

# ISRAEL SHELANU ישראלי שלנו

This newsletter is a nonpolitical, informational and educational publication. Informing about news that does not always make the US headlines. We aim to educate about institutions, constitutions, organizations, history and other small things that makes Israel, Israel Shelanu - Our Israel.

Vol. 1 no. 2

A publication of the Community Kollel of Dallas

October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007 / Marcheshvan 7, 5768

## News

חדשות

**Israeli pediatrician and nephrologist** Dr. Yoram Blachar was named president elect of the World Medical Association at its annual conference in Copenhagen.

Blachar, is head of the pediatric nephrology unit at Kaplan Medical Center in Rehovot and chairman of the Israel Medical Association since 1995. The WMA, represents 84 national medical associations and nine million physicians worldwide. (IL21c)

**Palestinian rocket fire** has increased dramatically since Hamas takeover in Gaza. Palestinian terrorists in Gaza have fired 1,000 mortar rounds and rockets toward Israel since Hamas took power four months ago, Israeli security officials said. The IDF estimates that 350 Kassam rockets and 650 mortar rounds have been launched at Israel since June 14. Around 160 mortar rounds and 80 Kassam rockets land in Israel each month. These numbers only represent launches that have been identified and recorded, so the actual number of attacks is likely to be much higher. (Ynet News)

Despite the efforts of a group called **Boycott Israeli Goods**, products made in Israel will remain on the shelves of the People's Food Co-op of Ann Arbor. At a meeting of the co-op's Board of Directors, officials announced the outcome of a vote to determine whether the organization should boycott Israeli products. The final vote was 262 members in favor of the ban and 866 opposing it. (Michigan Daily)

**eBay Inc. is expanding** its activity in Israel by deepening its joint activity with Shopping.com and opening a development center. Shopping.com CEO Joshua Silverman says that the new center will develop eBay's sorting and cataloguing technologies. (Shopping.com was the world's first price comparison website. It began as the Israeli start-up Dealtime. eBay acquired the company for \$634 million in 2005). (Globes)

**Pop superstar Madonna** has become addicted to using Israeli creams made from Dead Sea minerals, to combat signs of ageing. A source tells British newspaper the Daily Express, "Madonna is hooked. She has started using Laline products on her face every morning and night, and all over her body. She could clearly afford to buy far more top of the range creams but it's the Israeli ingredients that have her hooked." (Evening Echo)

More news on page 2...

## Did you know?

הידעת?

### Israel's Nobility

We are proud to say there are 8 Israeli recipients of the Nobel Prize. They are:

- Shmuel Yosef Agnon, Literature, 1966
- Menachem Begin, Peace, 1978
- Shimon Peres, Peace, 1994
- Yitzhak Rabin, Peace, 1994
- Daniel Kahneman, Economics, 2002
- Aaron Ciechanover, Chemistry, 2004
- Avram Hershko, Chemistry, 2004
- Robert Aumann, Economics, 2005

In this and the following issues we will highlight one or more of these honored "Israeli dudes".

*Robert J. Aumann* was born in Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany. He fled to the United States with his family in 1938, two weeks before the Kristallnacht. He attended high school at the Rabbi Jacob Joseph Yeshiva in New York City and graduated from the City College of New York in 1950 with a B.Sc. in Mathematics. Dr. Aumann received his M.Sc. in 1952, and his Ph.D. in Mathematics in 1955, both from MIT. In 1956 he joined the Mathematics faculty at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and is currently a professor at their Center for Rationality.

Dr. Aumann received the 2005 Nobel Prize in Economics for explaining conflict and cooperation by means of game theory - or interactive decision theory. Along with his American colleague, economist Thomas C. Schelling, Aumann's work "help[ed] explain economic conflicts such as price wars and trade wars, as well as why some communities are more successful than others in managing common-pool resources".

Dr. Aumann also used Game Theory to analyze Talmudic dilemmas. He was able to solve the mystery of the "division problem", a long-time dilemma of explaining the Talmudic rationale in dividing the heritage of a late husband to his three wives, depending on the worth of the heritage (compared to its original worth). He dedicated the article in memory of his son, Shlomo Aumann, who was killed during the 1982 Lebanon War while serving as a tank gunner in the Israel Defense Forces' armored corps.



*Insights about the Land of Israel through the eyes of the Torah and Sages throughout Jewish History.*

The Torah (Vayikra chapter 25) teaches us that in the Land of Israel, every seventh year is considered a 'year of rest' for the land, with all acts of cultivation essentially forbidden. That which grows on its own is considered ownerless; anyone is entitled to help themselves to the produce of the field, but only an amount sufficient to satisfy a family's immediate needs. Hoarding or profiteering is strictly forbidden. In addition to restrictions on working the land, all private debts are cancelled. Putting aside the detailed laws of the Shemita year, the very institution itself touches on so many fundamental Jewish concepts: faith in God, social justice & responsibility, the Jewish People's relationship with the Land of Israel, Jewish economic & social theory, etc. Furthermore, the challenges of observing this special set of laws in a modern, industrial society such as the State of Israel have given rise to a number of creative solutions, many of which exemplify the breadth and sophistication of Halakha (Jewish Law) as a legal system. Though our lives in the Diaspora are only marginally affected by the restrictions of the Shemita year, exploring its many aspects affords us an opportunity to both deepen our appreciation for our tradition, while strengthening our connection with our brethren living in Israel.

Rabbi Ari Perl

## ...And speak of them

...וזכרתם בם

*Facts about the modern State of Israel that you can share with your children.*

The capital of Israel is Jerusalem (Yerushalayim in Hebrew). It is also the most populated city.

One-quarter of the Israeli population lives either in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa or Rishon Letzion.



## A good laugh

שמח ומבדח

A group of elderly, retired men gather each morning at a café in Tel Aviv. They drink their coffee and sit for hours discussing the world situation. Given the state of the world, their talks are usually depressing.

One day, one of the men startles the others by announcing,

"You know what? I am an optimist."

The others are shocked, but then one of them notices something fishy.

"Wait a minute! If you're an optimist, why do you look so worried?"

"You think it's easy being an optimist?!"

**Israeli company** - NexSig Neurological Examination Technologies has developed a computerized assessment software called NexAde that can help identify patients at risk of Alzheimer's before the illness sets in, giving them a chance to ward off the disease for as long as possible. Trials have showed that NexAde showed better sensitivity at evaluating patients than existing tests. The system has already been purchased by Israel's Maccabi Healthcare Services in Israel, and NexSig is in negotiations with Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

**Hizbullah Rebuilding Bunkers in Beirut.** In the al-Dahiyeh district in Beirut, Hizbullah militiamen are reconstructing buildings destroyed by the Israeli air force during the summer war last year in Lebanon in much the same way they had constructed their prewar villages in areas in southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley. "Hizbullah is rebuilding underground positions from which they can store weapons and defend and attack whomever they choose," said Toni Nissi, head of the International Lebanese Committee for UN Security Council Resolution 1559. The Hizbullah-owned Wa'ad construction company is rebuilding homes and commercial buildings with hidden "battle corridors" linked point by point above and below the ground with other buildings and adjacent neighborhoods.

The construction includes subterranean command posts, and hollow walls capable of concealing large stockpiles of weapons and ammunition. (Washington Times)

**According to a poll** by the Dahaf Institute published by Yediot Ahronot Tuesday, when asked if Israel should compromise Jerusalem's status as part of any future peace agreement with the Palestinians, 63% said Jerusalem should not be included in a peace agreement, 21% thought it should, and 16% would agree only if the changes were approved in a referendum. As for handing over Palestinian neighborhoods in eastern Jerusalem to the Palestinian Authority, 68% were against, 20% agreed, and 11% said they would agree if a referendum supported the idea. When asked who should remain sovereign of the Western Wall and Temple Mount, 61% said Israel should be sovereign, 16% favored joint Israeli-Palestinian sovereignty, 21% said the holy places should be under international rule, and 1% said Jordan should be named the holy places' sovereign. (Ynet)



## A word from the Editor

דבר העורך

Suggestions, comments and bright ideas are always welcome. Our goal is to publish bi-weekly for the remainder of 2007 and then become a weekly newsletter in January 2008.

In order to do so we need to add "staff". You don't have to be a Nobel Laureate (although it is a plus), simply have a passion for Israel and a desire to inform and educate the community at large in a non-political fashion. If you are interested in joining the team please e-mail me at [IsraelShelanu@sbcglobal.net](mailto:IsraelShelanu@sbcglobal.net). Mickie Sallmander - Editor