



A Tangled Tale
Lawyers and hasids
spawn a network of
accusations
F1



The Presidents' Ear
Sylvia Porter invented
the personal
finance column
F1

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THE JEWISH JOURNAL

Serving the North Shore and Greater Boston

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INSIDE

TRAVEL



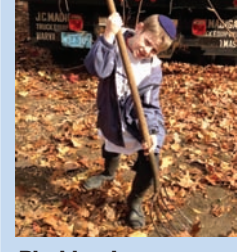
Globetrotting With the Journal
Readers share their adventures **11**

FOOD



Starters & Sides
Tasty dishes that can also take center stage **16**

YOUTH

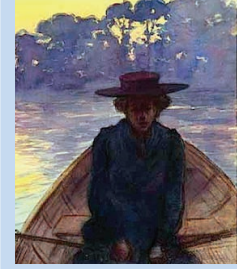


Pitching In
Maimo helps Brookline community **21**

ARTS & CULTURE
Cross Cultural
Brutality

Some similarities of "12 Years a Slave" and Kristallnacht **24**

ARTS & CULTURE



Impressionists at PEM
Make an impression **25**

Journal Unveils New Website

SUSAN JACOBS
Jewish Journal Staff



SALEM — The Jewish Journal Massachusetts has unveiled a new website, powered by its partner, the Jewish Daily Forward in New York. The state-of-the-art website can be accessed by the URL www.jewishjournal.org or boston.forward.com. Users will find the site clear and easy to use. Breaking local, national and international news rotates in the upper left hand corner. The weekly Torah portion, candle lighting and Havdalah times are listed in the lower right hand corner.

The Jewish Journal's new home page

continued on page 9

Get in 'Le Mood' for LimmudBoston

MATT ROBINSON
Special to the Journal

CHESTNUT HILL — Boston, with its vibrant communities, schools and shuls, and where there is such a love of learning, provides the ideal setting for an idea-sharing gathering such as LimmudBoston.

On Sunday, December 8, at the fourth annual LimmudBoston conference, the Jewish community will have the opportunity to embrace and explore a wide variety of topics. LimmudBoston 2013 will be held at Congregation Mishkan Tefila in Chestnut Hill, MA.

Limmud is Hebrew for "study." According to LimmudBoston organizer Steffi Aronson Karp, the Limmud concept began in England in 1980, when three Jewish educators placed an ad in local papers saying that anyone who wanted to "do something Jewish" on Christmas Day should show up at a meeting hall.



Courtesy photo Steffi Aronson Karp

continued on page 2

Yachad Receives Ruderman Foundation Grant, Plans to Expand

AMY FORMAN
Jewish Journal Staff

BOSTON — With the promise of a significant grant earlier this month, Hanukkah arrived early for Liz Offen, director of New England Yachad, an organization dedicated to enhancing the life opportunities of individuals with disabilities and promoting their inclusion in the Jewish community. A \$50,000 grant from the Ruderman Family Foundation, and a partial match from Yachad's national branch, will provide the necessary funding for the fledgling local chapter to expand its reach wider into the Greater Boston area and beyond, ensuring the chapter's sustainability.



Courtesy of Yachad Joel Taubman and Kayla Shatz at Yachad's apple picking outing at Belkin Family's Look Out Farm.

"Yachad's work embodies the core belief of our foundation that 'including each is strengthening all,'" said Sharon Shapiro, a trustee of the Ruderman Family Foundation, which supports programs and partnerships that advocate for and advance the inclusion of people with disabilities throughout the Jewish community.

"The Ruderman Family Foundation and Yachad have been leading the way within the broad Jewish community of promoting inclusion for Jews living with a disability," said Yachad International Director Dr. Jeffrey Lichtman, who added that the grant "validates the tremendous need for Yachad in the Jewish community."

continued on page 8

The Miracle of a New Kidney

NICOLE LEVY
Special to the Journal



Courtesy photo Dan Leavitt

BURLINGTON — Dan Leavitt will be celebrating an additional miracle this Hanukkah. On November 8, as Leavitt was preparing to share Shabbat dinner with a friend prior to services at Peabody's Congregation Sons of Israel where he serves as president, the former dialysis patient got

the phone call he had waited three years to receive — a kidney was available for him. He underwent transplant surgery at Leahy Hospital and Memorial Center in Burlington early the next day.

"It's hard to believe. It's still hard to believe. It happened so quickly," Leavitt said from his hospital bed.

continued on page 23

A Conversation With Brandeis President Fred Lawrence

CAROL MARLIN
Special to the Journal



Carol Marlin Brandeis University's Fred Lawrence

WALTHAM — Frederick Lawrence sees himself as a "good fit" for the job of Brandeis University's president. And it seems his confidence has served this institution, deeply rooted in the Jewish community, well. In three years at the helm, Lawrence has taken advantage of improved financial markets to

"engage people and build coalitions," as he steers Brandeis to a more secure future.

In a recent interview at his cavernous office on the Waltham campus, furnished with a conference table, walls of books and comfortable furniture, the president's avuncular nature exuded warmth and sincerity. With lawyerly precision, he articulated his views and recounted how

continued on page 2

3 INTERFAITH 5 BUSINESS 6 LETTERS 7 OPINION 12 PREPARE FOR THE HOLIDAYS 23 OBITUARIES 27 PEOPLE

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Get in 'Le Mood' for LimmudBoston

from page 1

From that initial gathering of about 80 people, Limmud has exploded into an international movement in 80 cities throughout the world that engages many thousands each year. Participants attend sessions focusing on all aspects of Jewish life — from art and philosophy, to politics and spirituality.

After attending the first Limmud Atlanta in 2008, Karp knew she had to bring it home to Boston.

"Everyone I spoke with said, 'If you start it, I'm in,'" Karp recalled.

A self-described Jewish conference junkie since her high school days in NEFTY, NFTY and SMARTY on Boston's North Shore, Karp (with the help of a dedicated team of volunteers) launched LimmudBoston in 2010. The annual event has been wildly successful, drawing more than 1,000 participants to Mishkan Tefila last year.

The various volunteer LimmudBoston Program Teams have created an exciting lineup of inspirational program this year.

"There will be plenty of scholars, and lots of funky, fun other stuff," said Karp, mentioning

that a playwright will read his latest piece, and a bird watcher will present a talk on the birds of Israel.

There will be lectures by volunteer presenters on all sorts of subjects. The topic of b'nei mitzvah will be covered by luminaries such as Rabbi Bradley Solmsen, head of the new URJ B'nei Mitzvah Revolution, and Jeffrey Salkin, author of the award-winning book, "Putting God on the Guest List."

Other sessions include a Jewish take on the popular Zumba exercise program called "Jewmba," a community art exchange with Tova Speter, and presentations by organizations such as CAMERA.

"No matter what your affiliation or your perspective," Karp promises, "LimmudBoston offers opportunities to deepen and share knowledge. Once again there is a Camp Limmud program for families with children ages 3-13.

"At LimmudBoston, everyone is a learner," Karp added. There is something for everyone, beginner to scholar, young to young-at-heart, those who never walk into synagogues and those who find themselves in a



LimmudBoston

Participants at last year's LimmudBoston.

synagogue every day."

"We believe in the pluralistic idea of K'lal Yisrael," Karp explained. "We share ideas, and are eager to learn from all kinds of people."

Earlier this year, for her part in founding LimmudBoston, Karp was honored with the K'lal Yisrael Award from the Synagogue Council of Massachusetts.

She notes that there is an entire generation of Jews that has been raised in a culture based on the Limmud concepts of pluralism, respect and dynamic experiential education.

As attendees arrive at LimmudBoston on December 8, they will be greeted by what Karp calls volunticipants (volunteer participants). These individuals will help attendees register and then select from the

more than a dozen offerings available each hour. The schedule is also posted online at www.LimmudBoston.org.

Since LimmudBoston is held in a kosher building, participants are encouraged to order lunch tickets in advance. Also, Boston's first kosher food truck, the Chubby Chickpea, plans to park in front of the building.

Karp encourages everyone to come to LimmudBoston to "recharge their Jewish batteries," and experience all that the Jewish world has to offer.

"LimmudBoston is an annual opportunity to explore whatever and wherever you want to go next on your Jewish journey," Karp said.

To register, visit www.LimmudBoston.org.

Brandeis President

from page 1

his past experience in private legal practice, and as a professor and dean of George Washington University Law School, have bolstered his leadership style.

Flattered to be approached for the school's challenging position, he was not totally surprised and accepted the role that would combine his unique talents professionally as a CEO, and personally as a committed Jew. He describes the opportunity as "a chance to be part of a significant institution of higher education and the Jewish community," adding that Brandeis is deeply rooted in its Jewish values.

Lawrence is particularly pleased about the university's reformulated Rose Art Museum; its director and new exhibitions recently extolled in a front page Boston Globe article. More than any other issue, the proposed closing of the museum and sale of its valuable holdings symbolized the contentious atmosphere of gloom that pervaded the campus before Lawrence's tenure. Discharging the litigation was a priority, and within six months of his inauguration, the cases were settled and a grand re-opening of the "Rose" was scheduled.

Lawrence is Brandeis' eighth president, but its first to self-describe as an observant Jew.

"Students seem to like the fact that I am authentic in who I am. I think everyone is drawn to that," he said, adding that at Brandeis, "it is normal to be Jewish. I talk openly, publicly, of the inextricable way Brandeis and the State of Israel are linked."

Lawrence dismissed any controversy about kosher dining as a thing of the past. He often dines at the main dining hall, where kosher is one of two options and is "terrific," but where only the dishes are kept separate. Unlike other campuses that offer kosher food, at

Brandeis everyone sits together. While he views Brandeis as a key institution for Jewish continuity, he is proud that some 129 countries are represented on campus. Non-Jewish students serve as "life-long ambassadors to the Jewish world."

On campus, Lawrence — who is known as "Fred" — is routinely spotted at sporting events, concerts, dances and plays. His regular walks across campus provide opportunities to randomly engage students. On Yom Kippur, he has assumed the role of leading Kol Nidre services. Acknowledged as a skilled Hazzan, he has a voice perfect in

pitch, soulful and trained, having performed in a choral group in his earlier years at Carnegie Hall.

Brandeis' endowment, currently valued at some \$800 million, has grown under Lawrence. The board has approved a 10-year strategic plan, and Lawrence hopes that within two years the budget will need less and less of endowment funding to operate. As he settles in, the challenges that Brandeis confronts are those of higher education in general: to provide quality affordable education to all who apply. Applications are at a record high.

With federal funds shrinking, this small liberal arts college with major university research facilities must seek resources and form partnerships in creative ways. Lawrence travels the world to promote Brandeis and meet with alumni. He reports having met personally with some 10,000 of the alumni that this relatively young school has produced since its founding in 1948.

Lawrence hopes that future alumni will reflect on his stewardship as important years. Of all the schools in the country for him to be president, he believes the best match, unequivocally, is Brandeis.

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LimmudBoston

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Camp Limmud Registration Required in Advance

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