



Community Currents



Upcoming events...

The **Young Israel of Vacation Village** and the **National Council of Young Israel** is holding "Single Mingle" – a *shabbaton* for Modern Orthodox Singles at Vacation Village in Loch Sheldrake, New York – from August 19 through August 21. The *shabbaton* is open to Orthodox singles between the ages of 25 and 38.

This *shabbaton* will feature speed dating gourmet Shabbat meals at Bonnie's Place, Motzei Shabbat wine tasting and food extravaganza at Star-Gelt Café, and a Sunday morning brunch.

The early bird special price is \$175. The Vacation Village Singles Committee Review must approve every application.

For more information, contact vvsingles@gmail.com or NCYI Director of Programming Rebbetzin Judi Steinig at jsteinig@youngisrael.org.

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YouthCon 2011, an international one-day convention, will take place on Sunday August 21 from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. YouthCon will address the challenges and opportunities of defining Jewish education in the 21st century. The event is open to Jewish educators and lay leaders of all backgrounds. Organized by NCSY, the convention already has a registration of almost 300 people from across North America, Israel, England, and Germany.

For further information, e-mail info@youthcon.org or go to www.youthcon.org.

New Exhibit On Nazi Eugenics Opens

From 1933 to 1945, Nazi Germany carried out a campaign to cleanse German society of individuals viewed as threats to the nation's health. Enlisting the help of physicians and medically trained geneticists, psychiatrists, and anthropologists, Nazis developed health policies that began with the mass sterilization of "genetically diseased" persons and ended with the near annihilation of European Jewry. These efforts to create a "master race" will be explored when "Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race" – an exhibition produced by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum – opens at the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust on September 15. The exhibit will be open through January 7, 2012 in the museum's Irving Schneider and Family Gallery.

"'Deadly Medicine' explores the Holocaust's roots in then-contemporary scientific and pseudo-scientific thought," explains U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum historian and exhibition curator Dr. Susan Bachrach. "At the same time, it touches on complex ethical issues we face today, such as how societies acquire and use scientific knowledge and how they balance the rights of the individual with the needs of the larger community."

Eugenics theory sprang from turn-of-the-19th century scientific beliefs asserting that Charles Darwin's theories of "survival of the fittest" could be applied to humans. Supporters, spanning the globe and political spectrum, believed that through careful controls of marriage and reproduction, a nation's genetic health could be improved. By the late 1920s, two dozen states in the United States practiced sterilization for eugenic purposes. More than 16,000 operations for eugenic ends were carried out in America between 1920 and 1933.

The Nazi regime was founded upon the conviction that "inferior" races and individuals had to be eliminated from German society so that the fittest

In recent news...

Students Raise \$1,000 For Sderot Soup Kitchen

One hundred students from across the U.S. initiated a charity project in Israel last month to give back to the citizens of Sderot, a small city in southern Israel plagued by thousands of rocket attacks launched by terrorist groups from neighboring Gaza.

The students, Hasbara Fellows visiting Israel as part of a two-week Israel Activism Training program, raised nearly \$1,000 with which they purchased 30 new carts from a local store in the city to donate to visitors of the Sderot soup kitchen.

The students participated in a strategic tour of the city and then volunteered at the Sderot soup kitchen where they prepared and packaged bags of fresh produce for hundreds of local families provided daily with foodstuffs from the facility.

100 Cyclists Ride For Camp Simcha

Last week 100 elite cyclists joined in the 2nd Annual Bike4Chai to raise money for Camp Simcha, a medical-supervised overnight camp for seriously ill children.

Participating in the ride were a group of professionals primarily from New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania whose goal was to increase the \$206,000 they raised last year to \$500,000 – and they were successful. Among the riders was Psachya Skaist, who rode last year and signed up again as a way to show

"Aryans" could thrive. By the end of World War II, six million Jews had been murdered and millions others were victims of persecution and murder through Nazi "racial hygiene" programs, including "foreign-blooded" Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), persons diagnosed as "hereditarily ill," and homosexuals. In German-occupied territories, Poles and others belonging to ethnic groups deemed "inferior" were also murdered.

After the war, few of the biomedical experts who implemented and legitimized Nazi racial hygiene policies were indicted or brought to a moral accounting for their actions.

The exhibition is told through startling and sometimes graphic photos, artifacts, and testimony. Artifact highlights include a replica of a glass woman from the Deutsches Hygiene-Museum in Dresden created to demonstrate the benefits of genetic health at the time. Figures such as this one were even on display in the United States in health and eugenics exhibitions. The exhibition also features a scarred wooden door from an isolation cell used at the Eichberg Psychiatric Clinic in Eltville, Germany; posters and pamphlets urging Germans to screen their lovers' families for genetic "flaws," marry the right person, and have multiple children for the nation. Medical paraphernalia on display include calipers used by German anthropologists to take measurements for racial screening, and instruments of sterilization. Photos, testimony, and personal possessions, such as a brooch, a pocket watch, and rosary beads of victims of the Hartheim euthanasia center convey the story from the victims' point of view.

An online version of the exhibition is available at www.ushmm.org/deadlymedicine. The online exhibition includes extensive historical articles, videos, artifact explorations, survivor testimony, and more.

his gratitude for the intensive support and assistance his family received from Chai Lifeline when his infant son was diagnosed with a rare liver tumor. Another rider, Rocky Rayman, agreed to ride on behalf of his wife, Miriam, a former Camp Simcha counselor who became very close to an eight-year-old camper and wanted to do this in her honor. Also among the cyclists were three riders who participated in honor of 76-year old Yakov Preuss who had been training for the Bike4Chai event before he was fatally struck by a hit-and-run driver in an automobile.

To learn more about Camp Simcha, go to www.campsimcha.org. To support the fund-raising bike ride, go to www.bike4chai.com.

Group Wants Congressional Gold Medal For Raoul Wallenberg

August 4 marked the 99th birthday of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat whose heroism saved the remnants of Hungarian Jews during the waning days of the Holocaust. Wallenberg produced protective passports and provided shelter to Jews who remained in Budapest. He is credited with saving an estimated 100,000 lives in a six-month period. In anticipation of the centennial of Wallenberg's birth next year, a Raoul Wallenberg Centennial Celebration Commission (RWCCC) has been established and announced efforts to honor Wallenberg with a Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor the U.S. Congress can bestow.

The Gold Medal effort will be introduced by senior House and Senate leadership in a bipartisan fashion. "We aim to have both Senate and House bills introduced by September 21st in a press conference and congressional luncheon on Capitol Hill that will be attended by a powerful array of congressional leaders," said spokesperson for the commission and CEO of The Friedlander Group, Ezra Friedlander.

For more information, e-mail RWCCC@TheFriedlanderGroup.com.

New Partnership Forged To Help Singles

SawYouAtSinai has partnered with Canada's Sasson V'Simcha, a non-profit that was established in 2000, in an effort to help Toronto's Orthodox Jewish singles.

The new venture, SassonV'SimchaConnections.org, will be beneficial for both the singles as well as *shadchanim*. Through the SYAS-SVS partnership, Toronto Orthodox singles can now easily be matched with other compatible singles by using SawYouAtSinai's in-depth matching algorithms and technology and extensive 30,000-person database.

According to SawYouAtSinai director Danielle Solomon, "SassonV'SimchaConnections has a strong Canadian presence and excellent reputation. Sasson V'Simcha's *shadchanim* are personally invested in the *shidduch* process. They are interested in getting to know members and are eager to accommodate each individual's specific needs."

In just a few months since its launch, SassonV'SimchaConnections has already had significant success, with six engagements to its credit. For further information, go to www.sassonvsimchaconnections.org.

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