

המודיה

# HAMODIA

THE DAILY NEWSPAPER OF TORAH JEWRY

JULY 27, 2012 | DAILY VOL. IX | NO. 291

ב'ה, יום ו', פרשת דברים | ח' אב, תשע"ב

FRIDAY EDITION 50¢ - CATSKILLS 75¢

**White House: Obama Not Seeking New Gun Laws**

Just two days ago the president embraced some degree of additional restrictions on guns.

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**Syrian Defector Wants To Unify Opposition**

A general offered himself as a figure to unite the opposition against his former friend Assad.

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**Obama Inks U.S.-Israeli Pact As Romney Goes to Israel**

A senior Israel official said that the timing was a deliberate counterweight to Romney.

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**PA Praises Refusal to Honor Munich Victims**

A co-sponsor of a House resolution supporting a minute of silence denounced the praise.

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**Opinion by Daniel Pipes**

Sixty Years of Egyptian Misery

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## American Pleads Guilty in Iran Missile Case



AP Photo/Kamran Jebreili

Fishing boats float and oil tankers in the Persian Gulf, south of the Strait of Hormuz. Later this year, the U.S. Navy plans to conduct exercises in the Gulf intended to make Iran reconsider any attempts to block oil-tanker traffic through the narrow waterway that links the region's huge oil fields with world markets.

**CHICAGO (Reuters)** – A California man pleaded guilty in Chicago yesterday to a felony charge of trying to export missile parts illegally to Iran, which the United States says is working to build nuclear weapons.

Andro Telemi, 42, faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. He pleaded guilty without entering into an agreement with the government.

Telemi, a naturalized U.S. citizen from Iran, had been indicted in 2009 along with Iranian national Davoud Baniameri, 39, also of California. Baniameri pleaded guilty last year and was sentenced to four years in prison.

The United States prohibits U.S. citizens from business dealings with the government of Iran and has recently put in place harsh new penalties for banks that deal with the nation.

According to Telemi's plea and court records, Baniameri contacted Telemi sometime

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## President Obama Signs Wallenberg Act

**WASHINGTON** – President Obama yesterday signed into law the Raoul Wallenberg Centennial Celebration Act, the culmination of the legislative process to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Raoul Wallenberg for his efforts to save over 100,000 Hungarian Jews during the waning days of World War II.

The Raoul Wallenberg Centennial Celebration Commission, which was founded in order to highlight the heroic actions of the Swedish diplomat, and its organizational partners noted this important milestone.

Mrs. Ruth Lichtenstein, director of Project Witness and publisher of *Hamodia*, a major partner of the Wallenberg Commission, said, "The signing of this legislation will help educate future generations on what it means to devote one's life to another."

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## Nero the Fiddler, Future Father of Rabi Meir: Who Was He?

BY YOCHONON DONN

The story of Nero, the Roman emperor who converted to Judaism and fathered Rabi Meir Baal Hanes, is one of those most often repeated in Tishah B'Av *shivurim*.

Secular historians also have a rich description of Nero, who allegedly "fiddled as Rome burned" and who went mad in his final days before either being killed by an adversary or taking his own life minutes before capture.

How do we reconcile the two versions?

The *Gemara (Gittin 56a)* says that after the disgraced Bar Kamtza informed him that the Jews were planning a rebellion against him, Nero went to Yerushalayim and shot an arrow in all four directions, but they all flew toward Yerushalayim.

Convinced that Hashem wanted him to destroy the Beis Hamikdash, Nero asked a child to tell him a *passuk* he had learned that day. The reply, that Hashem will incite Rome to destroy His

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## Romney Goes to Europe, Will Be in Israel Sunday

**LONDON (AP)** – Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney caused a stir in Britain yesterday by questioning whether the country is prepared to host the Olympic Games without a hitch and scheduling a fundraiser with the former head of a troubled bank.

The former Massachusetts governor visited with British political leaders as part of a larger effort to show he has what it

takes to represent the U.S. on the world stage. But instead of highlighting ties with America's staunchest ally, Romney may have embarrassed the Brits instead.

British Prime Minister David Cameron offered a blunt retort to Romney and other doubters, saying they will "see beyond doubt that Britain can deliver."

The stir came on the first full

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## Free Pollard Campaign To Greet Romney in Israel

BY HAMODIA STAFF

**YERUSHALAYIM** – Israeli leaders will be greeting Mitt Romney next week – and so will John McCain and Jonathan Pollard.

Members of the Free Pollard campaign plan to follow the presumptive Republican presidential candidate during the trip carrying large posters of Senator McCain, who has opposed clemency for Pollard until recently, as a con-

stant reminder to Romney that if he is elected, Pollard's fate will be in his hands, *The Jerusalem Post* reported yesterday.

The posters will also feature George Schultz, who was secretary of state under Republican president Ronald Reagan, and Michael Mukasey, who was Republican president George W. Bush's attorney general, both of whom have supported the campaign to free Pollard.

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## NYC Utility, Union Strike Deal to End Lockout

**NEW YORK (AP)** – Fearing that a severe storm could wreak havoc on New York City's power system, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo intervened in a labor dispute between Consolidated Edison and its workers and brokered a tentative agreement yesterday after a weeks-long stand-off.

"You don't want a storm hitting New York City without Con Ed being at full force," Cuomo said at a news conference announcing that an agreement had been reached.

Terms of the four-year agreement were not disclosed since it must be taken back to the union's executive committee and the membership, as well as Con Ed's board.

"It's a good deal I believe for both sides," Cuomo said.

The previous contract between Con Ed and Local 1-2 of the Utility Workers of America had expired June 30, with Con Ed locking out about 8,000 employees just hours later.

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Spencer Platt/Getty Images

Firefighters battle a six-alarm fire at a seven-story apartment building in the Prospect Lefferts Gardens section of Brooklyn yesterday. Fire officials have reported 14 injuries among residents and firefighters at the building, which houses 115 residential units.

## NY Apartment House Blaze Forces Out 100 Families

**NEW YORK (AP)** — A roaring fire engulfed the upper floors of an apartment building yesterday, injuring dozens of firefighters and forcing more than 100 families to leave.

Hundreds of firefighters battled the flames, which erupted yesterday morning on a top floor of the seven-story building in the Prospect Lefferts Gardens section of Brooklyn and soon broke through the roof, the fire department said. Hours later, orange flames and dark, billowing smoke were still visible at the 106-unit building.

Authorities said 26 firefighters were hurt, one seriously, and one civilian was treated at the scene.

The fire was extinguished by midafter-

noon. The cause of the fire was under investigation, but there was a report of a lightning strike just blocks away around the same time.

Resident Valma Brown heard a neighbor knocking on her second-floor door, telling her the building was burning.

"We walked through smoke. There was a lot of smoke, and everything was flying all over," she said, explaining that firefighters were breaking windows to get in. "The whole building was full of water."

The group then made its way through a back door downstairs to a patio.

The Red Cross set up a temporary shelter for displaced residents at a nearby public school.

## NYC Has Season's First Human Case of West Nile

**NEW YORK (AP)** — The Health Department has confirmed New York City's first human case of West Nile virus this season.

The patient is a Staten Island man over the age of 50. That group is more likely to become seriously ill from the virus.

The man was hospitalized with viral meningitis and has since been released.

West Nile virus can cause a flu-like illness. Patients may have a headache, fever, muscle aches and extreme fatigue.

Sometimes there are no symptoms.

The Health Department has done pesticide spraying on Staten Island.

The health commissioner, Dr. Thomas Farley, recommends individuals take precautions. For starters:

- Use bug repellent.
- Wear long sleeves and pants in the morning and evening.
- Fix torn window screens.
- Call 311 to report standing water.

## City Council OKs Park Slope Historic Expansion

**NEW YORK (AP)** — The City Council has approved the expansion of Brooklyn's Park Slope historic district.

In April, the Landmarks Preservation Commission had agreed to add 600 structures from the 19th and early 20th century to the area. The City Council's vote on Wednesday affirms the change.

The expansion means that it is now a district of 2,575 contiguous historic buildings.

That makes it bigger than the 2,315-building historic district in Manhattan's Greenwich Village.

The expanded district is made up of mostly tree-lined streets filled with brownstones. It also includes the former Ansonia Clock Works factory, once the world's largest clock manufacturer. It connects to the existing historic area — 30 blocks of townhouses near the western side of Prospect Park.

## Two New Trucks to DSNY



Yusef Rapaport

R-L: Councilman David G. Greenfield (D-Brooklyn) and Community Board 12 Chairman Yidi Perlstein joined New York City Sanitation Department Commissioner John Doherty yesterday afternoon, to present two new Haulster trucks to the Brooklyn 12 Sanitation Garage. The new equipment, which will be used for cleaning streets year-round and to clear snow in the winter, was funded by Greenfield with \$305,708 in last year's budget. Mr Greenfield hailed the efforts of the NYS D in considering the community's particular sanitation needs. Referring to Pesach, Councilman Greenfield noted in jest: "We even have a special holiday when we are [required] to manufacture garbage, so we thank the Commissioner for his special attention to our needs all year 'round."

## President Obama Signs Wallenberg Act

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"The president signing this legislation is an important symbol for the world to see how important the legacy of Wallenberg is to the United States," said Peter Rebenwurz, Chairman of the Raoul Wallenberg Centennial Celebration Commission.

Said Ezra Friedlander, CEO, The Friedlander Group, which spearheaded the lobbying efforts that helped the unanimous passage in the House and Senate, "As we celebrate the upcoming centennial of Wallenberg on August 4, we remind ourselves to follow Raoul Wallenberg's example and always be on the right side of history. We also must stay vigilant so that the memory of the Holocaust will not be diminished. Indeed this is the goal of the efforts to commemorate Wallenberg's heroism with a Congressional Gold Medal."

The United States Mint is now authorized to design and print the Congressional Gold Medal which will be presented in the Congress.



Ezra Friedlander with President Obama following the signing.

## NYC Councilman Guilty of Most Corruption Counts

**NEW YORK (AP)** — A New York City politician was convicted yesterday on nine of 12 counts in a corruption case accusing him of putting hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars meant for community projects in the pockets of friends and family.

The mixed verdict against City Councilman Larry Seabrook came less than a year after another jury deadlocked on the same fraud charges in federal court in Manhattan.

Seabrook, 61, sat motionless yesterday as he listened to the forewoman respond "not guilty" when asked for verdicts on the first

three counts, but then reeled off guilty verdicts on the remaining nine.

"I have faith in the system," Seabrook told reporters outside court. "I have faith in G-d, and now I'll prepare myself for what's next."

Said defense lawyer Edward Wilford: "We respect the jury's verdict. We don't agree with it."

In a statement, U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara said the conviction "ensures that the councilman will pay for betraying the public trust."

Seabrook will be sentenced on Jan. 8.