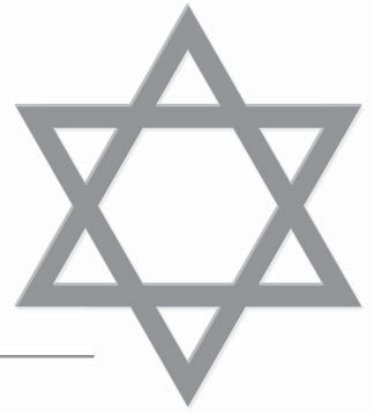




The Star



WASHINGTON AND LEE HILLEL NEWSLETTER
Elrod University Commons, Lexington, VA 24450-2116
hillel.wlu.edu robinsj@wlu.edu
(540) 458-8443 Fax: (540) 458-8155

HILLEL

JUNE 2008

Update on the New Facility for Hillel

I am thrilled to announce that we have raised \$2.3 million in gifts and pledges towards the new facility for Hillel. The Board of Trustees met in May, and were given a report of the progress. In addition to the amount raised, Dennis Cross reported that we have 71 donors, and that \$650,000 was pledged in the past month. So we are more than half-way towards our goal of \$4 million! The Trustees were pleased with the progress, and so was the Hillel Advisory Board. As you can see from the "Naming Opportunities" list, many alumni and parents have responded generously to this exciting project.



on the design. I think the building will be beautiful and functional. It includes everything we hoped for in the programming phase, including a cafe, two kitchens, and a two-level terrace, which adds 1,400 square feet of usable space.

The architects are currently working on their presentation for the Committee's review. This will include a narrative, plans, elevations, and cost estimates. Once the final plans are approved, we will move forward towards

The earliest that we could begin construction would be the summer of 2009, because of the time frame for decisions

about design details and bids. We are on schedule with design plans, and we expect to break ground on time.

the groundbreaking. Please contact me for more information, 540-458-8443, robinsj@wlu.edu.

Tom Contos, University Architect and I have met with the architects, food consultant, and landscape architect several times to work

Joan Robins



Passover Seder: Graham Sheridan '11 and Julia Spieler '09 lead the Seder, held at Evans Hall, attended by 120 people.



Israel at 60: Dinab Danforth '10 feeds the camel at the celebration. The campus community enjoyed music, played volleyball, frisbee, and sampled Israeli food, including falafel!



Hillel's Reunion Reception: Dan Einstein '83 and Bennet Ross '83 were honored for their great support of Hillel. Dan and Bennet also made a very generous gift to the new Hillel facility naming the Torah in honor of Betty Taylor and Prof. Emeritus Joe Goldsten (seated).

The Great Latke-Hamantashen Debate

By Graham Sheridan '11

Editor's Note: The Great Latke-Hamantashen Debate began as an informal gathering at the University of Chicago in 1950. It is now an institution that has been replicated on campuses nationwide. The best minds at Washington and Lee came together in March to consider the question that ranks as one of the most enduring of human history: latke or hamantashen—which is the worthier food?

The following is Graham Sheridan's introduction to the well-attended debate. Following the debate, the audience voted, (the latke won, handily), then enjoyed latkes and hamantashen at a reception for the debaters.

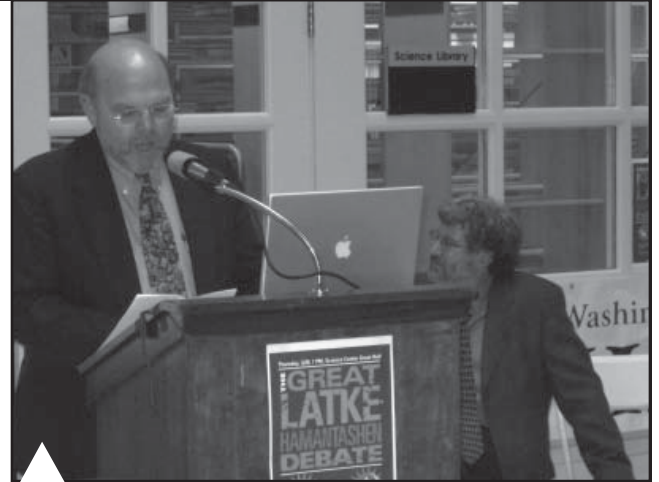
Welcome and thanks for coming. In case you just happen to be wandering through, this is the Great Latke-Hamantashen Debate, a battle between two pastries for supremacy. These professors will debate the merits of these foods from the perspective of their own illustrious fields. The latke being, for those who don't know, a potato pancake. Hamantashen is a triangular cookie with jelly in the middle.

Judaic scholars have been discussing the "latke-hamantashen question" for centuries. The great biblical scholar Baal Shem Tov wrote the latke was "obviously superior because the potato is a tuber, representing the deep roots of the Jewish people." To which his contemporary Lechm B'Yisroil responded "Dude, you so just made that up." This caused the Baal Shem Tov to miss Synagogue for a week while he sulked.

Attempts have been made to fold the latke-hamantashen debate into the larger "main-course dessert" conflict. This is obviously ridiculous, as the great hamantashen scholar Morty Abramowitz wrote in his ground-breaking 1937 essay, "On Jams and Jellies," "the latke-hamantashen debate is a feud in its own right, and anyone who tries to make it a subcategory of this other argument is whack." Well said, Morty.

Also, attempts have been made to find a middle ground. People who say "Well, it depends who made the latkes." Or, "Is it my mother's special hamantashen recipe?" These people are flip-floppers and you shouldn't be friends with them. However, as your impartial host, you will never learn my position. Sorry.

"The latke-hamantashen question" has been responsible for many of the great conflicts in history. Paul McCartney wrote in his memoirs "I could no longer work with John Lennon when I realized he was married to that latke lover Yoko Ono." The red phone was installed in the oval office so Soviet Premier Nikoli Kruzhev could insure that no US president was enjoying hamantashen during the tense periods of the cold war. And in their most recent televised debate hamantashen supporters Senators Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton both asserted that they are better able than the other to withstand the Republican Latke attack machine.



The Great Latke-Hamantashen Debate: Law Professor Mark Grunewald argues the side of the Latke (the winner).

U2 lead singer Bono started the One campaign to bring Latkes to Africa while Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie adopted several children so they can feed them Hamantashen.

The debate has led to violence in the past. Recent evidence has found that the hostility between Tupac Shakur and the Notorious B.I.G., formerly chalked up to East-Coast-West-Coast rap group tensions was really about latkes and hamantashen. A new bootleg of a Biggie recording session from June of 1996 found him referring to Tupac as a "latke-lovin' sucka Emcee." Within a year both were dead.

The debate was nearly ended a year ago when both Britney and K-Fed declared their love for hamantashen, causing the latke side to declare victory. It resumed when they both admitted to not knowing what hamantashen are. Justin Timberlake laughed while taking a delicious bite of latke.

Hank Dobin is Dean of the College and a huge lover of latkes; he just worries about getting applesauce in his beard.

Prof. Simon Levy spent many lean years in graduate school learning computer science and linguistics and not to be too picky about what he eats. Given the choice, however, he knows that "gentlemen prefer hamantashen".

Mark Gruenwald is the James P. Morefield Professor of Law. Because of this, he always eats latkes along with a jury of their peers, just so that it will be fair. Dude, thirteen latkes in one sitting is a lot. Professor Gruenwald's specialty is Labor and Employment Law. He is known widely (pun intended) for his fondness for working class foods. He appears this evening on behalf of the Latke.

David Bruck is a fellow in teaching at the law school and a practicing trial lawyer. When he prosecutes, no latkes have ever been found innocent, but the hamantashen have always been found delicious!

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Birthright Israel , Winter '07 – '08

By Audry Horn '08

Hello from Jerusalem!

I wanted to write a quick e-mail to all of you who I love dearly with some updates as to my trip thus far. Mom and dad, can you please forward this to the other relatives and David? Thanks.

I am Jerusalem at an internet cafe. I could not write sooner, despite my attempts, due to the lack of internet cafes in the desert. We arrived and got right off the plane onto a bus into the Negev Desert. We took a hike to secluded desert springs and it was the most magnificent view I have ever seen. A lot of people on my trip had been to the grand canyon, and they said that these canyons far surpassed it in their grandeur and beauty. Our days are jam-packed and I have been sleeping about 2 hours a night. The schedule is so smooth and we literally go from one activity to another. The next day we went rappelling off some cliffs in the Negev which was incredible. The actual cliff stopped pretty far up so we were dangling freely for most of just hanging out, taking in the unbelievable view. No civilization in any direction. It was a really surreal experience. We went snorkeling in the Red Sea. It is said to have the most beautiful coral reefs in the world and they were definitely the most beautiful rocks I had ever seen. We had an adorable Israeli girl lead us around the corals and she kept referring to the fish as characters in Finding Nemo. It was pretty funny. She would stop snorkeling to yell, in a thick Israeli accent, "did you see Nemo? oh and look, there is also Dori!"

After an exhaustive morning of hiking and snorkeling we got 15 shekels to find lunch. We broke off into small groups, one of whom wanted burgers. But we wanted the authentic Israeli experience, so what else is there to do but find a hut on the side of the road and eat some pita baked in the sun by an old Arab woman? So that is what we did. It was a hut covered in elaborate rugs and curtains. We sat on stuffed couches and mattresses overflowing with pillows and ate the largest and freshest pita I had ever eaten. They also brought hookahs to every table. Everyone was staring at us since we're American and they had an upside down American flag on the wall – obviously not big fans. It was one of the coolest things I have ever done and it is a moment I will never forget for its sheer amazingness. Sitting on a couch in the desert eating pita. Cool.

Today we hiked to the top of Masada. It was really hot and it was steep the entire way. We were all winded by the time we got to the top, but it was worth it. Standing atop Masada and hearing the story of the 940 Jews who chose to commit suicide instead of surrendering themselves to slavery at the hands of the Romans was a powerful experience. We also

went into the Dead Sea today which was fantastic. We floated and just hung out. It was an unforgettable feeling.

One of my favorite experiences was Shabbat. We all got together and sang and talked about Judaism and how we felt being in Israel. It was incredible to hear how, despite our obvious differences, we all had similar feelings when we stepped off the plane. The first thing our amazing tour guide Aviv said to me in the airport was "welcome home" and I got chills. Seeing and taking in the landscape of a land saturated with history, spirituality, suffering and victory is often overwhelming. Driving through Jerusalem and seeing Hassidic Jews walking on the street and men in kippas sprinkled throughout coffee shops is so comforting. It is difficult to articulate how it feels to be here with such a wonderful group of people. We all bonded within the first night and spent last night sleeping all together in a Bedouin tent in the desert making shadow puppets on the wall. Every moment has been fun and memorable. I even rode a camel!!!!

Tomorrow we go to the wailing wall and meet the 8 soldiers that are going to escort us throughout the city and Tel Aviv.

We have a guard who travels with us, his name is Shahar and he is very attractive, speaks no English, and carries a gun. He is actually waiting outside the internet cafe for us right now smoking a cigarette. I feel incredibly safe and well-cared for. We have two knowledgeable leaders in their mid-20s who are extremely laid back and take us out at night to experience the night life. The other people on the trip range from age 18-26. They are all intelligent, passionate, lovely people. I have two girls in particular who I am particularly close with and have been my roommates every night. One is from Ohio and the other is from NYC and actually worked at Ramapo Day Camp the same summer as me, our paths just never crossed. I have so many connections with everyone on the trip via Jewish Geography, a boy from Princeton knows Sarah, another knows my camp friend, the connections are endless and hysterical. Jews are a small population, but we get around.

OK, time is running short. I love you all and miss you so much. I am having an incredible experience here that, unfortunately, I lack the ability to fully convey to all of you. I feel at home here. I wish you were all here to share this with me. I cannot wait for the upcoming days and am already sad thinking about this experience ending.

Shalom!

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Very Interesting Professors

By Adam Hockensmith '08

In January, Hillel was pleased to invite Law Professor Mary Natkin and her son, Ben, to lead a discussion about interfaith marriage. Professor Natkin shared her family's stories: from her wedding, the birth of her children, synagogue membership, and holiday celebrations. Students asked many thoughtful questions, and the Natkins readily shared their perspectives. Professor Natkin told us that she and her husband, David Natkin '83L, could credit the family's success to their ability to communicate and to be flexible.

February's lunch, held at the Morris House, featured Art Goldsmith, Jackson T. Stephens Professor of Economics. Students were fascinated to hear about Professor Goldsmith's research regarding the Economics of Race and Ethnicity. Topics included: economic theories of discrimination, stereotyping, wealth disparities, and the connection between skin shade and economic outcomes. Professor Goldsmith's ability to make complex economic research understandable to non-majors, made the lunch enjoyable and educational for all.

The Honorable Sol Wachtler 51A, 52L visited Washington and Lee University on Wednesday, March 26 to discuss the documentary film, "Hitler's Courts: The Betrayal of the Rule of Law in Nazi Germany." Afterward, Wachtler joined Hillel students for dinner at the Bistro on Main, where we talked about the documentary, what life was like at W&L when he attended, and which aspects of life at W&L have changed (and remained the same!). Judge Wachtler shared many interesting stories about his time as a student, and we all had a wonderful time chatting over a good meal.

Dr. Judith Hruza, grandmother of W&L alumnus Audrey Horn '08, visited Washington and Lee on Thursday, May 1 to talk about her experiences as a Holocaust survivor. After a very moving talk given in W&L's Stackhouse Theater, Dr. Hruza and the Horns joined other W&L Hillel students for dinner at the Southern Inn. In all, it was a very enjoyable evening filled with great discussions and laughter—a happy ending to a day filled with deep reflection and a lasting message of perseverance.



Very Interesting Professors lunch featuring Law Professor Mary Natkin and her son, Ben. The discussion was about interfaith marriage.

Holocaust Remembrance

By Arie George '08

Hillel's fourth Holocaust Remembrance Week was a great success once again. As in previous years, programming was ambitious, including films, a vigil against oppression, a talk by a holocaust survivor, and a Yom HaShoah service. In addition, this year we projected names of victims of the holocaust, scrolling on a monitor all day in the Commons living room. Those that did take the time to stop and watch for a second or two were clearly moved.

Films shown were "Everything is Illuminated" and a documentary about the crisis in Darfur, "The Devil Came on Horseback." "Everything is Illuminated" has a wonderful message that even a terrible tragedy like the Holocaust can leave hope for those who come later. "The Devil Came on Horseback" tells the story of former U.S. Marine Captain Brian Steidle's firsthand account of the genocide in Darfur.

The week ended with a Yom Hashoah service. This year it was led by the Dean of the College, Hank Dobin, who began the service with some very moving and inspiring words. We were honored to have Dr. Judith Hruza, Audrey Horn's grandmother and a Holocaust survivor, participate in the service. It meant a great deal to all who attended when Dr. Hruza lit the candle for the six million Jews who died.

The week was an emotional roller coaster as it is every year, but for me it was harder this year. As a graduating senior, every "last one" that I experienced was more difficult than I would have liked it to be. But Holocaust Remembrance Week was more difficult to handle than most "last ones." I'm not quite sure what made it so hard. Maybe it is that I feel so attached to my Jewish heritage, of which the Holocaust is an integral part. Maybe it was because I realize that as the event evolved and matured over the last four years, so has my own personal growth. Whatever the reason, I know I have become a better person for working with my classmates on the Holocaust Remembrance Committee to enrich the entire W&L community.



Holocaust Remembrance Week: Audrey Horn '08 hugs her grandmother, Dr. Judith Hruza, a Holocaust survivor, after the well-attended talk.

Holocaust Remembrance Week: Dean Hank Dobin leads the Yom HaShoah service





The Star



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<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Amount Required</i>	
Naming The Center	\$2,000,000.00	
Sanctuary/Multi-Purpose Room	\$500,000.00	
Cafe Seating Area	\$500,000.00	
Conference Room/Library	\$250,000.00	subscribed
Cafe Retail Area	\$200,000.00	
Student Lounge	\$150,000.00	subscribed
Reception Area at Washington St.	\$150,000.00	subscribed
Foyer at the Patio/Terrace	\$100,000.00	
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Offices (2)	\$50,000.00	each, 1 office subscribed
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