



## The New Abayudaya Coffee Song — see page 8! Burundi Genocide Update — see page 13!

### Changing of the Guard at Porto's Synagogue

*By Manuel Azevedo*

Twenty-nine-year-old Rabbi Elizier Shai DiMartino smiles easily. He and his young family have recently arrived in Porto, Portugal, courtesy of Shavei Israel. He will work with the *Bnei Anousim* at the Kadoorie Mekor Haim synagogue, the “Cathedral of the North,” built by Captain Barros Basto during the 1930s with the financial help of the descendants of the Marrano Diaspora in New York, London, Amsterdam, Paris, and Shanghai. He is replacing outgoing Rabbi Elisha Salas.



Rabbi DiMartino must have expected to move to Portugal someday; why else would he have taught himself Portuguese years ago? Growing up in Rome, he was keenly aware that the most common surname in the Jewish community was DiPorto, i.e., “from Porto.” He practiced his Portuguese in long conversations with his good friend from Belmonte, Yosef Rodrigues, while both

were studying at the Midrash Sefardi Institute in Israel.

When pressed, he describes himself as a medievalist Sephardi. He detests labels. His heroes, apart from Captain Barros Basto (he cried when he finished reading his biography), include Maimonides (Rambam) and Portuguese-born Abrabanel Gersonides, and he thinks Aristotle also had some important things to say. He is not too keen on post-modernism. However, he sees a silver lining in post-modern angst; it has weakened the Church's moral authority,

*(Continued on page 10)*

### The Lost Jews Of Manado

*By Yonatan Menashe*

This is the story of the Lost Jews of Manado and that of Eli, who has been recreating a Jewish presence in this Indonesian city. His is the story of the enduring faithfulness, perseverance, and ingenuity -- a triumph of the Jewish spirit against all odds. The achievements of Eli are even more amazing given his youthfulness and the circumstances. Indonesia is a poor land, a country without diplomatic relations with Israel, and a place where being Jewish is potentially life-threatening.

Indonesia is the world's largest archipelago, comprising 7,000 islands in the equatorial regions of the Far East straddling an area as wide as the Continental United States. It was known as the Spice Islands of the Far East or the Dutch East Indies. Indonesia was under Dutch rule from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the late 1940s. It is a republic of over 220 million people with the world's largest Islamic population; 90 percent of Indonesia's population is Moslem, with the balance mainly Christian, Hindu and Buddhist.



*Members of Manado Jewish Community*

Indonesia has had a Jewish presence for over 100 years, and a small Jewish community remains in the city of Surabaya. The Surabaya community was largely a Sephardic one, hailing mainly from Iraq. Over the years, a few families moved to Singapore while others have assimilated into the local populace. Some prominent local Jewish

*(Continued on page 2)*

# Jews Of Manado (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

family names like Musry still crop up from time to time.

There were other smaller Jewish communities scattered throughout Indonesia, mainly Ashkenazi ones. One of them, Manado, is a city located on the northeastern tip of the large island of Sulawesi (formerly Celebes). Manado has had a long history of Dutch settlement and is one of the few places in Indonesia where the Dutch have had a significant influence on the local community. Unlike much of Indonesia, Manado and the surrounding areas are mainly Christian, reflecting the strong religious inroads made by the Dutch and other Europeans who had missionized the locals. Along with the Dutch Christians came small numbers of Dutch Jews.

There was a small synagogue in the old Dutch part of the town that was badly damaged by the Japanese during World War II. It has since been partly restored through the efforts of a young local by the name of Toar Pailingan, who is only 22 years old.

Toar, who has taken on the name Eli, after an ancestor, has Jewish blood on his maternal side. His great-great grandfather on his maternal side was Elias van Beugen or Eliyahu ben Eleazar, a Dutch Jew who passed away during the Japanese occupation in 1942. I met Eli in January 2006 during a visit to Manado, a 3-hour flight from Singapore. Manado is known for its diving, with crystal clear waters, beautiful coral, and colorful tropical fishes. The countryside is beautiful, as the land is surrounded by mountains and a couple of volcanoes which are still active, although there has not been a major eruption for many years. The land is fertile and dotted with coconut trees and rice fields, especially in the Minahasan highlands, which are about an hour's drive from the city and rise to elevations of 2-3 thousand feet above sea level (the peaks of the volcanoes rise to elevations of 6 thousand feet or more). Although the people are mainly Christian, the Moslem population has increased steadily over the years as Moslems moved in from other parts of Indonesia. While other parts of Sulawesi are being torn by inter-religious strife between Christians and Moslems, Manado remains an island of calm.

Eli may be only 22, but he has achieved much in trying to recreate a Jewish presence in Manado. He has been practicing "Judaism" since about 15. He first learned about his Jewish heritage in his teens from his mother and granduncle. That seemed to ignite a spark of interest in his Jewish heritage that grew over time. He learned much of his Judaism through the Internet, including an impressive array of Jewish liturgy. We spent a Shabbat together and I was amazed at his command of the liturgy considering he had so little contact with the Jewish world.

In recent years, Eli has received several Jewish visitors from around the world, including three Israelis -- impressive considering that Indonesia does not have diplomatic relations with the State of Israel. His visitors have brought him gifts of various Judaica, including menorahs, tallits, shofars and siddurs. He had a whole cabinet full of menorahs that he had received as gifts from his various Jewish visitors.

There are a few Jewish graves scattered throughout Manado but no single Jewish cemetery. Eli has recreated a "synagogue" located an hour's drive from Manado in the rolling countryside of the Minahasan Highlands. The "synagogue" was purchased with funds donated by a wealthy Jew from the Netherlands who had heard about the plight of the Lost Jews of Manado. The synagogue was originally a house that

(Continued on page 10)

# Introducing the *Raices* *Hebreos* -- A Colorado *Anous* Community

By Guillermo Lazo

We often learn of emerging *Anous* communities in exotic places, so it came as a surprise to actually find one in my own backyard, the Denver metro area. Sylvia and Raul Perez have heeded their unique spiritual journeys and ancestry and are leading a small group of Latinos back to Judaism. Raul is originally from Chihuahua, Mexico, and Sylvia is from the US Southwest. Both have been on a spiritual path for many years. Both as a couple and as business partners they operated a religious bookstore and even served as pastors in an evangelical church.



Raul and Sylvia Perez (Photo by Ariana Lazo)

Notwithstanding the protests from their former evangelical community, they have begun holding Shabbat services in the backyard of their bookstore. The have attracted a strong group of believers who bake their own challah and are fervent in their study of Torah.

I met Sylvia and Raul through a meeting called by Ivan Baca and Michael Fajardo, who organized a Symposium on the descendants of Sephardic Jews in Denver this past September.

Due to my association with Kulanu and as a member of B'Nai Chaim synagogue in Littleton, Colorado, I was invited to the meeting. In fact, I spoke on behalf of Kulanu at the Symposium, which was well attended by people from all over Colorado's front range, Denver, Colorado Springs and Pueblo.

The members of this congregation attended the Symposium as well and I feel that they were the heart and soul of the event. All the members of this community have interesting stories, but I was most struck by their fervor.

The group (which loosely calls itself *Raices Hebreos*) initially made contact with an Orthodox shul on Denver's West Side, but they were not exactly welcomed with open arms. However, after attending one of the services at Raul and Sylvia's, I invited the group to attend services at my synagogue, B'Nai Chaim, and they were welcomed by the congregation and even engaged in some discussion with our Rabbi Joel Schwartzman after the *Oneg*.

The very nature of *Anousim* recognizing their Jewish

(Continued on page 15)

# LETTERS TO KULANU

## Musings in Nigeria

I read a write-up by some Igbo scholars that the Igbos should have a say in the resolution of the Middle East conflict. I wondered why? But people who are more knowledgeable than I am have said that Arabs bombed and strafed Igbos during the Biafran war, and I've read that Igbos were enslaved by Arabs during the trans-Saharan slave trade. Perhaps our historians should start researching into all this with the objective of including them among the oppressive acts that Arabs have meted out to *Am Israel*, so that the oppressors will stop pretending that they are victims.

*Remy C. Ilona  
Abuja, Nigeria*

## Helping Belmonte in Florida

Little did I know when in 1989 I visited Belmonte, Portugal, for the first time that the Jewish community there would become the focus of my life. On August 31 I led a group of five friends to the unique, complex Jewish community, on my fifth visit. In response to a Belmonte appeal for funds for books and teachers, I set up a "Fund for Jewish Education" at the American Sephardic Federation. I mailed a fund-raising letter to all my friends, with good results.

In February and March of 2006, in Century Village, Deerfield Beach, Florida, I organized two fund-raising events, one featuring Esther Wertheimer, internationally known sculptor, and one a *Purimspiel* that included our "Kulanu chorus" singing the now-popular "Kulanu Song" composed by Jocelyn and Jerry Cooper. About 450 people attended, including the consul-general of Israel for Florida, Dr. Yitzchak BenGad. (The song is published in *UNDER ONE CANOPY: Readings in Jewish Diversity*, available at [www.kulanuboutique.com](http://www.kulanuboutique.com).)

To date we have \$6110 in our Jewish Education Fund. Readers wishing to help bring Jewish education to Belmonte may contribute (tax deductible) to the American Sephardic Federation, earmarking the donation to the "Jewish Education Fund, Belmonte" and mail to Randall Belinfante, American Sephardic Federation, 15 West 16 St., Sixth Floor, New York, NY 10011.

*Yaakov Gladstone  
New York City and Deerfield Beach, Florida*

## First Anniversary of Coffee Project — Just in Time for the Gift-Giving Season!

A year after it began, Thanksgiving Coffee's Mirembe Project has raised over \$6,000 to support the Peace Kawomera Cooperative. To date, the funds raised have financed critical infrastructure (de-pulping machines to bring in the 2005 harvest), a training program in neighboring Rwanda, and the purchase of land for the co-op's future warehouse and office.

Thanksgiving Coffee thanks each and every customer for making this possible. Each consumer is integral in the strengthening of the Peace Kawomera Cooperative, and their work to build peace. Stay tuned as the story continues to unfold in Abayudaya-land!

Don't forget, you can order this Fair Trade, kosher coffee raised by Jewish, Muslim, and Christian farmers in Uganda at

[http://store.thanksgivingcoffee.com/  
product\\_info?products\\_id=29](http://store.thanksgivingcoffee.com/product_info?products_id=29)

What a perfect Chanukah gift for Jewish friends and Christmas gift for Christian friends!

## HAPPY CHANUKAH!

Great gift ideas from  
The Kulanu Boutique —

*Aish Chai lapel pins*

*Books*

*CDs*

*Challah Covers*

*Kippot*

*Tallitot*



All proceeds help Kulanu and the communities we serve. See page 15 for the order form or go to [www.kulanuboutique.com](http://www.kulanuboutique.com)



# KULANU BRIEFS

## The Forest Foundation – A New Partner

The Forest Foundation made a grant to the Abayudaya Congregation for an "Apples 'n Honey" party right after Yom Kippur. Israel Siriri, chairperson of the Abayudaya Congregation, reported, "This made the Rosh Hashanah very special. The day was joyous, all synagogues were represented, and the synagogue at our Nabugoye headquarters was full. This created an atmosphere of brothers coming together." About 250 people attended the party, including visitors from overseas, people from all five Abayudaya villages, and Christian and Muslim neighbors.



*Apples and Honey Party in Uganda*

This was one of many Apples 'n Honey parties supported by the Forest Foundation in many diverse Jewish communities and the first project in their new Remote Jewish Communities program. The idea for these parties came from the Foundation's 85-year old donor, Dr. Morris Squire, who recalled that the High Holy Day gatherings in his Chicago neighborhood allowed young people to meet each other and begin making plans for community programs for the coming year.

The Forest Foundation is probably best known for its Moishe House program -- a collection of homes throughout the United States that serve as a hub for young adult Jewish community (with an emphasis on ages 18-28). The Foundation provides a rent subsidy and a program budget for a handful of young, eager, innovative Jews to live in and create their vision of an ideal Jewish communal space. The Foundation has just adopted Remy Ilona's new home in Abuja, Nigeria, as "Moishe House, Nigeria" – the first Moishe House outside the United States! Ilona's home has a living room, kitchen, two bedrooms, and a courtyard. One bedroom is set up as a Judaica library, and the living room is to be used as a meeting room. Remy will offer programs twice a week where people interested in Igbo/Jewish life can gather. On the Forest Foundation Web site, at [http://theforestfoundation.net/mhouse\\_display.asp?HouseID=8](http://theforestfoundation.net/mhouse_display.asp?HouseID=8), Ilona introduces himself and the house.



*Torah Study in Moishe House Nigeria*

Kulanu is pleased to assist with these programs, and we are excited about this new partnership with the Forest Foundation.

## Family Information Sought in Brazil

Prof. Tania Kaufman, coordinator of Kahal Zur Israel/Jewish Archive of Pernambuco and of the Interdisciplinary Group of Jewish Studies at the Federal University of Pernambuco, is beginning a new work on *Anous* families from Northeastern Brazil, mainly Pernambuco State. She finished recently her work on "Jewish Lords of Sugar Mills" and now her focus is on cattle farmers, who are the roots of those *Anousim* who live in the backlands or semi-arids. She invites those with family documents, photos, and other genealogical information to contact her at [tnkaufman@arquivojudaico.org.br](mailto:tnkaufman@arquivojudaico.org.br).

## January Tour to Uganda Still Has Places

Have you priced tours to Africa lately? If you have, you'll know that Kulanu's mitzvah tour to Uganda is a big bargain! At only \$2550 for 15 days of sightseeing, visits with the villages of the Abayudaya Jews, and opportunities to do meaningful work to assist this remarkable community, this deal can't be beat. All in the company of tour leader and singer/lecturer Laura Wetzler, Kulanu's award-winning coordinator for Uganda. See the ad on page 14 of this newsletter — time is running out!

## Guest House Progress

Kulanu received a 2005 grant from the Jewish Youth Philanthropy Institute, an organization in which teenagers pool their bar/bat mitzvah gift money to make charitable gifts responsibly. Of the \$6000 awarded to Kulanu, \$3000 was earmarked for an Abayudaya guest house, to be matched by \$3000 from other sources. The matching donations are nearly all in, and work has been steadily going on to complete the guest house. Here is a photo of the early days of construction. We hope to have a photo of the completed structure and a report of its operation soon!



## Kehila Kedosha Janina Marks 80th

The 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Kehila Kedosha Janina, the Romaniote shul in Manhattan, will be marked on June 3, 2007. It is the only surviving Judeo/Greek congregation in the Western Hemisphere. As they develop, further details will be available at <http://www.kkjsm.org>.

## Speakers Spread the Word

Florida International University's Center for the Study of Spirituality is presenting a lecture series that includes, on November 28, a talk by **Prof. Tudor Parfitt** of the University of London on "Lost Tribes of Israel in Africa and Asia." FIU's Dec. 15 **Prof. Nathan Katz** will speak on December 15 on "The Dalai Lama's 'Jewish Secret.'" On February 3, 2007, **Cantor George Mordecai** will present a concert of Indian Jewish Music, and **Ellen S. Goldberg** will present a gallery talk about a photo exhibit of the Jews of Cochin, India. For information go to <http://cas.fiu.edu/SpiritualityCenter> or phone 305-538-2503.

**Aaron Kintu Moses**, Abayudaya headmaster and spiritual leader, took his first flight and embarked on a US speaking tour in October and November. Stops included Massachusetts, New York, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, California, and New Jersey.

# KULANU BRIEFS

In October and November, the London Museum of Jewish Life in Camden Town presented an exhibition of photographs by **Rena Pearl** on the Abayudaya Jews of Uganda as part of Black History Month. On October 18, Pearl presented an illustrated talk on the history, culture and music of the Abayudaya, and on October 31 an illustrated talk was given by **Dr Ronald Lipman** on the Jews of Ethiopia since 1769. Josh Dresner, a 17-year-old Londoner, arranged for Kulanu to have a role in offering literature and products of the Abayudaya and Kulanu at the museum.

**Michael Freund** spoke about the work of Shavei Israel on November 16 at the Manhattan JCC. Entitled "Finding Lost Jews from India to Portugal and Beyond," the talk discussed the Bnei Menashe of India; the Subbotnik Jews of Russia; the *Anousim* of Spain, Portugal and South America; the hidden Jews of Poland; and the descendants of the Jewish community of Kaifeng, China.

Wisconsin Public Radio interviewed **Prof. Xu Xin** (from China via telephone) on Oct. 12 on the topic "Growing interest in China in Jewish Culture."

**Judith Cohen** and **Tamar Cohen Adams** have had an active summer schedule of lectures and song workshops on Sephardic music. Sites visited included Madrid, Ibiza, Aveiro, London, Hervas, Sarajevo, Belmonte, Sancti Spiritu, Balneario, Pamplona, Vitoria, Newcastle, and Varna.

On August 27, **Beejhy Barhany** discussed the then-upcoming Sheba Film Festival on WBAI's *Beyond the Pale*. The festival, presented annually by BINA, ran on September 2 and 3. Films this year included *Journey to Lasta*, *Sisai*, *The Silence*, and *The Nanny*.

## Unexpected Help

Upon learning that the UN was offering support to rebuild post-kirmish Lebanon but not Israel, Remy Ilona called on the Igbo-Jewish clans of Nigeria to help out and send support to Israel. Since there is no UJA emergency fund (yet) in Nigeria, Ilona called upon the traditional ruler of an important Ibo clan to assemble other clan heads and do fundraising for relief of Israeli war victims. Ilona reports: "Without any hesitation he told me to send him a letter recommending the project so that he could go into action. Igbos have to take active part in rebuilding what is also their land and heritage."

Also, the non-governmental Polish Humanitarian Organization is raising NIS 1 million from the Polish government and private donors for assistance to hard-hit residents of northern Israel. "If you really are a humanitarian organization you have to work for the victims of both sides, and not only be supporting one side," said Janina Ochojska, the group's founder and president.

## Upcoming Meetings

The Society for the Study of Ethiopian Jews announces that the next SOSTEJE international conference will take place in Florence, Italy, on October 7-10, 2007, marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary after the establishment of the Pro-Falasha Committee by Dr. Jacques Faitlovitch, in conjunction with the local Jewish community in Florence.

The Latin American Jewish Studies Association (LAJSA) announces its XIII International Research Conference in Buenos Aires, July 29-31, 2007. The conference will explore facets of Jewish cultural production in Latin America. To obtain a detailed Call for Papers in-

cluding instructions for proposing a paper or panel and the proposal form, contact david.foster@asu.edu.

## Newsletter Help Wanted

After 12 wonderful years at the helm, your editor is asking for some volunteer help in putting out this quarterly newsletter. If you are interested and have some writing or editing experience (word-processing a must), please contact Karen Primack at [primack@starpower.net](mailto:primack@starpower.net). An occasional "guest editor" would be appreciated, as would regular copy-writing assistance.

## Refuah Shleimah

We wish a full and speedy recovery to **Rufina Bernardetti Silva Mausenbaum** in Johannesburg.

## Condolences

To Massachusetts activist Barbara Vinick on the death of her husband **Arnie Vinick**.

To the family and to the Jewish community of Curacao on the passing of **Charles Gomes Casseres**, highly respected leader in the Jewish and non-Jewish community of Curacao

To the Jewish community of Cochin, India, and to family, on the passing of **Shalom Cohen**, 87, the community's last *kohen*.

To Kehila Kedosha Janina synagogue community and to family on the passing of **Hy Genee**, president of the Romaniote congregation in New York.

## Todah Rabah!

We are grateful to an anonymous donor for a \$5530 gift.

And to our \$1000-2000 donors: **The Forest Foundation, Stuart Sandy Leeder**, and the **Dr. Irving Moskowitz Foundation**.

\$500 - \$600: **David & Jane Cohen, Rabbi Scott Glass, Anne Katz Jacobson & Robert Jacobson, Lee & Leslie Lloyd, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Howard & Judith Mayer, New Jersey Region, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, and Jaime Walman & Noam Katz.**

\$101 - \$499: **Susan & Mark Beckerman, Hope & Matthew Feldman, Anne Gelb (Dora Bloch Memorial Fund), James Gelb & Sharon Pohoryles (Dora Bloch Memorial Fund), Elizabeth Lewis (in honor of Rina Mulobole), Jonathan Sills, Bert Linder & Bliss Siman, Daniel Lis, Hasha Musha Periman, Tenet Healthcare Foundation, and Barbara Zacky.**

\$100 Club: **Diana Blum & Bill Scott, Lynne Elson, Am Kolel, Erica M. Greenbaum, Herald & Marge Katleman, Elie Perl, Peter & Betty Silverglate, and Temple Sinai.**

## OPINION

# Provide Care to Falashas

By Ricki Lieberman

A June 30 article reports that, "American Jewish philanthropic leaders are vowing to fight Israel's recent decision to postpone a plan to increase the rate of Ethiopian immigration."

While this is a most worthy effort, it is worth noting that Ethiopian immigrants are ill prepared for life in Israel because for years the Jewish Agency for Israel and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee have refused to take responsibility for these future Israelis, and refused to provide humanitarian aid and "Israel ready" services to this population — guaranteeing that their aliya and absorption would result in enormous social and economic costs to Israeli society and Israeli taxpayers.

These same American Jewish philanthropic leaders must now step out from behind the reprehensible action of the Israeli government and at the same time as fighting that decision, take direct responsibility for the health, welfare and education of the Ethiopian Jews waiting to make aliya.

These same bureaucrats and American Jewish leaders go home each evening to a warm house, a soothing shower and a hot meal. They relax, go to the movies, spend Shabbat with their families — all as 20,000 Jews in Ethiopia live in dank, dark tin huts with no sanitation or running water and empty stomachs, separated for many years from family already in Israel.

There is no excuse for withholding funds for these Jews while the Israeli bureaucrats and government delay and delay and delay. What possible reason could there be to not provide food, education, decent housing and Hebrew language training while the bureaucrats bicker?

Enough already. Stop the finger-pointing and hypocrisy. This is a man-made disaster, not an act of God. American Jews must hold the Jewish Agency and the JDC accountable, and insist that they immediately take responsibility for the humanitarian, educational and Israel-ready services — regardless of whether the Israeli government lives up to its obligation and speeds up aliya...

As long as one Jewish child in Ethiopia goes to bed hungry, no Immigration Absorption official and no American Jewish leader should go to bed complacently.

*(Excerpted from a letter to the editor published in the July 21 Forward. The writer worked with the Jewish communities of Addis Ababa and Gondar in Ethiopia and in Israel.)*

# A New Renaissance In Italy

By Karen Primack

Something unusual has happened in Italy: a Roman Catholic church has been reconsecrated as a synagogue. The Jewish community in Trani (southwestern coast of Italy) thrived in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, but persecutions began in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and a *Neofiti* (Italian *Anousim* or "Marranos") community arose. The 13<sup>th</sup> century synagogue had not been used as a Jewish holy place since 1510, when the Jews were expelled from Puglia, in southern Italy. Although freedom of religion was enacted in Italy in 1861, Puglia has seen no open Jewish practice until now. However, the *Neofiti* have been practicing secretly all along.

The *renaissance* of the Jewish community seems to have begun with the formal conversion of pianist-conductor Francesco Lotoro and his wife, who now are openly observant in Trani. It was Lotoro who secured the municipality's permission in November 2005 to use the synagogue building, which the church had abandoned 50 years earlier. Lotoro then encouraged the quiet Jews of the area to attend the synagogue and form a community. Members include some *Neofiti* and some descendants of the San Nicandro community of converts to Judaism, most of whom moved to Israel after World War II.

Their rabbi is Shalom Bahbout, a physicist who also presides at the Panzieri Fatucci Synagogue in Rome. He comes from Rome every two weeks to teach. The congregation hopes to establish a Jewish school, library, Jewish music study center, and guest accommodations. They are recognized by the Italian Rabbinic Council and the Union of Italian Jewish Communities.

*Jerusalem Post* writers Ari Z. Zivotofsky and Ari Greenspan visited the synagogue and spoke with Lotoro. They note that, with 40 congregational participants, "These people see much room for growth since there are 1000 individuals in southern Italy who give their 'religious tax' to the Italian Jewish community."

\* \* \*

And in the north of Italy, a 200-year-old Torah was dedicated on September 26 at a vacant 131-year-old synagogue in Ivrea, Italy, a small town near Turin. The Torah, donated by the Pollack Family Foundation in Detroit, had been completed by a North African scribe in Valish (Sephardic) script, and had been donated to a yeshiva in Israel in 1948; it was just restored by Rabbi Moshe Druin. Rabbi Barbara Aiello led Turin's Progressive chavurah Or Chadash in the dedication ceremony.



*Torah dedication in Ivrea*

# PUBLICATIONS OF NOTE

✍ Upon hearing a presentation by Abayudaya leaders JJ Keki and Seth Jonaday in Washington last spring, poet **Judy Neri** sat down and wrote a song about the Mirembe Kawomera coffee project they discussed. She collaborated with Keki, who was sitting nearby strumming a guitar, and composer Elisabetta Fortini, who assisted with the notation. It is published on pages 8 and 9 of this newsletter!

✍ “Mangoes, Medjools and Mitzvah”s by **Tina Wasserman** appeared in the Fall edition of Reform Judaism Magazine. It contains recipes for Sukkot inspired by the Abayudaya Jews of Uganda. Recipes include a Ugandan Fall Harvest Fruit Salad (featuring bananas, mango, and jackfruit), Manioc Cheese Puffs (with yucca or tapioca flour and parmesan cheese), and Arugula Salad with Dates and Chevre (emphasizing sunflower seeds and pomegranates).

✍ “Campaign Launched to Seek Justice for Jewish Refugees” ran on Arutz Sheva on October 29, concerning the Israeli government’s decision to assist the effort to obtain redress and spread awareness about the eviction of hundreds of thousands of Jews from Arab and Muslim countries.

✍ On October 16, JTA ran “Amazon Rabbi’s Gravesite Becomes Pilgrimage Place for Local Christians” by **Bill Hinchberger**. It tells of the custom of local Catholics to honor the gravesite in Manaus, Brazil, of Rabbi Shalom Emmanuel Muya, to whom they ascribe dozens of miracles.

✍ On October 5 the Jerusalem Post carried **Deborah S. Esquenazi’s** “The Pre-Ashkenazi and Sephardi Romaniote Jews.” It discusses Kehila Kedosha Janina’s renovations at the NYC historic landmark. The Romaniote community dates from 300 BCE, when Hellenized Jews arrived in Greece from Alexandria in North Africa.

✍ **Devin Naar’s** catalog, *With Their Own Words: Glimpses of Jewish Life in Thessaloniki before the Holocaust*, has just been published by the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki to accompany an exhibit. The exhibit and catalog focus on publications, documents and manuscripts, including books, periodicals, broadsides, ledgers, and other paper items.

✍ “Israel Will Soon Welcome from India Descendants of a ‘Lost’ Jewish Tribe,” by **Dina Kraft**, was distributed by JTA on September 26. The article details the Israeli government’s decision to admit 218 already-converted Bnei Menashe Jews from northeastern India. They will be joining 1000 members of their community already in Israel.

✍ “Igbos Seek Jewish Link,” by **Kristin Erikson**, appeared in the September 13 Jewish Advocate. It reports that leaders at the 12<sup>th</sup> World Igbo Congress annual convention in Boston met with officials at the American Jewish Committee to discuss forming an alliance. Boston Igbo Peter Opara said Igbos feel a

spiritual bond with Jews because “Igbos have not been able to trace their origin back to anywhere else other than Israel. We want to join and walk together with the Jews. Whenever Israel suffers in any possible way, the Igbos feel it.”

✍ A September 8 Arutz Sheva article, “Ethiopian Immigrants Protest Olmert Government,” discusses a planned protest of the cutting of the monthly quota of Ethiopian immigrants to be absorbed from 300 to 150. The United Jewish Communities of North America also slammed the Olmert government for going back on promises regarding Ethiopian immigration to Israel, which has been financially assisted by the UJC.

✍ An AP story, “Finland’s Jewish Community Commemorates Synagogue’s 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday,” appeared on Haaretz.com on September 3. It describes the event, with government representatives, foreign dignitaries and Christian leaders in attendance.

✍ **Max Yadin’s** “Humbled To Be an Honored Guest” ran in the Washington Jewish Week in September, describing the author’s two-week volunteer stint with the Abayudaya and his fund-raising efforts.

✍ **Tali Raveh’s** “Jewish Tales: Key to Chinese Success,” appeared on Ynet News on August 30. It reports that 5000 copies of the children’s book series *The Secret to the Jews’ Success* have been published in China. Each of the 10 books tells a short Jewish tale with a moral, highlighting such values as respecting elders.

✍ The August 11 Chronicle of Higher Education contains **Paul Mooney’s** article, “In China, a Growing Interest in All Things Jewish.” It reports on M. Avrum Ehrlich, a former rabbi and now a professor of Judaic Studies at Shandong University, who conducts a weekly celebration of the Jewish Sabbath with his Chinese students. An Australian, he is one of the first foreign academics to teach Hebrew Bible, Talmudic Thought, and the Kabbalah in China. There is a growing interest in Judaism in China, where 10 other universities now offer courses in Jewish Studies.

✍ “Soldier Fights for Family’s Aliya,” an August 2 Jerusalem Post story by **Hilary Leila Krieger**, reports on recently wounded St.-Sgt. Avi Hangshing and a dozen other combat soldiers of Bnei Menashe heritage who served in Lebanon and Gaza. They all have relatives - some have immediate family members - who are still in India and can’t come to Israel because the government isn’t giving them visas. Hangshing described himself as “angry” at their situation and questioned why the government would keep them out of the country despite the contributions being made by his community.

✍ “Once Thriving Jewish Community in Suriname Is Struggling,” a June 23 JTA article by **Larry Luxner**, discusses the closure of a one of Paramaribo’s two ancient synagogues.

# Coffee Song

VOICE

ON THE GREEN HILLS OF U - GAN - DA THEY'RE WOR - KING,  
MUS - LIMS AND CHRIS - TIAN'S AND JEWS ALL TO - GE - THER.

WOR - KING TO MAKE, YES!, A COF - FEE FOR PEACE.  
WOR - KING TO MAKE, YES! A COF - FEE FOR PEACE.

CA - VA, CA - VA, CA - VA, CA - VA, U - GAN - DA'S COF - FEE.

CA - VA, CA - VA, CA - VA, CA - VA, COF - FEE FOR PEACE!

MI - REM - BE, MI - REM - BE, MI - REM - BE, KA - VO - ME - RA CA - VA!  
MI - REM - BE, MI - REM - BE, MI - REM - BE, MI - REM - BE CA - VA!

IT'S "DE - LI - CIOUS PEACE" THAT MAKES THE BEST COF - FEE.



COFFEE SONG

16  
MI - REM - BE KA - VO - ME - RA MAKES COF - FEE FOR PEACE.

17  
MI - REM - BE, MI - REM - BE, MI - REM - BE, KA - VO - ME - RA CA - VA!  
MI - REM - BE, MI - REM - BE, MI - REM - BE, MI - REM - BE CA - VA!

21  
CA - VA, CA - VA, CA - VA, CA - VA, U - GAN - DA'S COF - FEE.

25  
CA - VA, CA - VA, CA - VA, CA - VA, COF - FEE FOR PEACE!

COFFEE SONG

On the green hills of Uganda, they're working,  
working to make—yes!— a coffee for peace.

Muslims and Christians and Jews all together,  
working to make—yes—a coffee for peace.

Cava, cava, cava, cava, Uganda's coffee,  
Cava, cava, cava, cava, coffee for peace.  
(2 times, maybe use audience participation)

Mirembe, Mirembe, Mirembe— Kawomera—cava (3)  
Mirembe cava!

It's "Delicious Peace" that makes the best coffee,  
MiREMbe Kawomera makes coffee for peace.  
(2 times)

Mirembe, Mirembe, Mirembe—Kawomera—cava (3)

Cava, cava, cava, cava, Uganda's coffee,  
Cava, cava, cava, cava, coffee for peace!

## Porto's Synagogue (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

thereby making it easier for descendants of forced ones to return to community-based Judaism. He has made an oath with God and he intends to bring back His flock.

Rabbi DiMartino is big on building community, but not big on big business. He is a certified *shohet* but is not going to get involved in commercial activities; rather, he will provide his services to the community. Besides, he says, it's a lot easier to keep kosher than most people think. He eats lots of fresh fish, vegetables, and rennet-free dairy. He asks about vegan restaurants in Porto (there are several).

He is well versed in Marrano history; his own family has New Christian roots in southern Italy from the time of the Spanish domination. He is here to set the record straight, to finish the wrestling match with the Inquisition. (After all, in what other language is Monday the second day of the week [Segunda-feira]? Why, Hebrew, of course.) He agrees with Professor Moises Espirito Santo's thesis that Portuguese derives from Latinized ancient Hebrew (the language of the colonizing Phoenicians thousands of years ago).

Rabbi DiMartino asked to work with the *Bnei Anousim* in Portugal because although they may know less, they "want more." He has started various Return classes and dreams of implementing the yeshiva program of Rosh Pina created by Barros Basto, which he says is as challenging as any in Israel. He acknowledges that he has big shoes to fill, but says he cannot afford to lose. It's been too long.

His easygoing manner and deep conviction of community-based Judaism will go a long way to ensuring his success. (Editor's note: The writer, who conducts Jewish tours of Portugal, is president of *Ladina*, a Porto-based nonprofit society dedicated to the recovery of Sephardic-Marrano memory in Portugal [see [www.ladina.blogspot.com](http://www.ladina.blogspot.com)]. He describes himself as a Portuguese-born former lawyer who spent most of his adult life in Canada. A returnee in Portugal, he insists, "We don't mind the use of the term Marrano; in fact we consider it a badge of honor!")



## Jews Of Manado (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

had been built along Dutch architectural lines. Eli had the building remodeled by removing the floor that separated the lower and upper levels of the house to provide for a higher headroom. He had pews installed on both sides of the synagogue – one side for women and the other for men, with a *bimah* in between and a cabinet in front which serves as the Ark for the Torah scrolls.

Eli learned about synagogue styles entirely from researching the Internet at a cybercafé. (He has a desktop PC but no Internet connection at home) He is the only child in his family and lives with his parents. Although they are middle class by local standards, as both his parents and he himself teach law at a local university, they are poor by Western standards, with a household income not exceeding US\$1,000 a month. The "synagogue" he created comes complete with a "Jerusalem stone" façade on the front entrance. The stone comes from a local quarry with material resembling that in Jerusalem. The "synagogue" has two "Torah scrolls" housed in a cabinet. On closer inspection, I realized that they were actually makeshift versions. The "parchment" was made from flipcharts either glued together or joined by cellophane tape, with pages of the Torah downloaded from the Internet and carefully glued onto the flipcharts in proper sequence. I had never seen anything like this before and thought it quite ingenious. Eli had the rollers and handles made by a local carpenter.

There was a plaque on the wall next to the rear entrance inscribed with Hebrew lettering on the top – *Baruch Haba B'Shem Adonai* (Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord) and the rest in Dutch saying that a donation was made on 17 September 2004 by J.P. Van Der Stoop on behalf of the Dutch Jewish Community to the "Jewish Community of Manado."

There are other "lost Jews" like Eli scattered throughout Indonesia, particularly in areas where the Dutch had a significant influence like Manado and Ambon in the Moluccas. This happened over the years through intermarriage and assimilation, some becoming Christian and others Moslem. Apart from the Van Beugen family, other Jewish family names that remain today in Manado include Bollegraf, Meyer, Jacobs, Abraham, Schram, Rosenberg, and Joseph. There was even an Iraqi Jew with the family name Ezekiel who was buried in Manado.

I also met Eli's granduncle, a Van Beugen, who told me he estimates there are around 100 Jewish family names in Manado and possibly up to a thousand descendants of Jews throughout Manado and the surrounding countryside. I am not certain how the "lost Jews" look, but suspect they look quite Indonesian.

On my last night in Manado, we drove by the old synagogue, which is now a home occupied by descendants of the Bollegrafs. It is actually a very humble building and couldn't have been very grand even in its heyday. Eli has taught the family Judaism and they have over the last few years been practicing again, at least in a limited way. I understand from Eli they have been keeping Shabbat. The family was not in when we visited but I peeped through the crack in the door and saw a menorah on the table and Judaic pictures on the wall. Eli brought to my attention that he had a hand in restoring the old building, complete with a "Jerusalem stone" façade like the "synagogue's."

This is the story of Eli, a young man of Jewish descent in a poor, distant and unlikely land who loves his God and heritage. The story of a man who is now known in Manado as the local "Yahudi" or "Jew" and who wishes to be reconnected with his Jewish brethren throughout the world.

# Teacher Completes 30 Traditional Chanukah Portraits

By Karen Primack

Randal L. Mars, who teaches fourth-graders at a public school in Maryland, became inspired when his class was studying Kenya. An artist, he made portraits of the ethnic groups of



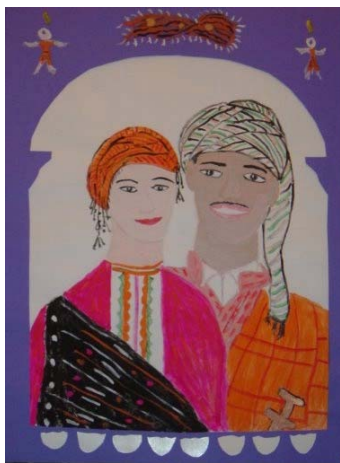
Randall Mars

Kenians – a successful project that he says the students loved.

As a former religious school teacher, Mars then turned to Judaism. In the last few years he has completed about 30 portraits of Jews around the world celebrating Chanukah. Each portrait has a couple in traditional dress as well as a type of *hanukkiah* representative of their country. He also composed a free-verse poem for each portrait. The figures are dressed as authentically as possible (he used the Internet to research original photos and post-

cards), and the menorahs are based on originals in museums he found online as well.

He painted the portraits, each 18x24 inches, on his kitchen floor.



Kurdistan couple with "menorah" of egg shells

Mars says his research has yielded a treasure trove of interesting information -- about the clay menorahs of Libya, the absence of menorahs historically in Ethiopia, the Renaissance symbols (angels, masks, singers in gondolas) used in Italy, the group menorahs of Switzerland, and the triangular shaped ones of Spain with biblical scenes.

He adds that the *hanukkiah* of the Poles adds an extra candle for Shabbat, and the Sephardim in Syria also added a candle. In Kurdistan, wicks were lit in egg shells and figures of Antiochus were burnt. Iraqi menorahs featured birds, the moon, stars, and hamsas; the poor lit wicks in walnut shells. In Yemen, Chanukah was celebrated with fireworks and the menorah was nailed onto the home's open front door. In Ukraine, a Shabbat holder was incorporated into menorah.

Following the Chanukah portraits, Mars then completed a series of succahs with poems, followed by Rosh Hashanah still-lives with poems.

His purpose? To preserve these customs for Jewish children, and for non-Jews as well -- perhaps in book form.

In his "spare time," Mars likes to make his own original menorahs of clay.

# Mayim Chaim: Water is Life!

By Laura Wetzler

Kulanu and the Jews of Uganda have completed drilling the first water well in the Abayudaya Jewish Community at Hadassah Primary School.

Israel Siriri, project manager and designer, headmaster Aaron Kintu Moses, and Rabbi Gershom Sizomu report that the well produces abundant clean, fresh water. Hope runs high that the new well will produce at a high enough rate to pump water from the Hadassah Primary School up to the catchment tanks and cistern installed by Kulanu on Nabagoye Hill in 2005.

Spiritual leader Gershom Sizomu saluted the occasion: "I would like to thank you, Alan, for your contribution 'to life.' Water gushed out on the evening of the *parasha* on which the Children of Israel demanded water in the wilderness. Thank you for being God's extension on earth, and may you continue to be!"

Kulanu and Abayudaya leaders created and successfully facilitated the first electricity and water projects in this Ugandan Jewish community in 2005.

Large water reservoir catchment tanks and a cistern were the rational first line of defense in a climate that has two rainy seasons. Half the year, the water is caught in the nine tanks and one underground cistern Kulanu helped install around the community. These first tanks have helped enormously, but run dry in dry season. Phase Two entails digging reliable wells.

Wells cost a minimum of \$16,000 each. We have been working to find adequate funds to hire the hydrologist, find the water, test, drill, and pump in the hard soils of Mt. Elgon. Pipe reticulation and plumbing costs are additional.

Here is the story of Kulanu-Abayudaya mitzvah volunteer network in action:

Medical volunteer Dr. Jordan Feld of Toronto worked with Aaron Kintu Moses and Israel Siriri in Uganda, and then contacted his brother-in-law, Cantor Mo Glazman of Temple Kol Ami in White Plains (who went to HUC with Gershom Sizomu, then attending on a semester fellowship). Cantor Mo invited me as Kulanu Coordinator for Uganda to meet with his congregants Alan and Reva Steinfeld to present a proposal for the project. The Steinfelds then donated the \$16,000 needed for the hydrologist, well drilling, and pump. Thanks to the Steinfelds, Kulanu's volunteer network, and Abayudaya leaders, the Jewish, Christian and Muslim children who attend Hadassah Primary School and their neighbors have hope for a healthier future.

More water wells, tanks, pumps, plus piping and plumbing for the primary school are still needed. Would you like to be part of this mitzvah?

These wells and water tanks save lives and help Abayudaya and their Muslim and Christian neighbors live in dignity. Please help us connect with family foundations or individual donors who can help the Abayudaya.

Be part of the Kulanu mitzvah network! Contact Kulanu Coordinator for Uganda (yours truly) Laura Wetzler [laura@laurawetzler.com](mailto:laura@laurawetzler.com).



Abayudaya chairman and water project designer Israel Siriri with wife Tehilla and daughter Judith.

# Burundi Genocide Update

By Rabbi David Kuperman

Alice Nzomukunda, who escaped an assassination attempt earlier this year after running afoul of Hussein Radjabu, the chief of Burundi's ruling party, CNDD-FDD, was recently forced to 'resign' as Vice President of Burundi despite her many years of loyal party service. She and Mathias Basabosa, another ruling party official threatened by Radjabu, held a press conference in Belgium in late October in which they described Radjabu's successful efforts to co-opt the authority of the elected government.

While their information is not new, this is the first time that it has appeared in a Western newspaper. Though it is been toned down for public consumption, it is essentially no different from what Kulanu and Havila have been describing for more than a year now. But when the most knowledgeable insiders speak about a militia that switches at will between military garb and the distinguished costumes of government, about strong Islamic influence in a part of the world targeted by Islamic extremists, about a trained army of devoted youth with their fingers poised on the triggers of automatic weapons, about the accumulation of vast wealth that can be used to implement personal policy, about the functional absence of a judiciary, about print and broadcast media that can be counted on to serve an ambitious and outspoken master well schooled in genocide, world governments should listen. When the most knowledgeable insiders explicitly compare the situation in Burundi with the situation in Rwanda in 1994, which led to the genocide of upwards of a million Tutsis, we must all listen.

The following press conference report by journalist Marie-France Cross for the Belgian newspaper *La Libre Belgique* has been translated from the original French.

## Burundi: Creation of a Parallel Government?

*Mis en ligne le 27/10/2006 Marie-France Cross  
© La Libre Belgique 2006*

**Dissidents from the party in power sound the alarm bell. They denounce the creation of a governmental authority parallel to the State and headed by the chief of their party.**

Alice Nzomukunda, recently resigned Vice-President (CNDD-FDD) of the Republic, and Mathias Basabose, a CNDD-FDD Deputy and former campaign manager of that party, in power since the electoral victories of 2005, gave a press conference in Brussels on Thursday to alert international opinion to the direction in which Burundi is moving.

### An armed militia

The two elected representatives warned against the machinations of the president of CNDD-FDD, Hussein Radjabu. They emphasized that he is in

the process of gathering into his hands the three elements that permitted the organization of a murderous power in neighboring Rwanda in 1994: money, an armed militia, and media without scruples. The money, according to the speakers, comes from the embezzlement and corruption that they have been denouncing since last April, which made them the target of the government's power. In addition, M. Radjabu, due to his activism on behalf of Muslims, has developed links with Sudan and is involved in business enterprises in that country.

What's more, M. Radjabu has created a 30,000-man militia (as many as are in the national army), the League of CNDD-FDD Youth, from which ten youths were positioned on each hill throughout the countryside to keep an eye on the elections. "He gave them weapons coming from the caches that we've been guarding since the ceasefire," explained M. Basabose.

One of the proofs of the militarization of this League of Youth is the replacement of its president by a military man, Major Jean Petit Nduwimana. The League employs military instructors who had been sent to Sudan [for training], according to Basabose.

### Creation of a radio station and a television station

The last bastion to be constituted: a press devoted to him. M. Radjabu, said Mme. Nzomukunda, already has the newspaper *Intumwa* and is preparing the creation of a radio station and a television station, while having imposed on his party, during its June 2006 congress, that they "not speak to journalists."

The two speakers cited numerous instances in which M. Radjabu overstepped his authority, and accused him of favoring the Islamicization of positions of power both within the party and within the State.

Justice no longer functions, added Mme. Nzomukunda, who cited the case of the order given by the Supreme Court to free the political opponents of the CNDD-FDD who had been accused of plotting against the state, an order that has not been obeyed. Since then, those judges of the Court have been replaced. "In the end, the people no longer believe those in authority and turn instead to the RPA [Radio Publique Africaine, a private radio station whose director was recently forced to flee the country after attempting to report independently]."





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**Under One Canopy: Readings in Jewish Diversity**, a 162-page book of poems, essays, stories, and songs by Sephardi, Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, African, and Asian Jews. *Proceeds benefit Kulanu.*

**Jews in Places You Never Thought Of**, a 305-page hardback which includes descriptions of personal interactions with returning and emerging Jewish groups around the world; over 30 photographs. *Proceeds benefit Kulanu.*

**Shalom Everybody Everywhere!** acclaimed recording of the unique sounds of the Abayudaya Jews of Uganda. Hear traditional Jewish liturgy and new compositions set to African melodies and rhythms, in English, Hebrew, Luganda, and Swahili. *Proceeds benefit Abayudaya.*

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# Introducing the *Raices Hebreos* (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

ancestry and the desire to return to Judaism are not without pitfalls. How do we overcome 500 years of separation? Though the gulf is indeed wide, I believe that it can be bridged with small steps. I was advised early in my own personal journey to study Torah and therein would I find my path. That has worked out for me, and with their fervor and the depth of commitment I believe that it can also work for the *Raices Hebreos* group.

Raul and Sylvia are a dynamic team and draw people from all over the Denver community. People attend from Castle Rock south of Denver, from Aurora, and from north Denver and the Thornton area. They are currently holding Shabbat services in their private home located in the NW metro Denver.

All of the members of the congregation have interesting stories to tell of how they each arrived at a desire to embrace Torah. Each of the members has engaged in a great deal of study and introspection. I have worked a bit with them in connecting them to the resources of the mainstream Jewish community in Denver. We started a Hebrew study group which meets on Sunday mornings. We have engaged Denver school-teacher Ilana Fishman, the daughter of a rabbi from Philadelphia, to teach the class.

If anyone wishes to contact *Raices Hebreos de Denver*, please contact me at [beatle-boy@hotmail.com](mailto:beatle-boy@hotmail.com).

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