way.

It's now some weeks
and soon they'll give me a day
And I'll be on my way.

What have I left out,
What is this story all about?

It's about friends, and care, and
loving kind.
Kathleen and the Chesed Project
come to mind.

The TJC
Took care of me.
Lovely dinners did I see
Brought to me
Gluten-free
By friends so many I can't name.

To all who came I say
The only way I know to say
Todah rabah.

I say it loud
Todah rabah.

I say it proud
And if allowed another line
And one more Time
You are my friends, you are divine.
Todah rabah.

Before I'm through
Todah rabah
To all of you. ♦

I give my thanks to all who have helped me: with meals, with visits, with loving kindness. After I'm home I will still have needs that include meals, shopping, and transportation. If you can help, please call me on my cell phone, at 609-408-9283. Todah rabah! -- Leah

-Kotzker cont. from p. 11

talked and gestured, was very different. Fasting for the Tzaddik was a regular practice -- and so extreme that he often lost consciousness, as if drifting into another world. His emaciated face simultaneously radiated light and heat and appeared (his skin) rice paper thin -- diaphanous. No titles -- no honors -- no ambition to power -- not as much as a moment of glory did he allow himself. Being somebody meant being nobody.

Too learned? Perhaps. He seemed to look on suffering as a Divine gift. "To be something, we must confront our nothingness. It is no shame to say: I am vulnerable. I need G-d's help. I know I am small in the eye of Heaven -- I turn around and see a long line of small successes, failures. I pray only for small miracles. No one but me need know about my lack of merit. G-d is great. The absence of G-d is infinite nihilism. Without G-d all is nothing."

He would invite us to pray together, to eat together, to learn together, even dream together. "If it's impossible, we'll plan to do it." It was as if the Tzaddik had the broken shards from Sinai to reassemble here in Taos. Whatever our problems, our suffering, we knew the Tzaddik could and would help us. He patiently heard our complaints, but he had no time for superficiality, no interest in mere *k'vetching*. He was sent to us, it seemed, to comfort, to heal, authentic dis-ease. His words were powerful; he gave us real answers to our many questions. But more than giving answers, the Tzaddik was the answer.

-cont.next page

¿ PARADISE LOST? . . . continued from p. 13

The bleeding hippies are at Dan's and Peggy's getting bandaged. Albert Christianson is irrigating his carrots and peas. Justin is repairing his old Mercedes. The state policeman is driving down the hill to the place where the Chicanos beat up the hippies. The Rio Hondo is traveling towards the Rio Grande, Texas and the Gulf of Mexico. When the Morningstar winos hear about the fight they grab axe handles and pile into an old truck. Lily is doing the dishes. Deirdre is asleep in the grass behind the house. Indio pulls himself out of the outhouse hole where he had been hiding. The hippie winos drive around Hondo looking for the Chicanos. Suzanne is sitting in her teepee wondering whether to masturbate or not. Nick's dog Spark is sniffing Sandra's dog Windssock. Toby is pulling tufts of hair out of his own face. Max is having a talk with Indio about shooting at people who approach Reality. The winos don't find the Chicanos and go check out Buffalo. The dope dealer has arrived at Reality. Nonnie, Carlos and Ramon are teasing an enraged cock. Fast Ed is sleeping in Ruth's front room. Jackson is laying a Mercy trap for the skunk that has been eating his chicks. Mrs. Ortiz is pulling in her drying. The winos are returning to Morningstar in triumph -- they scored some Bourbon! The state policeman is rushing over to Celso's bar. Mathew has gone back to splitting wood in the bright Sunday sun.



In the spring of 1970, I gave Glenda Gloss an essay to read and she gave it to Roger Thomas, the graphic designer of the hippie newspaper called *The Fountain of Light*. He invited me to coffee to discuss publishing the essay. We talked about *The Fountain of Light*, and he asked me to make a few remarks to the staff about how the paper could be improved.

The Fountain of Light was published monthly; a year's subscription was three dollars. It was a raggedy hodgepodge of hippie life: articles about home birthing (with photo of two naked

-cont. page 17

-Kotzker cont.

At higher elevations, while not exactly revered, the Tzaddik was called SAINT OF THE SLOPES. Zelda's "Bling's the Thing" featured effigy pins, Madeleine Albright style, for any occasion. Also T-shirts with the message: ROAR OR KEEP QUIET. Under the spell of creeping Mammon, our quest, soon out of control, seriously weakened, slowly but surely defeating the righteous influence of the Tzaddik. Faith became a faint memory. And without our faith, what was there? We searched and we found nothing. Our reliance on mankind yielded nothing. We had lost Heaven. Perhaps it is axiomatic that as our faith diminished, we saw less and less of the Tzaddik -- or perhaps his growing isolation weakened our belief.

Some say he continues to reside on the slopes, but it is now a long time and I have not seen him. Maybe one day -- who knows.

Shimon Fridkovsky stared at his stile as I thanked him, leaving the door ajar, as I found it...◆

HAKOL NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION POLICY

In order to conserve resources, the Taos Jewish Center Board of Directors has created a new policy for printing and mailing *Hakol*, our quarterly newsletter. All TJC members in good standing will continue to receive *Hakol* at no charge via US mail. Non-members are being asked to subscribe at a nominal cost. We will continue to feature an electronic version at www.taosjewishcenter.org so that everyone, regardless of membership status, can enjoy *Hakol*.

- ❖ *Hakol* will be printed and mailed as a TJC membership benefit four times per year.
- ❖ *Hakol* and our calendar of events will be available on the TJC website at no charge.
- ❖ Non-member subscriptions for four issues of *Hakol*, delivered via US mail, are available for only \$36. To subscribe make checks payable to TJC, write *Hakol* in the check memo, and mail to the TJC at 1335 Gusdorf Rd., Ste. R, Taos, NM, 87571.
- ❖ If you are unable to access *Hakol* in any of the above ways, please contact the TJC for further assistance. We want to make sure everyone has access to *Hakol*.

Taos Minyan

Torah Study and Shabbat Services take place every Saturday, beginning 9am at the TJC.

We use the *New Reform Siddur: Mishkan T'filah, Gates of Prayer for Shabbat* (which includes transliteration). Newcomers welcome!

Volunteer at the TJC

Committee positions are now available: Computer-savvy volunteers needed to help with emails and calendar updates.

Apprenticeship Available

Learn how to ask for donations by working with Phyllis Landis, the TJC's Vice President and one of Taos' best fund-raisers. Support TJC development and add a new skill to your résumé. Definitely a win-win for all!

TJC Wish List

Space heater, Assorted silverware or a set, Table cloths for our 72" long x 30" wide tables, 2 Rectangular area rugs in good shape, Podium or Lectern, Children's Jewish-themed books.

Are you on the TJC email list?

Call or email the TJC to be added to the list to receive reminders of upcoming and/or unpublished events:
tjc@newmex.com

TJC Office Hours:

The TJC office, library, and gift shop are open on Mondays from 10-5pm and by appointment. There is usually someone in the TJC daily; please call ahead for the hours. For a calendar of events call 758-8615 or see www.taosjewishcenter.org

Announcements and Special Winter TJC Events

The Case for Israel, Film Screening and Discussion, Jan. 10

The Case for Israel, Democracy's Outpost, an award-winning documentary film with Alan Dershowitz, will be screened on Sunday, January 10, 1pm at the TJC. Discussion will be led by Sam Sokolove, Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of New Mexico, who is sponsoring the event.

Receiving top honors at the 2009 Houston International Film Festival and premiering at the 24th Annual Haifa International Film Festival, *The Case for Israel* presents evidence from leading historians, analysts, legal experts and leaders on both sides of the political spectrum to make the definitive case for Israel's legitimacy and right to self-defense.

Through incisive conversations with 28 commentators ranging from Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, Ambassador Dennis Ross, and former Israel Supreme Court President Aharon Barak, to Opposition Leader

Benjamin Netanyahu and senior analysts Caroline Glick and Natan Sharansky, this film refutes deeply entrenched misconceptions about Israel's history, Jewish claims to a homeland, individual rights under Israel's democratic system of government, the security fence, and military conduct in the face of terrorist attacks.

Nearly two years in the making, *The Case for Israel* was produced by Gloria Greenfield and Michael Yohay, the principals of Doc Emet Productions. The film has been featured at numerous festivals and is 77 minutes long.

This event is free of charge, with donations welcome. ♦

Kabbalat Shabbat, Jan. 15

The quarterly TJC Kabbalat Shabbat is on Friday, January 15, 6pm. In this celebration led by Ziva Moyal, we will receive the Queen with blessings and joyful chants to enter the special Holy spirit of Shabbat together. The meal is potluck. No shellfish or pork, please. ♦

Occupation 101, Film & Discussion, Jan. 20

Occupation 101: Voices of the Silenced Majority, will be screened on Wednesday, January 20 at 5:30pm.

A powerful documentary on the causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this film will be followed by a discussion hosted by Current Affairs at the TJC. ♦

How Will It End? (a conversation), Feb. 4

How Will it End: A Conversation on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict featuring Mark Rudd and Robert Efrogymson, will take place Thursday, February 4, 7-9pm at the TJC.

Robert Efrogymson, President of the Jewish Federation of New Mexico, and Mark Rudd, the legendary activist, author and member of Another Jewish Voice, will exchange opposing viewpoints on the prospects for a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The conversation will be moderated by Peter Wengert and followed by an hour of open audience participation, with a Question and Answer/Discussion period. Jointly sponsored by the Taos Jewish Center and the Jewish Federation of New Mexico, this event highlights the TJC's winter quarter educational focus on Jewish-Arab relations. If there is sufficient interest, we will arrange follow-up activities to enable us to explore the topic further.

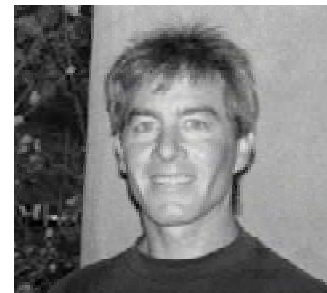
Suggested donation \$7 for TJC members, \$10 for non-members.

Note: For those who wish to prepare for this special event, the TJC will provide a listing of related books and DVDs, many of which will be available from our Library. ♦

Exploring the Sacred Tongue, Jan.7 - Feb.11

G-d spoke and the World became. Hebrew letters, words and concepts permeate the totality of our existence. Join Judah Botzer on a six-week journey through Hebrew's beautiful rhythms and concise expression. Basic prayers, fundamental concepts, and joyous songs will all be drawn upon. "My objective," says Judah, is to fill students "with the sacred words and expression of the Jewish people... I want to give you the tools and building blocks of Hebrew thought and use, so that the letters and words themselves will begin to communicate with you."

Judah Botzer is fluent in colloquial and liturgical Hebrew, and has a deep appreciation for the mysteries veiled in Biblical Hebrew. He brings to his teaching the unique synthesis of Jewish culture, history and religion that he has gained from immersion in both Jewish-American and Israeli societies.



Judah began his study of Hebrew in kindergarten, and received a classic Jewish education from Park Synagogue, the largest Conservative Congregation in the world, where he served as Torah reader and Hebrew teacher. Judah received a teaching degree from the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies. He subsequently spent 15 years living in Israel, where he spoke Hebrew as his primary language.

This six-week course will run on Thursdays, from January 7th to February 11th. The cost for the entire session is \$42 (\$60 for non-members). All are invited to attend. Advanced registration is suggested. To register, please call the TJC office at 758-8615. For questions about the course, contact Judah at 751-0779. ♦

Current Affairs at the TJC
Dynamic discussion every
Wednesday evening, 5:30-7pm



Join the Current Affairs email list
Contact Jay at jpl@levine.com

¿ PARADISE LOST? . . . *continued from p. 15*

pregnant women holding hands and three naked children), review of the Beatles' *Abbey Road* album; an interview with George Harrison stolen from *Rolling Stone*; a cartoon ripped off from R. Crumb; a handwritten page addressed to "communes, extended families, groups, tribes, families and people" which instructed them how to dispose of garbage, wash dishes, dig a hole for shitting in. It advises: "Don't shit where you eat," and concludes: "Nothing written here has to do with good or bad. It's common sense. It has most simply to do with you and me and how we are going to live together with each other and our planet in beauty/peace/ love/ cooperation."

A few days after meeting Roger, I went to the General Store, owned by Chick Lonsdale and Lorien Enterprises. It was a combination of groceries, hardware, animal feed and newspaper. The staff was waiting for me in the paper's office. I banged in, realizing too late how small the room was. I saw a black man, a good-looking blond, a good-looking dark-haired woman, some other guys, and Roger. There were no chairs, so I sat on the floor with my back to the wall. Everyone else sat down on the floor too, except the dark-haired woman, who leaned against the wall. I told them that I thought the paper was needlessly limiting itself to hippie material. It was the only alternative newspaper in the County and could tackle all sorts of things: the political scene, the prevalent violence, poetry, stories, gardening in high altitudes, history of Taos, and so forth.

They were ripe for advice. Furthermore, the editor had run off to Hawaii, leaving a message in green ink scrawled on the toilet seat: "I'm going away to where it's greener 'cause staying here is making me meaner."

Some funds were missing, or not; no one seemed to know for sure.

Black man: "If you think we're doing such a bad job, why don't you run it?"

Me: "I could do that."

Dark-haired woman leaning against the wall: "Do you have any newspaper experience?"

Me: "No, but I've written several novels and some poems and essays, and I know Taos County pretty well."

It ended with me agreeing to be the editor. There was no money to pay me and I said that was fine -- it was weird how we did without money in those days. Gas was fifty-five cents, sliced bread twenty-five cents, postage stamps six cents. The black man turned out to be Cyril, the head of a commune called The Family, which he ran like a Roman emperor. The good-looking blond was Cassandra, his lead wife. The dark-haired woman, who obviously didn't trust me, was the staff reporter, Phaedra Greenwood. ♦

-Conclusion of Jim Levy's "Paradise Lost" coming this Spring in Hakol

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