

# THE OJC

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Serving Columbus and the Central Ohio  
Jewish Community since 1922

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DEVOTED TO AMERICAN AND JEWISH IDEALS

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## EARLY DEADLINE

The deadline for the Sept. 19 issue of the OJC is noon today, Sept. 12. The OJC office will be closed on Monday, Sept. 16, in observance of Yom Kippur, which begins at sundown with Kol Nidre on Sunday, Sept. 15.

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## COMMUNITY FEATURE

# Federation names Marsha Hurwitz president, CEO

Ending a six-month, nationwide search, the Columbus Jewish Federation has filled its top professional leadership position, naming Marsha F. Hurwitz as president and chief executive officer of central Ohio's 19th largest philanthropic organization. Hurwitz, a Federation veteran and previously the executive director of the Jewish Community Federation of Richmond, Va., has more than 20 years of Jewish communal experience.

A native Virginian, Hurwitz has spent her entire professional career in Jewish communal service in her home state. After coordinating elder services programs for Richmond Jewish Family Services, Hurwitz joined the Richmond Federation as a staff associate in 1981. There, she worked her way through the ranks, becoming associate executive director in 1989, a position she held until 1994 when she joined the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater, Va., in the same capacity. Following her tenure in Tidewater, Hurwitz returned to Richmond as executive director, the position she has held since 1996. Additionally, Hurwitz served as acting executive director of Richmond's Jewish Foundation from September 1999 through September 2001.

A consummate fundraiser, Hurwitz's achievements in Virginia are numerous. She helped grow Richmond's annual campaign by 25%. Under her stewardship, the community recently completed a \$16.7 million capital campaign, allowing renovations to the Richmond Jewish Community Center, the Richmond Federation and the Richmond Jewish Foundation, and construction of new facilities for the Richmond Jewish Day School. Hurwitz was also instrumental in obtaining capital and endowment grant funding for Richmond's Jewish nursing home facility, Jewish Family Services and Jewish Foundation. United Jewish Communities (UJC) has honored Hurwitz and the Richmond Federation for fundraising prowess, bestowing on them the Sapiro Award for Campaign Excellence.

Hurwitz has also played an active role in the UJC regional and national leadership scenes. She has held a variety of positions, including chairing UJC's Small-Intermediate Cities Executives Group and the Small-Intermediate Cities Executives Institute. Additionally, she has served as co-chair of the National Jewish Population Study's Professional Task Force and as a member of UJC's Executive Committee, Israel and Overseas Pillar, and the Taskforce on the Argentinean Crisis.

Robert H. Schottenstein, chairman of the Columbus Jewish Federation's Board of Directors and a member of the CEO Search Committee, is excited by the skills

Hurwitz brings to central Ohio.

"Marsha is an experienced, knowledgeable, dedicated and skilled Federation leader," says Schottenstein. "She is passionate about the work and goals of Federation and has distinguished herself as a proven innovator and achiever in virtually all aspects of Jewish community life. I am fully confident that Marsha's leadership will be central to our efforts to build a stronger Federation and Jewish community."

Saying she has "always been impressed by Columbus' reputation," Hurwitz is eager to take on her new job.

"Central Ohio has a vibrant Jewish community, one that understands its role in the bigger Jewish world,"

considerable skills and experience, but also on a true effort from each of us to surpass our prior achievements and to write a bold new chapter in the life of our Jewish community."

Describing herself as a "consensus builder who listens to people, gathers information and then seeks solutions that can have broad-based buy-in," Hurwitz is looking forward to the challenges she'll face leading the central Ohio Jewish community.

"I'm excited," Hurwitz says. "As the maxim says: 'Life is a journey, not a destination.' This is part of a new journey, both for me and for Columbus. We have a lot of dedicated volunteers and a wonderful staff at the Federation

leadership that we need to be great again."

Among the goals Schottenstein outlines for Hurwitz are improving agency and donor relations and raising more money through the Annual Campaign.

"There's lots of relationship building that needs to occur," Schottenstein says. "Agency partnerships must improve, leadership development must improve, and we need to maintain and build upon the relationship we have with all of our donors. And, fundamentally, we must grow the Campaign."

Schottenstein adds there are "some administrative and management issues that we will attend to once Marsha arrives." He says overhead issues need to be addressed but does not point to anything, specifically.

"I think we need a little bit of reorganization," Schottenstein explains. "I think we need to get a little leaner and meaner."

Hurwitz says she'll be guided on the Federation's strategic directions, in part, by the organization's board of directors and community partners and indicates that a prime objective is enhanced community relations.

"I want to work to bring cohesiveness to our community," Hurwitz says. "To help people understand the relevance of the Federation and the added value we can offer to our agencies, our synagogues and organizations. I want to engage people, to help them see the beauty of being involved with Jewish life, and how, together, we can make a difference."

Hurwitz succeeds Hal M. Lewis, who served as the Federation's president and CEO from July 1999 through July 2002. Last month, Lewis left the Federation to become associate dean for Public Programs and assistant professor at Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies in Chicago. Following Lewis' announcement in November that he would not seek to renew his contract, the Federation formed a 40-person planning group, consisting of Federation board and key community leaders.

A search committee to find Lewis' replacement formed in February. Leslie H. Wexner chaired the committee; members included Herb Glimcher, Holly Kastan, Jay Schottenstein, Robert Schottenstein and Miriam Yenkin. Wexner Foundation President Larry Moses led the committee's professional staff, including Ted Farber, former CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, and David Edell, a New York-based executive recruiter, who served as consultants on the project.

Throughout the extensive, six-month quest for a new leader, the Federation's Search Committee considered more than 50 potential



Marsha Hurwitz

says Hurwitz. "The community has committed leadership, extremely generous people, and outstanding Jewish institutions, agencies and synagogues. I feel privileged to be asked to serve in this capacity."

According to Schottenstein, great Jewish communities all share one feature, a strong Federation. "The Columbus Jewish Federation has been strong," says Schottenstein. "But, we need to become stronger still. We need to play a greater role in the planning, coordination and growth of the central Ohio Jewish community."

While Schottenstein says there is "clarity of vision on the key strategic directions of the Federation," he also willingly points out the tests facing Hurwitz and the entire central Ohio Jewish community.

"Clearly, we have challenges," Schottenstein explains. "As our Federation becomes stronger, so does our ability to strengthen the quality of Jewish life throughout the world. It will take Marsha's best leadership and tremendous support and partnering from the community leaders to make these goals reality. Marsha's success depends not only on her

and our family of agencies, schools and synagogues. Everyone is very committed to the work we do. I think the opportunity to work with everyone is exciting and will be a pleasure."

In hiring Hurwitz, the Columbus Jewish Federation becomes the largest community, out of more than 189 Federations and 400 independent Jewish communities throughout North America, to be led by a woman. Hurwitz says she believes gender, in this case, will be a non-issue.

"What I've tried to do, historically is to neutralize the gender issue," Hurwitz explains. "My deeds speak for my work. If I say I'm going to do something, I deliver. To the extent that people judge me by who I am, I hope it's about whether they think I am a good person."

Schottenstein concurs, saying the new president and CEO's gender should not be an issue.

"We didn't set out to hire a woman; we didn't set out to hire a man. There were no assumptions or preconceived notions," Schottenstein says. "We set out to hire the best person for the job. I'm thrilled it's Marsha. If hiring her makes us a progressive community, great. The key is, we hired someone who will give us the

# EDITOR'S MAILBOX

## Prague synagogue needs funds for flood clean-up

**To The Editor:**  
We have just returned from Prague where we saw the clean-up efforts in the city and the surrounding countryside from the terrible flood of the Vltava River. The Czech people are resilient and are doing their best to repair and rebuild but many still can't return to their homes. The Red Cross and Jewish agencies and others are providing relief support. The memorial at Terezin and the nearby city of Terezinstadt, which was the location of the World War II

Jewish ghetto, were also flooded. International funds for the restoration of the memorial will be available. In the ghetto, there is a little-known synagogue in the basement of a house which was hidden from the Nazis. A Prague synagogue, Bejt Simha, has taken upon itself the task of sending volunteer clean-up teams to clear out the mud and clean and dry out the synagogue and repair it so it can be shown to visitors. Since this synagogue is part of a private house, no agencies are providing funds for its clean-up and restoration. Bejt Simha is in desperate need of funds to carry out this task. They would be grateful for contributions sent to: Bejt Simha, Attn. Silvie Wittman-ova, Manesova 8, 120 00 Praha 2, Czech Republic, or money can be wired by bank to Bejt Simha Account No. 000086-859 560207/0100 SWIFT: KOMBCZPP.

Laura & Jacques Zakin

## New Americans thank community

**To The Editor:**  
We're glad to inform you that the Russian Acculturation Program at the JCC has been resumed.

We would like to thank the Jewish Federation and JCC for understanding and allowing us to hold fundraising events in order to provide this critical service to New Americans. The publication of the petition in the *Ohio Jewish Chronicle* has made a big difference in public opinion.

All members of the community were deeply involved in this process. Thanks to all donors for financial and moral support. You made it happen. Please stop by to see what we can do.

To all of you, Happy New Year and Peace.

On behalf of New Americans,

Tatyana Yassenov  
Arkady Gips  
Nina & Leonid Polonsky

## Shofar should awaken us

**To The Editor:**  
Albeit, that it is late in the evening, the shofar with its eerie, piercing and surreal sounds that I heard hours ago, continues to resonate.

Rosh Hahannah, itself, is known as *Yom Teruah* or "The Day of the Shofar Blast." Curiously, the commandment given by G-d is that we must hear the sounds of the shofar, rather than that we blow the shofar. Maimonides interpreted the commandment to mean, "Awake from your slumber, you who have fallen asleep in life."

Have we been dozing? Today, as I heard the blasts, I thought that for the past two years, the shofar has roused us to a world of hideous evil and senseless destruction. A world of continued sadness, fear and seemingly irreconcilable conflict.

In our march in history, we as a people, have had periods in which we've had many reasons to despair. With the conditions in Israel and the continued threat of terrorism here, it seems to be such a time. I think that the sounds of the shofar that summoned us to repentance and prayer, also sounded the call to new possibilities, to new thinking and to new hopes. The new year is a period upon which to project all our hopes and dreams.

Yes, we need the sounds of the shofar to awaken us, to pierce the darkness of the world and to help realize the blessing: "May the year and its curses end; may the year and its blessings begin."  
May it be G-d's will.

Bernard Gerson  
Cols. Awareness Comm.

## Prime Minister Sharon sends New Year greetings

**To The Editor,**  
From Jerusalem, the eternal and undivided capital of the Jewish people, I send you my warmest greetings for a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

The past year has been one of many challenges for the State of Israel.

Though we are fighting a war imposed upon us, we refuse to surrender our hope for eventual peace with our neighbors, thus insisting that terrorism and incitement be stopped before negotiations can ultimately commence. And yet, as we enter the year 5763, I am certain that your unwavering solidarity with the people of Israel will enable us to overcome all obstacles that lie ahead.

This is the time for all Jews to unite. As we defend our home, our birthright and our very existence, this is the time for you to come to Israel. We share a mutual responsibility to stand together, and Israel needs your support now. In our common struggle for democracy and freedom, the terrorists who threaten our way of life must be defeated. Still, we must never forget that Israel is the only place in the world where Jews have the right and the capability to defend themselves by themselves. This

right and capability must be preserved to guarantee the survival, security and birthright of Jews everywhere.

On this Rosh Hashanah, I pray that the coming year will bring the blessing of peace with security. I am confident that, in unity, we can realize all our hopes and dreams.

Shalom, v'Shana Tova,  
Ariel Sharon

*In its Editor's Mailbox, the OJC provides a forum for readers to share their views on subjects of interest to the*

*Jewish community. All letters to the editor should be concise, must be typewritten and must contain the writer's signature, address and telephone number for verification. They may be e-mailed to ojc@insight.rr.com or mailed to OJC, PO Box 30965, Columbus, OH 43230. Letters, which may be edited for length and content, will be published at the editor's discretion. Publication of a letter does not constitute endorsement of the writer's views by the OJC.*

## Two years of Mideast fighting claims dozens of American lives

By Jason Keyser

**JERUSALEM (AP)**—In an Israeli hospital, Chana Nachenberg, 32, an American victim of a Palestinian suicide bombing a year ago, still lies in a coma. Her mother holds tiny mint leaves under her nose in hopes the smell might wake her.

In the Palestinian city of Ramallah, another American, Farhan Saleh, mourns a daughter shot dead by Israeli soldiers on a rainy night in March, during a major military offensive. She had to be buried in makeshift graves along with 25 other Palestinians dug into a hospital parking lot because streets were too dangerous to conduct a proper burial.

Americans have been swept up by Israeli-Palestinian battles that began in September 2000, shortly after U.S.-brokered peace talks failed.

Thirty-two Americans have died so far and 50 others have been injured, including many who had dual Israeli-American citizenship. Most of the dead and wounded were victims of Palestinian attacks or were combat casualties while fighting in Israel's military. One of the dead and a few injured were Palestinian-Americans.

There was Koby Mandell, a 13-year-old boy from College Park, Md., who was bludgeoned to death by Palestinians while on a desert hike. Judith Greenbaum, a school teacher from Passaic, N.J., died in a suicide bombing last year.

Avi Boaz, a 71-year-old Brooklyn-born architect, was shot dead by Palestinian militiamen in January as he visited a longtime Palestinian friend in the West Bank town of Beit Jalla.

Sgt. Matanya Robinson, a 21-year-old soldier and the eldest son of American immigrants from New York City, was ambushed and killed in April at a Palestinian refugee camp, along with three other American citizens in Israeli uniform.

Marla Bennett, 24, from San Diego, came to Israel on a study abroad program and

was killed by a bomb at Jerusalem's Hebrew University a month ago. Shortly before she died she wrote an e-mail to a friend: "I admit it. Israel is really scary right now. ... But I still feel so strongly about being here."

The American victims are a small fraction of nearly 2,500 people killed overall — more than 1,800 on the Palestinian side and more than 600 on the Israeli side.

Still, their deaths are a reminder that the United States' connection to the region is not only strategic, but deeply personal.

About 210,000 of the nearly 10 million people in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza Strip have American citizenship, according to U.S. officials. Of those, 120,000 live in Israel, and 90,000 in the Palestinian areas.

American leaders have long sought to broker peace here.

Israel and Washington maintain close ties; the United States gives Israel \$2.8 billion in annual military and economic aid.

The Palestinian Authority has also received hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. aid, and thousands of Palestinians study at U.S. universities. In several West Bank villages, a majority of residents carry U.S. passports, the result of a Palestinian exodus after Israel captured the area in the 1967 Mideast war.

Thousands of Palestinian-Americans returned to the West Bank to open businesses during the 1990s, encouraged by the peace process and hoping to help build a Palestinian state. Now, with the economy in shambles and prospects for a state distant, many are going back to the United States.

Jamil Ekhalil, a 54-year-old father of seven who lived for years in California, says he can no longer make ends meet with his clothing store in Bethlehem.

"There is no work now. There is no money," he said. Palestinian militant groups have not appeared to purposely set out to kill Ameri-

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## CALENDAR

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Sept. 12 8 am	Fed. Exec. Comm. Mtg. - ECM/BR
Sept. 12 7:30 pm	Beth Tzavah Bd. Mtg. - Beth Tzavah
Sept. 13 noon	Legal & Tax Planning Committee
Sept. 16	Yom Kippur
Sept. 17 7 pm	Opening Reception for Sid Chafetz Exhibit
Sept. 17 7:30 pm	12 Grad College Night - CTA
Sept. 18 noon	Monthly Staff Mtg. - WPM/MA/BI-Purposo Rm.
Sept. 18 6:30 pm	The Main Event - Main St. Synagogue
Sept. 19 noon	Dept. Heads Mtg. - ECM/CRI

Dates are entered in the Community Calendar as of the Wednesday before copy deadline. Visit the Federation's Web site: [www.tof.org](http://www.tof.org)