



# Speak EZ

Your Monthly MetroWest E-Newsletter

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**DONATE NOW**  
 or make a Tribute Gift  
 to the UJA Campaign

## Voice of UJC Leadership

### Campaign: In the Beginning

by Scott Krieger, United Jewish Appeal Campaign Chair

With this time of year, we begin anew the Torah reading cycle in synagogue. And in many ways, that's good news for most. Unlike the drier and often tougher passages on ritual law and prophesy, the book of Genesis – *Breishit* – offers us an interesting if not voyeuristic look at early family life.

From the first story, of Adam and Eve, all the way through to Joseph, our beginnings were many things . . . easy not being one. Lies, deception, struggle, and endurance permeate the passages we read this time of year. We started slowly, faced hurdle after hurdle, and not only survived but grew from a small family into a strong community along the way.

In many ways, these beginnings parallel the early stages of any Annual Campaign, including the one now under way for 2010. At this writing, we have surpassed the \$5 million mark, and are actually ahead of last year's pace. Despite all the warnings, and despite all the challenges, we persist, and we are growing.

Most notable is the renewed confidence to pick up the phone and call our donors. And with these conversations, we are hearing more positive stories than not: Donors who understand that they have an obligation to help others; donors who feel that perhaps the most meaningful way to give thanks for making a lot is to give a lot.

Perhaps, in a way, it is no coincidence – having to begin in challenging times as a prerequisite for growth. Perhaps, as the early narrative of the Torah suggests, you need one to achieve the other. And with Super Sunday just six weeks away, maybe this new sense of focus could not come at a better time.



Scott Krieger

## Issues of the Day

### Leading in Times of Change

by Cindy Chazan

I am an unashamed, superstitious woman who takes signs very seriously, especially at the beginning of a new year, when I am feeling introspective

### CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Over 400 seniors receive mental health counseling, case management, and health education services each month through the JFS Housecalls program.

and reflective. Most recently, I have been drawn to signs that speak of these uncertain times and the imperative to change oneself in order to meet these challenges:

The future is unknown and unknowable, except for sure it will be different from the past;

the future is uncertain and anything is possible;

and one of the most memorable on the Perkins School for the Blind: “All we see is possibility.”

It can be daunting when sudden change to our equilibrium challenges our familiar reality and values we cherish. In order to rise to the challenge, today’s leader needs to know the difference between technical change and adaptive change and to be able to create order amid confusion and uncertainty.

Now is the time to make hard decisions about what to preserve of all that is valued, and to determine what to leave behind. In order to survive and thrive in the new world, leaders are required to be simultaneously brutally realistic and unflinchingly optimistic.

Will we hunker down until the storm blows over and then try to restore? Or will we adapt and reset now, starting from a new beginning with the rich experiences and values we maintain?

By being both realistic about the difficulties and the risks and optimistic about the future, we can try to enable ourselves and our community to cope with that reality at a rate we can absorb.

We are living in a new and different world. Can these times present each of us with an opportunity to leave an incredible, bold, and brave legacy?

Leaders need passionate, unwavering commitment to principle, combined with flexibility and a feeling of hope, optimism, and resourcefulness.

Leadership can be lonely. When the world seems hopelessly confusing, taking a deep reflective moment with family, friends, and colleagues is a powerful tool for gaining clarity, generating new outlooks, and finding strategies to not only cope but to flourish. Cultivating a beloved friendship and developing a dependable network is probably the most precious and valuable tool, especially now. What better place to start than now.

*Cindy Chazan is a vice president of the Wexner Foundation, responsible for alumni and community development. UJC MetroWest works in partnership with the Wexner Foundation to conduct the Jerry Waldor Institute, UJC’s premier leadership development program. A proud Lion of Judah, Chazan lives in South Orange, New Jersey, with her husband, Jay Leipzig. Their son, Eric, a graduate of Solomon Schechter Day School (a UJC MetroWest beneficiary agency), is a junior at Boston University, and their daughter, Deborah, is with the Curriculum Initiative.*

## Issues of the Day

### Learn the Facts

by Yotam Zach

Watching the news and reading The Goldstone Report in recent weeks reminded me of my days as an Intelligence Officer and Commander of 12 soldiers during Operation Cast Lead in January 2009. The Goldstone Report, written by Judge Richard Goldstone, accuses both Israeli and Palestinian soldiers of committing war crimes during the operation. Hamas is blamed for mistreating Gilad Shalit, an Israeli POW held in captivity for three years, and violating The Geneva Convention. Israel is accused of committing war crimes by purposely targeting Palestinian civilians.

In reviewing the report, The U.N. Human Rights Council heard testimony from Colonel Richard Kemp in defense of Israel. Speaking of his experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq as a Colonel in the British forces, Kemp explained, “During Operation Cast Lead, the Israeli Defense Forces did more to safeguard the rights of civilians in a combat zone than any other army in the history of warfare. Israel did so while facing an enemy that deliberately positioned its military capability behind the human shield of the civilian population.” Not only did Israel not commit war crimes, but they took steps to help protect Palestinian civilians. As Kemp explained, “The truth is that the IDF took extraordinary measures to give Gaza civilians notice of targeted areas, making over 100,000 phone calls. Many missions that could have taken out Hamas military capability were aborted to prevent civilian casualties. The IDF allowed huge amounts of humanitarian aid into Gaza. To deliver aid virtually into your enemy’s hands is, to the military tactician, normally quite unthinkable. But the IDF took those risks.” Unfortunately, Judge Goldstone refused to attend the testimony.

On a personal level, this report is very frustrating. I constantly hear, read, and watch negative reporting on Israel and false accusations against its soldiers. One of “its soldiers” is me. It’s Meital, Nitzan, and the other soldiers I commanded. I think back to my experiences in the army and how the IDF attitude was adopted

by my soldiers and me, and I have a true perspective on the events. It is important for all of us to take the time to listen to what is being said about Israel, learn the facts, and advocate on its behalf.

It is my hope, as your *Shaliach*, that we will have many opportunities to learn, share, and grow together.

*Yotam Zach is one of UJC MetroWest’s Young Shaliach (Emissary from Israel).*

## Making a Difference

### A new slate of UJC-sponsored Overseas Missions is about to begin

Participant after participant in UJC MetroWest’s overseas missions, to Israel and to Jewish communities around the world, says the same thing about the experience of visiting the distant Jewish communities with a group of their MetroWest peers. They say few other experiences could do so much to give them a sense of affiliation, a sense of tradition – to deepen their feeling of Jewish identity.

That’s why the UJC Missions are among the most popular and the most important programs UJC conducts – and why they are always filled to the maximum with enthusiastic participants. Not only are they inspirational to so many who go, but they provide a special and unusually intimate way to experience the State of Israel and other Jewish communities, with special guides and access to sites many tourist don’t get to visit.

More important, UJC Missions foster a deep and indispensable connection between members of the MetroWest Jewish community and their fellow Jews in Israel and elsewhere around the globe. Mission participants get to see first hand the work they and UJC MetroWest support. Participants get to meet the people we help with the programs that they depend on. Participants get to know them directly, and get to know, in a personal way they could not get without going there, why we do what we do.

Carey Pack of Short Hills, participant in a recent mission to Israel, put it well.

## Speak EZ

“The UJC mission was truly a unique way to really see Israel. In addition to visiting the usual sites, the mission took us ‘behind the scenes,’ where we could interact with community leaders, politicians, and even soldiers, to help us learn more about the culture and current issues that face Israel today. Certainly a lasting and memorable experience. I look forward to returning in March on another Mission.”

That kind of enthusiasm, and desire to return again and again, is typical. And UJC has just announced four new Missions for 2009 – 2010.

### **Women’s Philanthropy Heart 2 Heart Mission to Israel (National)**

January 23 – 29, 2010

National Chair: Lori Klinghoffer

MetroWest Co-Chairs: Adele Lebersfeld and Joan Silver

Minimum gift: \$500

The mission will be a unique and soul-searching experience in Israel designed to attract and engage new participants to Women’s Philanthropy and to foster enduring bonds among the women of our system, here and Israel, and all over the world.

### **Cuba Mission – Women’s Philanthropy (Sold Out, Waiting List Only)**

March 3 – 8, 2010

Co-Chairs: Anna Fisch and Wendie Ploscowe

Minimum gift: \$10,000

The mission is designed to express spiritual support and humanitarian aid to the Jewish community of Cuba.

### **Business Professional Mission to Israel**

March 14 - 21, 2010

Chair: Steve Kany

Minimum gift: \$10,000

The mission is designed to engage the next generation of future leaders by exposing them to the work of UJA in a meaningful and enlightening way. Our approach is to take a small group of high level, less involved participants to Israel so they can experience what UJA is doing first hand. We make it fun, exciting, and extremely fast paced.

### **Couples Mission to Israel**

March 20 – 27, 2010

Co-Chairs: Shari and Mark Bernstein, Dana and Peter Langerman, Gina and Kenny Mandelbaum, and Wendy and Scott Newman

Minimum gift: \$10,000 combined

The target number is 20 couples. The trip will include exclusive briefings and experiences involving the arts, government, and business. Equally exciting will be visits to historic sights in Jerusalem, a winery tour, and relaxation at a world-class spa in the Galilee. In addition, visits to our partnership communities will give us the opportunity to meet the people we help through UJA and hear them tell of the difference we have made in their lives.

“The missions to Israel are imperative,” said Kenny Mandelbaum, who is co-chairing the Couple Mission, and Steven Roth, who will be participating with his wife, Nancy, “because they educate the next generation on the importance of our support for the State of Israel.”

For more information and to sign up for any of the UJC Missions, contact Neimah Tractenberg at (973) 929-3046, or [ntractenberg@ujcnj.org](mailto:ntractenberg@ujcnj.org).

## Working Together with Our Partner Agencies

### **Mitzvah Mania**

Coordinated by The Partnership for Jewish Learning and Life, Mitzvah Mania is a new initiative that was created in response to community need. This past summer, a group of local teens visited the Lester Senior Housing Community and discussed the importance of re-using water bottles. They also helped seniors decorate water carafes. Visit [www.ujcnj.org/mitzvahmania](http://www.ujcnj.org/mitzvahmania) to view the video.



As a result of the initial success this summer, The Partnership will be running the program again during winter break. Contact Michal Greenbaum at [mgreenbaum@thepartnershipnj.org](mailto:mgreenbaum@thepartnershipnj.org) or (973) 929-2966 for more information about Mitzvah Mania.

## Thoughts from MetroWest Rabbis

### Meaningful Ideas in 140 Letters

by Rabbi Amy Joy Small

Many of us are struggling to keep up with all of the new media that are defining our rapidly changing culture. Last year, I finally took the plunge and created a Facebook page. While Facebook still mystifies me, annoys me, and sometimes delights me, I have come to realize that for better and for worse, it's necessary to be there in order to connect to many people, groups, and causes that I care about.

When I was initially invited to join Twitter, I didn't know what it was. In an effort to get "with it," I created my account (*amyjoys*) and posted a comment. But since then, I have been wondering – what is the value of this popular new medium for rapid communication?

When I hear about people "tweeting," I can't help but think of the oldies song, "Rocking Robin" (by Bobby Day)

He rocks in the tree-top all a day long;  
Hoppin' and a-boppin' and a-singin' the song.  
All the little birds on J-Bird St.;  
Love to hear the robin goin' tweet tweet  
tweet

If you, like me, are ready to get up and dance when you hear this, you've discovered the brilliance of Twitter's creators. It is a format for sharing very short statements that, once broadcasted to the world, get your friends' attention and connect people in unprecedented ways.

Do you "tweet?" When I was asked this recently in preparation for a Jewish education conference, it got my attention. In an effort to figure out how this medium could be useful, I signed up to "tweet" during a Talmud text study session to see what I could learn.

It turned out to be a fascinating experience. The threads of the conversation from each related tweet were posted to one Twitter page, which was projected onto a screen for all participants to see. As the room broke into groups of study partners in *bet midrash* (study hall) style, the tweets provided a forum for sharing reactions

and ideas in real time before the teacher brought it all together.

In this brief experiment it became evident that we have a lot to learn about the use of this technology. It highlighted with even greater clarity what many of us have learned through email – that it is easy to be careless with this communication. Quick electronic messages can be a source of misunderstandings since nuances are lost. It is challenging to express meaningful ideas in the allotted 140 letters or fewer for each tweet.

But, if we learn that this medium is not for deep thoughts, and we can learn to share brief information appropriately, we might find all kinds of new possibilities. Why should we bother? Perhaps by embracing new technologies and communication media, we can more effectively remain relevant and connected to the next generation. In such a rapidly changing world, we do well to be open to experimentation, creative thinking, and adaptive change. If it helps us to reach more people and sustain communities of meaning, it will have been well worth the effort.

Let's imagine, for example, that participants in a meeting are broken into groups to study and discuss an applicable text and one person at each table posts tweets with summary insights coming from the group and they are projected for all to see. Or, a rabbi posts a tweet at the beginning of the week with a thought for the week (using the # to establish threads of a conversation) and members of the community respond with their own tweets during the week. The community can share reactions to current events, or add their reactions to events in the community (e.g., "That speaker on Shabbat was very provocative. Wonder if folks want to continue the conversation next week?")

Twitter can point us toward each other, helping us to keep our focus on what is important to us in a world filled with distractions. If we try to use it thoughtfully, we can ride the wave of this trend and become stronger from it.

*Rabbi Amy Joy Small is rabbi of Congregation Beth Hatikvah in Summit. She can be reached at [www.bethhatikvah.com](http://www.bethhatikvah.com).*

## Community Relations Committee Update

### **CRC in Action**

*Become an informed and active advocate*

#### **Attend Senator Menendez's Address to the Jewish Community on Israel, Iran and Anti-Semitism.**

This is an Israel advocacy event – numbers matter. Senator Menendez is a strong champion of Israel and for deterring Iran's nuclear proliferation. Attend this historic program to strengthen the connection between the Senator and the Jewish community, and to show appreciation for his leadership on these issues.

#### **Pro-Christians: What do they believe? What do they want? How can we work together?**

Christians United for Israel (CUFI) has been engaging the Jewish community to work together in support of Israel. This two-part series gives us an opportunity to learn more about the pro-Israel Christians and how we can forge a path together in support of Israel, knowing we differ on other important areas of concern.

#### **Challenges and Opportunities in Jewish-Christian Dialogue: an Interfaith Dialogue with Rabbi Irving (Yitz) Greenberg, Reverend John Pawlikowski, and Dr. Henry F. Knight.**

This program is a wonderful collaboration bringing together three internationally known Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant theologians/scholars to engage in dialogue about the challenges and opportunities today for interfaith dialogue. As we present this interfaith dialogue program in the week of Holocaust Remembrance, and as we will be commemorating Kristallnacht, it is special to recall that such dialogue would not have taken place at that time.