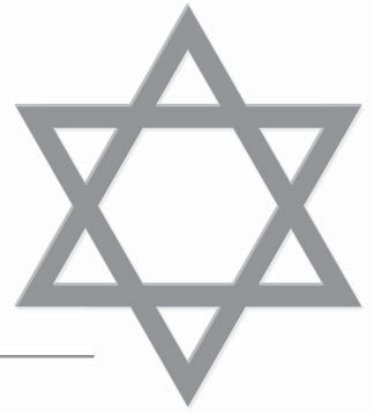




The Star



WASHINGTON AND LEE HILLEL NEWSLETTER
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HILLEL

JUNE 2007

Center for Jewish Life Planned for W&L

Plans are underway to build a new Center for Jewish Life at W&L. The Center will provide our community not only with a much needed home but also a place for students to explore what it means to be Jewish.

At the February meeting, the Washington and Lee Board of Trustees approved the Howard House site for the new Center. This site, on Washington Street, is across and down the street from Evans Hall. It will be easily visible and accessible both to people entering campus (visitors, students) and to local residents. Plans for the Center's interior feature a library, lounge and conference spaces appropriate for studying and socializing, kitchens, a large multipurpose room that is flexible enough to be used for worship



The campaign for the Center for Jewish Life, part of W&L's strategic plan, is essential to reinvigorate Jewish community life at W&L. It will be a catalyst for increasing Jewish enrollment and activities to a level that provides an attractive and outstanding college experience for Jewish students, and enriches the entire University community. We are beginning our fundraising for this beautiful new Center. If you have questions, or want to hear more, please contact

services, lectures, and other celebrations, and offices for the current and planned Hillel staff. The large multipurpose room will include an ark and a Torah. We are especially excited about the creation of a café on the garden level, which will open to a terrace.

contact Dennis Cross, Vice President for University Advancement, 540-458-8232, or Joan Robins, Director of Hillel, 540-458-8443.

Joan Robins

Holocaust Remembrance Week: April 30 - May 5



Holocaust survivor, Irene Zisblatt discussed her experiences with students and community members after her talk at Elrod Commons on May 3. She also spoke at Lylburn Downing Middle School. Zisblatt was featured in "The Last Days," an award winning documentary which showed at the Commons Theater all week.

Holocaust Remembrance Week: Dean Watkins, Arie George and students signed a scroll for a victim of the Holocaust on May 2. A vigil against oppression was held May 1 in front of Lee Chapel.



Dinner With the Ruscios

By Joel Katz '07

Recently, Hillel was invited to Lee House to eat dinner with President and Mrs. Ruscio. The evening began with a special tour of the house, which was given by Mrs. Ruscio. During the tour, Mrs. Ruscio showed us several pieces of historic artwork and furniture, and told us about the house's unique history.

Following the tour, the meal commenced. We started things off by saying the motzi and eating Joan's world-famous, homemade challah. During dinner, President Ruscio proudly announced the exciting news that plans are underway for the new Center for Jewish Life, and then answered several questions regarding current issues on campus. The wonderful evening concluded with a delicious desert, and a promise to do another Lee House dinner again next year.

Mrs. Ruscio explains some unique artifacts in the Lee House.



Reunion 2007

By Kyle Harvey '08

*Kyle Harvey '08 honors
Bob Maslansky '52
at Hillel's Reunion
Reception.*



On Friday May 2 Hillel held an Alumni Reception in honor of Dr. Bob Maslansky '52. The reception was held in the Elrod Commons and had a great turnout of about 35 Alumni, several current Jewish students, and several Jewish members of the faculty. Tributes were given honoring Dr. Maslansky by Kyle Harvey '08 and Prof. Harlan Beckley, both of whom highlighted Dr. Maslansky's mensch-like contributions to his community as well as the W&L community. Dr. Maslansky is the director of NYU's Bellevue Addiction Rehabilitation Clinic and was a pioneer in the field of methadone treatment as a substitute for heroin addiction. He works with W&L's Shepherd Poverty Program during the summers and has a huge influence on those students who have participated in the rehab clinic at Bellevue.

Alumni also had the opportunity to discuss plans for the Center for Jewish Life. Hillel Director Joan Robins, Vice President for University Advancement Dennis Cross, Dean Hank Dobin, and Faculty Advisor Simon Levy were on hand to answer questions and offer comments. The Center for Jewish Life is going to be built on campus directly next to Robert E. Lee Episcopal church. Currently, fund-raising efforts are in the early phases.

First Fridays at Five

By Justine Dargahi '07

When I first called my mom and told her that I was going to be the new service leader for First Fridays at Five her reaction was a mixture of bewilderment, amazement, and pride. I had always been active in Temple when I was younger but mostly because that was where my friends were and they were all doing it also. Temple for me, like many kids in Boca Raton, Florida, was a major part of my social outlet. However, going away to college and becoming a very involved member of Hillel and leading services was not something I expected would happen.

When I attended a Shabbat service as a prospective I instantly felt something different than I had ever found at my Temple at home. Services at home were a chore and boring. Here there was a special feeling in the room; a connection I had never felt before to the spiritual side of Judaism. Two years later I was the person leading those services. I must admit I was hesitant at first. I could not play the guitar, my singing voice left much to be desired, and I was afraid of how my D'var Torah would be received. However, I knew all the prayers and would attend all of the services anyway so it did not take that much convincing from Joan before I agreed to be the service leader.

For many of the services during my first year I asked Ben Goldsmith, son of Professor Art Goldsmith and Jan Kaufman, to help me out by playing the guitar. I had always associated the guitar with the chanting of prayers during services and loved the tone it brought to services. I was eventually permanently joined by Sheryl Silvers whose wonderful voice spared those who attended the services from my less than stellar singing voice. Sheryl's voice brought a warm feeling to the room and we were able to add additional songs to the services because of it.

The most interesting part has been writing the monthly D'var comments. It has proved to be a task that has really forced me to think about life and how it can relate to Judaism. Each month I tried to relate the D'var to life at W&L and I was shocked that practically every Torah portion was easily related our life within the W&L community.

It has been a fun and interesting two years leading services. I have gotten to lead services in front of my Jewish friends, my non-Jewish friends, my family, members of the Lexington community, and two different presidents of the university. These are things that I would not have gotten to experience anywhere else and will be very fond memories for me as I look back on my time at W&L. I would also like to thank everyone who have attended the "First Fridays" services for it truly is a community event that could not be as wonderful as it is without those who come, help, and participate.

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Ms. Marcy C. Panzer and Mr. Manny D. Pokotilow: "Very Interesting Professors" lunch in honor of Douglas Panzer's graduation from Washington College of Law—American University
Mr. Leon J. Warms '42: 2 "Very Interesting Professors" lunches
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Leading Up North: 12/26/06 – 1/5/07 *Carly Cowley '07*

I recently returned from my second organized trip to Israel; both occurred during my years at Washington and Lee. The first was after my freshman year when I went on a birthright trip. The second was over winter break, when I participated in a ten-day humanitarian mission, Acharai La'tzafon, (Leading Up North) to help rebuild cities that had been most devastated by the war last summer. Funded by the Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, the mission involved painting bomb shelters, clearing brush in the forest, donating blood, and working with local community members.

The first few days of our trip were spent in the villages of Horfesh and Carmiel painting bomb shelters. Horfesh is a Druiz village in which 98% of the people refused to evacuate last summer. That meant most residents spent about 45 days in gloomy, dirty bomb shelters that weren't well ventilated-- very depressing places in which to live. Thanks to donations from North America after the war, air conditioners were installed in many of the shelters. Our group of 550 volunteers painted about 3.5 kilometers of wall. The air conditioning, combined with the colorful murals, will provide a much more pleasant experience, especially for children, if the bomb shelters are needed again. Many Israelis told us that they expect to be targeted again in the near future.

For two days we aided the Jewish National Fund (JNF) clearing brush from the forests. Thousands of Keytusha rockets fell during the war, and fortunately most of them landed in the forests and not on houses. However, each time a rocket landed it started a fire, and

JNF volunteers were on call 24 hours a day to put out these fires that had the potential to destroy huge amounts of forestation. The underbrush is what fuels these fires, and our job was to clear the pruned "branches" (they were more like whole trees) to prevent a fire from spreading after a rocket hit.



Painting a colorful mural in a bomb shelter in Northern Israel—Carly's group of 550 volunteers painted 3.5 kilometers of wall.

I've always known that there are Jews in America, Israel, and other countries around the world, but it was amazing for me to experience first-hand Judaism's international identity. On my bus alone there were people from seven different countries; our common thread was a Jewish identity and support for Israel. I was struck by how so many different cultures can be tied through a common bond of Judaism.

My group had many discussions about charity, giving, and physical labor. Over 3000 people applied for this mission, and everyone I met was excited to have the opportunity to help. We all felt somewhat helpless, however, because we could make

only small contributions. We wondered if sending a check would have been more useful to the people of Israel. But we came to understand that the effort and commitment of over 500 volunteers didn't go unnoticed. For me, the realization that we were appreciated came when people thanked us just for being there. Our willingness to do whatever we could to help was the legacy we left behind in Israel. We were given a rare glimpse into what it is like to live in a place that is so threatened all the time. It was a powerful experience and I am thankful to have been a part of such an amazing trip.

Shabbat Diner at the Dobin/Bernstein's *Emily Martin '10*

On March 23, Hillel was welcomed for Shabbat dinner at the home of Dean Dobin and Ms. Bernstein. The night was very relaxing and many good conversations took place over the dinner table. When asked about his experiences at Princeton, Dean Dobin talked about his love of teaching Shakespeare, and the similarities between W&L and Princeton. He also told us about the new Freshman seminars which will be taught during Spring Term, including one on Shakespeare which he will teach. Ms. Bernstein will also teach a seminar on using a printing press.



Bonnie Bernstein lights the candles before a delicious Shabbat dinner. Also pictured is Bonnie's husband, Dean Hank Dobin and Adam Schapiro '08.

Hillel members talked about their own family Passover traditions. Whitney Rothstein told us about her very large family all uniting for the Seder at her home in Florida. In addition to cooking all of the family's favorite recipes, her mother moves all of the furniture to the top floor of the house to make room for tables to seat 100 family members! And when the door is opened for Elijah, some of the uncles dress as cartoon characters, scaring and delighting the smallest children.

The food was delicious and we all welcomed the break from the dining hall that night.

As we looked forward to Passover, some

Very Interesting Professors

By Joan Robins

In January, Alan Corwin '62, while on campus for the Institute of Honor, showed slides of his art collection titled "Biblical Images" during lunch at the Morris House. Students, faculty, staff and administrators viewed beautiful prints and sculptures, including important pieces by Agam, Chagall, Ben Shahn, Shlomo Katz, and Simon Kogan. Alan has generously made plans to donate this wonderful collection to the new Center for Jewish Life. At the end of the talk, Alan presented an Agam mezuzah and his interesting dreidel collection to Hillel, for display in the new Center. Thank you, Alan, for your deep interest and support of W&L Hillel!



Mike Walsh talks to students about Famous Jewish athletes.

Mike Walsh was our February "Very Interesting Professor." Prior to his current appointment as a major gifts officer, Mike served as W&L's athletic director for 17 years. A life-long participant and observer in the American sports scene, Mike told us about some of the "characters" who have dominated the sports landscape. He said that Jewish athletes and contributors to the world of sport have always been among the most significant and accomplished in their fields. From lesser known Lipman Pike, the first paid professional baseball player in 1866 to more well-known Sandy Koufax, the greatest left-handed pitcher of all time, Jewish athletes have been influential in handball, fencing, figure skating, baseball, basketball and football.

.....
 The Novacks were our guests in March, and Irene Zisblatt, Holocaust survivor, was our guest in May. Please see those stories elsewhere in the newsletter.

David and Lesley Novack Fund

By Joan Robins

Hillel students and I gathered for dinner in March with Professors David and Lesley Novack to hear details about their newly established fund. Titled the David and Lesley Novack Fund for Jewish Social Responsibility, it was established with a gift from David's brother, Ken Novack. The fund is permanently endowed, providing funds to allow students involved in Hillel to serve needy residents and children in Lexington and Rockbridge County.

The Novacks talked about their long tradition of helping needy children in the Rockbridge County area. They have provided clothing and other supplies, usually anonymously, to children identified by their teachers. It is the Novacks' intention to add to the fund each year, and the University also welcomes additions by other donors.

David Novack joined the faculty at Washington and Lee University in 1976, as a member of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, where he has taught for more than thirty years, rising to the rank of Professor and department head. He attended the University of Massachusetts and received his Ph.D. from New

York University. Lesley joined the faculty of Mary Baldwin College in 1986, and has continued to teach at the College since that time. She also has attained the rank of Professor and was the chair of her department. Lesley is also a graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and is the recipient of two Master's Degrees, from New York University and the University of Virginia. She also received the Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Virginia.

Lesley and David have been involved with Hillel for many years and wanted to provide support for Hillel students in this community service. They would like to remain anonymous as the fund is allocated—the recipients of this fund will know that their gifts came from W&L Hillel.

We are deeply grateful to all three Novacks for this very generous, worthwhile gift. They truly embody the act of tzedakah by supporting Hillel and the community. We look forward to working with the Novacks as they help us in our allocation of the fund each year.

Passover Seder: Over 150 people attended Hillel's Community Seder at Evans, including 100 students. Jewish students brought their non-Jewish friends. Leaders were Justine Dargabi '07, Tara Rubenstein '08, Julia Spieler '09 and Whitney Rothstein '08.

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Students enjoyed real Nova lox and bagels during exam study break, sent from NY by Sam Kuckley and Roberta Alpert.



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The Star



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Sheryl Silvers '07 helped Eli Welsh light one of the 6 Yartzeit candles at the Yom HaShoah service May 4. Rabbi Terry Treseider, from Agudath Shalom Synagogue in Lynchburg, led the service.