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# WESTCHESTER TIMES TRIBUNE

VOLUME 2 • NUMBER 21

JANUARY 25, 2007

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## An American Rabbi Serving in Baghdad



By Jewish Chaplain Rabbi Huerta from the 2nd Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division

NINEVEH-MOSUL, IRAQ -- 'Climbing over the rotting garbage, I realized I was the first Jew to enter this holy place in over 50 years. I am writing to you from

Nineveh, the city of the prophet Jonah. Its present name is Mosul. I have had the privilege of seeing its ancient walls, of touching its stones, of going to the grave Islamic tradition says is the prophet Jonah's. There is a mosque at the site; but hundreds of years ago, the Iraqis we work with tell me, it was a

synagogue. They tell me the reason the site is so sacred is because of the sacredness in which the Jews held it. Presently, there are no signs of this ancient synagogue. I am the rabbi of the 101st Airborne Division, the division Steven Spielberg immortalized in  
*see American Rabbi Pg. 5*

## Councilmember Annabi Exposes City Hall's Vindictive Holding of Information

YONKERS, NY -- Council Member Annabi has today revealed proof that exposes the administration for their lack of cooperation and communication with City Council Members in their efforts to get information. Annabi said, "Once again the Mayor's office has blocked our efforts in trying to obtain public information from their office."



**Original Message:**  
From: Debbie Kayal  
To: Phil Amicone  
CC: Lisa Mrijaj; William Regan  
Sent: Thu Jan 18 16:53:12 2007  
Subject: Yonkers City owned properties

Please advise where I may obtain a list of all Yonkers' City owned properties. If your office has an updated list please forward a copy to my office, if not, please advise where I may obtain a copy. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Council Member Annabi

*see Councilmember Annabi Pg. 2*

## Lesnick Declares War on Northeast Yonkers



YONKERS, NY -- Yonkers City Councilman John Murtagh (R-5) today blasted City Council President Chuck Lesnick for singling out Northeast Yonkers residents for punishment due to the refusal of Murtagh and Councilwoman Dee Barbato to support Lesnick and the Council majority in its political war with the Mayor.

Lesnick last week unveiled a proposed amendment to the City's Capital Budget which targets for elimination critical safety and infrastructure projects in Yonkers' Northeast neighborhoods. The projects which Lesnick is seeking to eliminate are all located in the Fifth and Sixth Council Districts,



the Districts represented by Councilmembers Dee Barbato and John Murtagh. Murtagh and Barbato were the only two Councilmembers who refused to go along and voted no last month when Lesnick led the Council in slashing the Mayor's original capital plan by 50% thereby eliminating critical safety, development and quality of life projects. Among the projects Lesnick cut last month were a traffic light at an intersection which has been the scene of at least one fatal pedestrian/car accident and repairs to a long neglected foot bridge where a woman fell and

*see Lesnick Declares War Pg. 3*

## Idoni's Hands-On Management Eliminates Backlog and Restores Good Government to Clerk's Office

**First Year Highlights: Increased Productivity, a Tightened Pistol Permit Process & Enhanced Privacy**

WHITE PLAINS, NY -- When Timothy C. Idoni was sworn in as Westchester's 43rd County Clerk last January, many wondered how the fourteen year Mayor, who built the foundation on which the current revitalization of New Rochelle is taking place, would transition from being the dynamic leader of a growing community to the professional manager of the office responsible for safeguarding county records. The results have been tremendous for those who live and do business in Westchester. After just one year in office, Idoni has eliminated the six-month backlog of deeds, mortgages and other land records, improved staff productivity, protected the privacy of thousands of residents, and made dramatic strides to increase accessibility to records and services.

These results, and an overview of the office, are documented in the 2006 Annual Report of the Office of the Westchester County Clerk which was released earlier this week. "One thing you will not find in the pages of my first annual



report, but what I value as my most significant achievement in 2006, is that those we serve have witnessed the emergence of a professional level of service from a government office," stated Idoni. "So while my dedicated staff and I are pleased that Westchester residents trust us to secure their records, we are most proud that our office has broken away from the stereotypical expectation of mediocrity which plagues so many government offices." Idoni, a former municipal manager and Past President of the Westchester County Municipal

Officials Association who holds an M.P.A. from New York University, has frequently shared his belief in good government and in a government managed by professionals. In his first year in office, Idoni transformed the Clerk's Office into an efficient, respected operation. "I have been energized by the opportunity to return to my management roots and to serve residents throughout Westchester as their County Clerk," shared Idoni. And in an office of ninety-five employees, Idoni's energy and active management style has not gone unnoticed. The Westchester County Clerk can be seen walking through the offices to address employee concerns or constituent inquiries at all hours of the day. "I have always believed that public officials must give the taxpayers a hard day's work" said Idoni, a twenty-six year public servant. "And I know my active involvement in the management of the office has provided my dedicated staff with the support and tools they

*see Idoni Hands-On Pg. 3*

## New York Civic

**Selecting a Comptroller: Politicians Strive to Fill Vacancy they Created by Feeding Hevesi to Wolves**



By Henry J. Stern

NEW YORK, NY -- For the last month we have focused on Albany, where regime change took place on January 1, described by the victors as "Day One, Everything Changes." Today is January 19, 2007, Day 19, and there have been many personnel changes, as can be expected, and the adoption of a commendable new ethics code by the governor. There is still, however, much left to change.

The legislature, which normally hibernates during the coldest months, is awaiting the governor's budget, due January 31, and the special election for a state senate seat in Nassau County on February 6. That vacancy was created, as you may know, when Governor Spitzer plucked Senator Michael Balboni from Senate Majority Leader

Bruno's diminishing majority to become deputy secretary to the governor for homeland security. The outcome in Nassau will determine whether the senate will be 34-28 or 33-29 Republican.

The immediate task the 212 legislators will face in February is the choice of a new state comptroller, to replace Alan Hevesi, who was run out of office and prosecuted for a felony by the Albany County District Attorney. This took place a month after he was re-elected by the voters, many of whom were aware of his widely-publicized wrongdoing having his state driver care for his grievously ailing and suicidal wife. Hevesi has since repaid the state about \$280,000.

We cannot judge the Hevesi case definitively because there may be facts of which we are unaware. But on the basis of what has been published, we believe that the punishment is disproportionately severe for the offense. The New York State Constitution provides that elected officials who commit misconduct with regard to their offices should be subject to

*see New York Civic pg. 3*

## Weir Only Human

**Boxer Outclassed in Condi Dustup**



By Bob Weir

Leave it to the left-wingers to trip over their tongues every time they try to throw more dirt on the Bush administration.

The latest foolish assertion came from California Senator Barbara Boxer when she was questioning Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice. She said Ms. Rice might not recognize the horror of war because she has "no immediate family," a reference to the fact that Rice is single and has no children.

Radio talk show icon Rush Limbaugh referred to the remarks as "hitting below the ovaries." Now, correct me if I'm wrong, but aren't we supposed to be living in an enlightened age? Since when did we begin to criticize women who have decided not to

propagate? Does Ms. Boxer have more right to speak about the war in Iraq because she has offspring?

Using that logic, women legislators without children should not be voting on issues like abortion because their lack of "immediate family" may suggest that they have already made up their minds on the issue. The same would apply to women who do have children. Hence, women would be left out of equation entirely.

Rice responded later in an interview by saying she thought single women had come further than that. Well, they have, unless one of them gets between a Democrat and President Bush. Then it becomes a free-for-all in which people like Boxer can spew up all that bile they've been accumulating as they wait for every opportunity to show their hatred for the president.

You have to wonder if these radical ideologues are actually hoping the US gets defeated in the war. Now that another 21,000 troops have been committed to Iraq, Dems are trying to figure out a way to keep them from being equipped. Since they can't keep Bush from sending them, they are flirting with the idea of cutting off the funds.

*see Weir Only Human pg. 2*

## The WesFoodie's: Eating in the Burbs

**Modern Times Taste Bad**



By Jack 8. Kirby

As winter finally descends on the freshly wind chapped suburbs and hopelessness hangs heavy in the air threatening to settle amongst those who love to work the earth, through the symmetry of nature and the ingenious ways of marketers, a ray of light arrives. It's in the mailbox. It's made of paper. Something seedy this way comes. Yes, the farm catalogs have arrived! Not to get too gardeny on you, I promise not to talk about arrangements of ferns and such,

but ever since I learned of an effort under way in the former Iron Curtain countries to save the quickly disappearing genetic diversity in plant varieties (particularly the tasty kinds) I have been fascinated and occasionally obsessed with seeds. There are amazing, scrumptious, gorgeous plants, fruits and vegetables out there that need to be saved - Amen! And there are many at work in the U.S. and across the world now saving seeds. Forget the lame supermarket stuff (you

*see WesFoodie's pg. 5*





Business • Community • Law

Mount Vernon Seeks Nominees for Annual Distinguished Citizens' Award

MOUNT VERNON, NY -- Mayor Ernest D. Davis, The City of Mount Vernon, New York, the Mount Vernon Department of Recreation: Karen Watts, Commissioner, Mount Vernon City Council: Steven Horton, President, and Maureen Walker, Comptroller proudly present The Annual Mount Vernon Distinguished Citizens' Award, which honors citizens for their special deeds, efforts and/or contributions to the City of Mount Vernon. This prestigious award is the brainchild of Mayor Davis that began in the year 2002 with recognition categories that vary from year to year. Nominees for this year's category, "The Wind

Beneath My Wings" are needed. We are honoring Mount Vernonites who serve unselfishly, in the "background" (those who work hard and painstakingly behind the scenes, making things happen), who receive very little or no recognition for volunteering and executing those wonderful church, business, and organization events. The "unsung" heroes who stay behind the curtains while others are honored - which is quite alright with these "behind-the-scenes people" because that is exactly where they want to be. If there is someone you would like to nominate for this year's Mount Vernon Distinguished Citizens' Award, please e-mail or fax the

following requested information to Sheryll Brownlee-Fox at SBrownlee@cmvny.com - 1-914 / 665.2421 - no telephone calls please. The prerequisites are: \* Nominees MUST have been raised\* and/or currently reside in Mount Vernon, New York \* Nominee submissions must contain name, a day and evening phone number, and an e-mail address \* The nominator must include their name, a day and evening phone number, and an e-mail (if you have one) \* 2 or 3 paragraphs submitted by nominator, describing why you feel this person should be honored

\* The deadline for nominee submissions is Monday, April 30, 2007 \* No nominees will be accepted after this date, no expectations. \* PLEASE NOTE: 10 people will be recognized The Mount Vernon Distinguished Citizens' Award honoring "The Wind Beneath My Wings" is hosted by The Mount Vernon Department of Recreation during the Summer Breeze Concert Series. This year it will be held on Saturday, August 4, 2007, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. on Mount Vernon City Plaza. (\* Residency judgment based on circumstance.)

White Plains Announces Fire Fighter Exam



WHITE PLAINS, NY -- The City of White Plains is actively seeking a diverse pool of candidates for the June 2nd Fire fighter written exam. The salary range is \$48,982

- \$76,836 and the exam is open to Westchester County residents. Interested applicants must submit an application no later than Thursday, March 15, 2007 to be eligible. Application materials and announcements can be obtained by logging onto www.cityofwhiteplains.com or by calling the City of White Plains Personnel Department between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM at 1-914 / 422.1258. Free training is offered to help candidates prepare for the written exam. For more information please contact the Personnel Department at 1-914 / 422.1258.

Real Estate and Retail Sales Boomed in 2006

Needy and Not-for-Profit Groups Suffered Local Summit Told at "Temperature Taking" Meeting

By Harold Wolfson

LARCHMONT, NY and MAMARONECK, NY -- How are things going in Mamaroneck/Larchmont? According to experts, real estate and commerce are booming, but the needy and social agencies are not. This is the contrasting picture speakers presented at the Local Summit's third annual "Taking The Temperature Of The Community Program" held at the Nautilus Diner on January 16th.



Mariana Boneo



Janet Bookbinder



Dave Currie



Cary Sleeper



Al Tocman

Cary Sleeper, a veteran real estate broker with Sotheby's, said that last year real estate sales in the Mamaroneck School District amounted to \$349,044,940, compared to \$292,400,620 a year earlier. This buoyancy was in sharp contrast to lower prospects presented at the Local Summit this time a year ago.

"Larchmont is a small, solid community and this is what buyers are looking for," Mr. Sleeper said. By contrast, he added, "back country Greenwich, Ct. which has had large double digit price increases year after year now is languishing in over-inventory. Our average price growth locally of between 8% - 10% a year is still continuing."

Average Home Price \$1,360,000 He brought gasps of surprise when he said the average price of homes in the Mamaroneck school district last year was \$1,360,000 vs. \$1,100,000 in 2005.

Further good economic news was reported by Al Tocman, president of the Mamaroneck Chamber of Commerce. "Business is vibrant," he said, "and there is a lot of change which is good." He said new businesses are coming in and some of the older ones are changing hands. He said that despite the growth of malls in Westchester, people continue to "want to shop locally where they can see neighbors and where they have a relationship."

He praised the Mamaroneck Village government for helping local businesses. "You can't find a safer, more comfortable place to shop." The one fly in the ointment, he said, was parking, which continues to be scarce.

Agencies Forced to do with Less

Dave Currie, Senior Director Resource Development of the Larchmont-Mamaroneck United Way, said not-for-profit groups currently have to "do more with less." He noted there has been a continued "shift from government support for social services to not-for-profits."

He said that few agencies have been able to meet this challenge. By way of illustrating a general dearth of funding, he told of one local agency with restricted funds which had been looking for an early development teacher for many months. "Recently they hired someone for \$24,000 a year. Think about trying to live in this community on that."

He said, "Relatively speaking, this community has better access to funds than other communities; if our agencies are struggling, imagine what is happening in less affluent communities."

Judy Dobrof, executive director of the Cancer Support Team, confirmed a comment by another audience member that some elderly and low-income individuals were suffering from the closing of United Hospital in Port Chester, even though the new Open Door medical center in Port Chester has picked up some of the slack.

Emergency Rooms Overwhelmed

Audience member Barbara Henkind, a professional public health nurse and president of the Larchmont Schools Foundation, said, "The elderly medicated population is suffering from the hospital closing." She said that the emergency rooms at hospitals in New Rochelle and White Plains were "overwhelmed with underserved elderly and others."

Additional speakers at the Summit meeting and their comments follow:

• Shirley Romney, director, Mamaroneck Community Services, said that "affordable housing is still a challenge" and even though winter has been warm, her agency was helping a number of people "living on the edge in Mamaroneck" pay for heating. She added that overall there has been an increase

in families who need help this year. She complimented the Westchester Jewish Center for its help with immigrants. She also mentioned the activity and fair run by the Westchester Accueil, proceeds of which went to Ms. Romney's department to fund good works.

• Beverly Brewer-Villa, executive director of the C.A.P. Center, said her agency had many ongoing programs but was "spread thin" and funding and lack of qualified staff was a problem.

Need for Connectedness

• Janet Bookbinder, president of R.A.D.A.R., youth alcohol and drug group, said the community was suffering from an "eroding of connectedness" and a shift from individuals serving the community to "development of self." She said a study of local students indicated they were not connected to the community and that they suffered from negative messages from media ---sex, alcoholism and violence. She said teens frequently look at community activity in which they are involved as mostly "resume padding" for their college applications. She said there was a great need to provide after-school and especially weekend activities

for older children. She urged the development of a formalized Teen Advisory Council for the tri-municipality and also said that parents need an opportunity to network and strengthen their parenting skills.

• Anna Danoy, executive director of Mamaroneck Town community services, said the waiting list for Section 8 Rental Assistance is open. Seniors on fixed income who need rental assistance are eligible. Local residents are given preference. She also said her office has funds for one-time emergency assistance.

• Mariana Boneo, executive director of the Hispanic Resource Center, also stressed the need for connectedness which is very important for the Latino community. She said that in the current slow season for day laborers her agency was focusing on training: law workshops, OSHA led safety measures, and English as a second language. She said her agency is beginning to get the word out that it would welcome help to identify a property where day laborer activity and the agency's social and educational work could be housed together to foster greater interconnectedness among staff and clients. She also talked about the

need for agencies in the community to coordinate and work together, sharing resources.

New Program at Hommocks

She said a unique program is unfolding with the Hommocks Middle School called PALMS (Post Secondary Access for Latino Middle-Grades Students.) The Resource Center and Hommocks School will be among the first in the country to participate in a two-year research study which seeks to improve the life chances of Latino youth by opening doors to post-secondary education. The PALMS program provides middle school faculty with tools to promote a working relationship between Latino parents and the school and to help Latino parents support and motivate their children to pursue post-secondary education.

The Local Summit, which hosted the program, is an informal community council. Through its monthly meetings and forums it promotes continuing dialogue about local needs. It has advocated on specific issues and worked to establish new programs and services that help make the tri-municipal area a better place to live for everyone.

Landsman Top Producer of Century 21 Wolff Becomes Associate Broker

YONKERS, NY -- Jeffrey Landsman, a Realtor with Century 21 Wolff in Yonkers, has completed the 45 hours of studies and passed the test for his associate broker license. Principal broker-owner of the Century 21 Wolff offices Nick Wolff said, "We are very pleased that Jeffrey Landsman has not only been a top producer year after year (known in Century 21 as a Centurion), but is also interested in acquiring higher real estate education."

Landsman has been a consistent top producer in the Yonkers Century 21 Wolff office since his first year as a Realtor in 2001, when he was Rookie of the Year. His second year he was second top producer in his office. In 2003 he earned a Double Centurion Award, the first Agent to receive the Double Centurion Award and number one in all of Wolff's offices. In 2005 and 2006 Landsman achieved the Centurion award again.

Prior to becoming an associate broker, the Realtor achieved the GRI designation - Graduate

REALTOR Institute. For his next designation the Realtor plans to obtain the ABR (Accredited Buyer's Representative.) Landsman grew up in the Bronx. He is quite active in the Colonial Heights section of Yonkers, because of its beauty and desirability. "In a short time I've been able to accomplish a lot and it has been very gratifying," said the Realtor. He resides in Yonkers with his wife Gina.

Century 21 Wolff is the number one Century 21 Company in Westchester/Putnam Counties

with five offices strategically located in Yonkers, White Plains, New Rochelle, Mt. Pleasant and Mamaroneck. Century 21, the largest real estate company in the world, has 8,000 offices in 45 countries; it has 147,000 agents of change.

Contact information: Jeffrey Landsman, Associate Broker, Century 21 Wolff of Yonkers, Tanglewood Shopping Center, 2254 Central Park Avenue, Yonkers, New York 10710. Telephone: 1-914 / 771.6300.

New Rochelle Gas Station Found Guilty of Price Gouging After Hurricane Katrina

NEW YORK, NY -- Attorney General Andrew M. Cuomo announced that his office received a favorable decision in a lawsuit alleging that a Westchester County gas station had gouged consumers in the days following Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

New York's price gouging statute prohibits sellers of vital consumer goods from taking unfair advantage of consumers by charging grossly excessive prices during any abnormal disruption of the market for the goods.

On Tuesday, January 16, 2007, a New York State Supreme Court Judge concluded that My Service Station, Inc., located in New Rochelle, violated New York's price gouging statute because there was a "gross disparity" between the prices charged before and immediately after the storm, and the disparity was not attributable to higher costs imposed upon the seller. My Service Station must pay \$2,000 in costs and penalties. This decision also confirms the important legal principle that the Attorney General can bring an anti-gouging case even if there is no declaration of a state of emergency by the Governor, and even if the disaster took place outside of New York.

Mr. Cuomo heralded the decision. "It is unconscionable for anybody to try to profit from the disruptions that natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina can cause to New York State's gasoline market," Cuomo said. "These gas stations capitalized on fear and uncertainty by jacking up prices and increasing profits. My

office will continue to ensure that during market disruptions any increase in prices must be proportionate to increased costs."

The case against My Service Station, Inc. was based on information the Attorney General's office received from the Westchester County Department of Consumer Protection. Cuomo thanked the Westchester County Department of Consumer Protection for providing gas price information that was instrumental to the successful prosecution of this case.

Westchester County Executive Andy Spano said, "When it comes to protecting the public against price gouging, the County's Consumer Protection Office will continue its efforts and its close collaboration with the Attorney General's office to find and prosecute those who take advantage of a situation. We are very pleased with the outcome of this case which sends a strong signal to those who would gouge the public."

Similar findings were made last year against Penn-Can Truck Stop Mobil, located in Central Square in Oswego County, and Schaghticoke Mobil, located in Rensselaer County. All three cases held that the gas stations engaged in price gouging because of an unjustified disparity between the prices charged before and immediately after Hurricane Katrina.

All three cases were handled by Acting Deputy Attorney General Christopher Walsh, Assistant Attorney General in Charge Winthrop H. Thurlow, and Assistant Attorney General Judith C. Malkin.

New York State ASSEMBLY You're Invited The Second Inauguration of Assemblyman George Latimer Thursday, January 25, 2007 10 a.m. Jefferson Elementary School 131 Weyman Avenue, New Rochelle Including 4th and 5th grade Students Questions-and-Answers Refreshments following ceremonies For details, call 777-3832

GET IN THE GAME! Advertise in the Westchester Times Tribune Call 914-378-1433, ext. 235 or WTads@gmail.com

Business • Cuisine • Worship

# Fast and Fresh Gourmet Coffee for "Topspeed" Racing Fans



NEW YORK, NY -- Foothills Coffee Company, one of the nation's leading online gourmet coffee retailers, announced their official partnership with race car driver, Louis "Topspeed" Alborno. As part of the partnership, racing fans will get an exclusive "Topspeed" discount on the delicious coffees and teas that Foothills offers. The discount is available through a link found on the home page of www.topspeedracer.com.

"We wanted to introduce our products to the racing world and needed a sincere and personable spokesperson. Topspeed has a great reputation and he will help us to deliver our 'Fast and Fresh' message," stated Mike Loy, President of Foothills Coffee. Foothills Coffee joins the growing

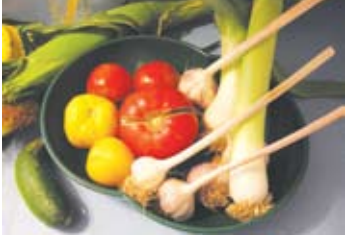
list of businesses associated with the likeable New York City racer and his "Topspeed" brand. "I'm glad to have Foothills Coffee on board as an official "Topspeed" partner, and I'm happy to provide my loyal fans with yet another exclusive benefit," stated Louis Alborno. Foothills Coffee Company is a leading online retailer of gourmet coffee and teas. Offering consumers the alternative of home brewing their own gourmet coffee for pennies instead of paying several dollars at large-chain coffee houses, Foothills is steadily becoming the online destination for frugal coffee and tea lovers everywhere. Foothills guarantees fast delivery of the freshest coffee blends from around the world. Learn more by visiting www.foothillscffee.com.

Louis "Topspeed" Alborno is a professional race car driver affiliated with several open-wheel racing series. His official website has money-saving offers for racing fans and supports charity. Learn more by visiting www.topspeedracer.com.

# The WesFoodie's: Eating in the Burbs

## Modern Times Taste Bad

From Page 1



knew that), but also get beyond the heirlooms at most high end restaurants; it's bigger than that. 1,518 unique varieties of tomatoes! 186 different kinds of watermelons. 127 types of carrots. That is just the start for what's available through the Seed Savers Exchange. At Heritage Farm, the group grows 24,000 varieties of heirloom vegetables. As I start to select which plants I will grow in my garden come spring, I am once again taken by the open pollinated varieties available. Open pollinated? Oh yes, OP. Open pollinated plants are varieties that will reproduce true to their parents. Unlike hybrids, which are the result of crossing two different parents and the offspring of which will be something very different containing "break-out" features of each of its parent's genomes, OP plants can be reproduced generation after generation in the same form as their parents so long as both parents are of the same OP variety. Heirloom vegetables and flowers are open pollinated varieties that date back to previous generations (of gardeners - and plants). With heirlooms, adventurous gardeners can try out the same tomatoes as were eaten during the Civil War, taste the apples Thomas Jefferson cultivated at Monticello and eat squash favored by Native American tribes. Or you can make a new heirloom by crossing two OP varieties and "stabilizing" the cross (and keeping them for a long time). Stabilizing involves creating enough generations of the crossed variety that all variables are expressed and remain constant. I highly recommend experimenting with heirloom OP varieties. They tend to be more delicious than hybrids because the varieties date back to a time before breeding was done for reasons other than taste

(like how long they would last in a supermarket display or how many could be packed into an airplane cargo hold). Modern Times taste bad. Sepia tastes bad too; but ole time flavor hits the spot. Many heirlooms were bred and maintained for taste. And taste you will find. The most popular heirloom vegetable is the Brandywine tomato. Like all things popular, the Brandywine name is used to mean a lot of different things. What's the true Brandywine? Well, what's a true "prophet" or a real "Democrat?" No one really knows but I find the Sudduth's Strain of Brandywine to be the very finest Brandywine. According to the Seed Savers, Brandywine "first appeared in the 1889 catalog of Johnson & Stokes of Philadelphia and by 1902 was also offered by four additional seed companies." The Sudduth's strain "was obtained by tomato collector Ben Quisenberry of Big Tomato Gardens in 1980 from Dorris Sudduth Hill whose family grew them for 80 years." According to my calculations that puts the strain's use by the Sudduth family beginning at around 1900. It's a darn good To - Mater. It is large, unevenly shaped, pink-ish red and meaty but moist. When you first bite into a Brandywine you taste the slightly citric, hushed sweetness and true old time tomato flavor. But then there is a second flush - deep flavor that is sensed at the back of the mouth and tongue; something more complex and almost earthy; it completes the taste sensation, lending a fullness; it is lush-ess. Seed Savers can be found at www.seedsavers.org. Another terrific source for heirlooms from around the world is www.rareseeds.com, a/k/a Baker's Creek Seeds. Make history, taste history. Grow 'em! Jack 8. Kirby, named "Westchester's No. 1 Foodie" by Westchester Magazine, blogs about food in Eating in the Burbs (www.wesfoodie.com). When not eating his way round the Burbs, Kirby can be found bemoaning the exponential growth of waistlines in direct proportion to sleepless nights of childrearing and other immutable laws of mid-life in the suburbs.

# Ultra Black Hair Care Event with Cathy Howse at Body and Soul Essentials

YONKERS, NY -- Before you spend another dime on hair care products, come and enjoy a FREE seminar at Body and Soul Essentials on Saturday, January 27th, 2007. We will be hosting a Black hair care event with Cathy Howse, the creator of Ultra Black Hair Care products, which is changing the world for Black women everywhere. Since 1989 Cathy Howse has worked to dispel the many myths on caring for and maintaining Black hair. On a whole, hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent every year on trial and error methods to treat Black hair. Now there is no more guessing. Cathy Howse's biography appears in Who's Who in America, Who's

Who of American Women and Who's Who in the World. Ms. Howse says; "There are so many products and companies that claim to help us grow our hair. But when you read things they say like "trim the ends to make your hair grow" be forewarned, they did not research hair growth! They only want to capitalize on the fact that you want long hair!"

After years of research, Cathy decided to put her findings in a book. Her research had not only delivered educational information for her book but some scientific data as well; so in 1992, Cathy developed her own conditioner—and in 1997, she developed a dew spray moisturizer. Before long, her

products were in demand around the world and thousands of Black women were achieving long, healthy hair.

Cathy states; "Recognizing the need for more accurate knowledge about caring for our dry hair, I researched our hair and developed an actual hair care maintenance system to help alleviate our dry hair problems. While others only claim they know our hair needs, and deluge you with products, I arm you with accurate black hair information. Information that you need to successfully achieve your longest length."

Cathy Howse will be here, in Yonkers New York for one day only, sharing her knowledge on

Black hair care. Her products as well as her books; Ultra Black Hair Growth II and Thinning Edges: A Chemical Reaction, will be available for purchase. The hair care industry recognizes her as the author of the only proven black hair growth process in the world.

The seminars will be conducted at Body and Soul Essentials, located at 20 North Broadway, from 12 Noon to 2:00 pm; 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm, and 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

Please accomplish your reservations by calling 1-914 / 375.7133 in advance. Space is limited. You may also wish to make further inquiry by directing email to: Info@BodyandSoulInc.com.

# Friends of the Larchmont Library Present Violin Virtuosi Kensho and Kisho Watanabe



LARCHMONT, NY -- On Sunday, January 28th at 4:00 pm, the Friends of the Larchmont Library present violin virtuosi, brothers Kensho and Kisho Watanabe. Now 19 and 17, the brothers have

been guests of the Friends of the Larchmont Library for the past three years—always to great acclaim. Both have been busy winning musical competitions while still maintaining their studies; Kensho,

at Yale, and Kisho, at Juilliard and Horace Mann.

This program will be held at St. John's Parish Hall in Fountain Square.

# An American Rabbi Serving in Baghdad

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his epic Band of Brothers. We, the soldiers of the 101st Airborne, fought our way up from the south, from Kuwait. The battle took us past Ur, the city where Abraham was born. We maintained contact with the enemy, passed the site of the great Talmudic academies of Sura and Pumpaditya, to the city of Babylon, where the prophet Daniel was taken.

There we engaged the Nebuchadnezzar Iraqi Armored Division and beat them. We continued the battle to Baghdad, where so many Jews lived and were massacred in the summer of 1948. It was the city of so many of our sages, including the Ben Ish Chai. Now we are in Mosul . I ask about the Jews who lived here, and very few remember them. Many say Jews never lived here; but my heart tells me different. The old ones tell me there was a Jewish quarter, a synagogue, study halls, and a cemetery. One day, while searching the streets of the ancient city, I came across a building missing half of its roof. The site was a garbage dump and the building's interior was three-quarters full of rotting garbage, feces and sewage. I had to crouch down low to get inside as the doorway was almost completely buried.

As I entered light came through the half-open roof and I could just make out writing engraved on the walls. It was Hebrew. It was then that I knew I had stumbled into the ancient synagogue of the city of Mosul-Nineveh . My heart broke as I climbed over the garbage piles that filled the room where, for hundreds of years, the prayers of Jews had reached the heavens. I realized I was probably the first Jew to enter this holy place in over 50 years.

Over three-and-a-half meters of garbage filled the main sanctuary and what appeared to be the women's section. I could barely make it out because of the filth, but there was Hebrew writing on the walls. Many Iraqis congregated around me, wanting to know what I was doing.

My translator said that the American army was interested in old archeological sites of all kinds. I asked them if they knew what this place was, and they all said in an instant: It was the house where the Jews prayed.

They told me that the houses in the streets surrounding the synagogue had been filled with Jews. They took me to the children's yeshiva, a marbled edifice that no longer had a roof, only walls and half-rooms. There was a vagrant family living there and when I asked them what this place was, they said it was a Jewish school for children.

As I walked through the quarter I was shown the grave of the prophet Daniel, once a synagogue. I saw that many of the door posts had an engraving of the lion of Judah on the top. I felt the presence of our people, of their daily lives as merchants, teachers, rabbis, doctors, and tailors. I felt their rush to get ready for Shabbat, felt their presence as they walked to the synagogue on Yom Kippur.

I could almost hear singing in the courtyards, in the Succot, as they invited in the ushpizin (criminals). I could hear the Pessah (Passover) songs echoing through the narrow streets late into the night.

And the children: I could see their shadows as they raced down the alleys and around the corners, playing. I heard their voices learning the Aleph Beth (ABC's) in the Yeshivot (Jewish schools) as they prepared for their bar mitzvah (Passage from boy to adulthood) and bat mitzvah (passage of girl to adulthood). But I also heard the babies crying, and I could see the young daughters of Zion clinging to their mother's skirts, asking why the bad people were killing them and making them leave their homes of thousands of years.

Tears came to my eyes, but I had to hold them back lest I put myself and the soldier with me in a dangerous situation. I had to pretend that I was only mildly interested in what they were showing me.

How does one absorb this kind of experience? How do I convey the feeling of hearing all those voices reaching out in prayer at the synagogue as I stood on top of all that garbage? How do I recover our history, how do I bring honor to a holy place that has been so desecrated?

I have no answers. I only have great sadness, pain, and loneliness. Since then, I have gone back to the Jewish Quarter of old Mosul with members of my congregation, Jewish soldiers of the 101st: Infantrymen, artillerymen, medics,

pilots, lawyers, doctors, all proud to be Jewish and serving their country. Together we have found five more synagogues, more yeshivot (Jewish schools) and many Jewish homes. They have all come away profoundly affected by what they saw.

They are saddened, but yet proud to be connected to such an ancient and rich tradition in this historic city of Nineveh . I searched the ancient city near cemeteries in hope of finding the Jewish cemetery. I found a Christian cemetery and a British War cemetery situated next to each other. The British War cemetery is now used as a soccer field. The cemetery was marked as a war memorial cemetery and the dates were for World War I and World War II.

There was a marker in the cemetery written in English and Sanskrit, dedicated to the Hindu and Sikh soldiers of Her Majesty's army who died while serving. Another one, written in English and Arabic, was dedicated to the Muhammadan soldiers in Her Majesty's army who died while serving and a third marker had nothing on it. These markers were over seven meters high. The third marker could have had a dedication, but if so it had been destroyed or removed. Scattered all through the cemetery were fragments of tombstones, some with a few words of English, some with a cross on them.

Outside these three markers there were no standing tombstones anywhere, only broken fragments scattered in corners.

The cemetery was surrounded by a 1.5-meter wall and an entrance gate. About half a meter inside the cemetery, barely showing through the surface, was a fragment my assistant, Specialist William Rodriguez, discovered. By working with me over these last few months he has learned to recognize Hebrew letters. As we dug it out we noticed it had both Hebrew and English on it. I was so excited to see it, yet so sad. There are many possible explanations, but the one I think most plausible is that it was the grave marker of a British soldier, a young man by the name of Zev. The British Army had contacted the local Jewish community to have a stone engraver put Hebrew on the stone along with the English. It was their way of honoring and

respecting their fallen comrade.

If this explanation is true then this cemetery contains those of the Hindu, Sikh, Islamic, Christian, and Jewish faiths, all soldiers who died in the service of their country. The obvious question: Is death the only way these great faiths can coexist in peace? We would hope not. I have not yet discovered the ancient Jewish cemetery of the Jews of Mosul-Nineveh. My instincts tell me it is nearby, but in the last 60 years it has probably been desecrated and obliterated. One native I talked to told me that a major highway had been built through it.

I will continue to search as my military mission allows me. I have taken Zev's marker and reburied it in the cemetery. I have said Kaddish (prayer over the dead) for him and for all the other Jewish souls that may be buried here.

There is a great history to be written here, a great opportunity to recover the lost narrative of our people, the Sephardim of Iraq. My prayer and hope is that when the gates finally open for scholars the remnants of our people will still be here for historians to recover. If this chapter of history is erased, it will never be recovered again. I pray that those with more resources, more connections, and more wisdom than I will be able to add to these pages of our great history. I am only thankful that God has given me a small part in it.

May the memories of our brothers and sisters - "hakahal hakadosh d'Nineveh" - the holy community of Nineveh - never be forgotten.

# Rabbi to Discuss Women of the Bible at Sisterhood Luncheon



MOUNT VERNON, NY - Rabbi Morris W. Barzilai will be the featured speaker at the February 7, 2007, luncheon meeting of the Sinai Free Synagogue Sisterhood. He will explore the question: "How do today's women look at the women of the Bible?"

The meeting will start at 12:15 pm in the Sinai Free Synagogue auditorium at 550 North Columbus Avenue in Mount Vernon, NY.

Rabbi Barzilai recently celebrated his tenth anniversary as spiritual leader of Sinai Free Synagogue and one of its predecessor congregations, Free Synagogue of Westchester. He is active in community and inter-religious activities.

For further information and reservations, contact the Synagogue office at 1-914 / 664.1727.

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