

executive message

As I sit down to write my first FOCUS! message as President, the excitement of Convention is still charging the air. Thanks and congratulations to the staff, Chairs, and Board of Directors for an outstanding event – all of the delegates had smiles on their faces throughout the weekend, and an incredible amount of our organization's business was accomplished in a few short days.

We have returned to our communities energized, and it is now time to begin to execute the plans we have established for the coming year. "Our Vision for the Future," Women's American ORT's strategic plan, will be the guiding doctrine by which we make our decisions.

There are six major items by which we will measure our progress and success. With

FOCUS!

leadership matters

August 2001

"Our Vision for the Future," Women's American ORT will:

Focus on being a mission-centered membership organization designed to maximize member contributions to the ORT mission, and demonstrate organizational commitment to members.

Optimize the financial power of every dollar brought into Women's American ORT through integrated systems. Shared strategies and structure will support the strategic plan.

Secure new support from a growing constituency (men and women) and dynamic new leadership.

Maintain its status and be recognized as the leader in directed giving for international ORT programs.

Ensure that it is effectively organized to exercise our oversight responsibility for U.S. Operations.

Demonstrate definitive influence in the global ORT community as an independent member of World ORT.

Within each of these points we are developing action agendas, where we can evaluate – on an ongoing basis – what has been accomplished and what deserves our attention.

When you consider sponsoring

*We have returned to
our communities
energized...*

an activity or an event, I ask that you assess its value on the basis of these goals. Does it accomplish our objectives or move us forward in any of these areas? Will the organization benefit from these activities or does it diminish our aims?

At Convention, our new web site was launched (www.waort.org). I encourage you to use it. The site has been completely redesigned, is very user friendly, and offers all sorts of online resources for our members. Please e-mail me at clinch@waort.org to let me know if there is any way we can serve you better through the web

✓ INSIDE

Convention Corner	2
Assignment Update	3
Staff Update	4
News in Brief	4
WAO Web Wanderings	5
Young Leadership	6
Visionaries	7
Good and Welfare	7

site. I will be posting regular messages on the latest ORT developments. My first message addresses the recent arson at the Jewish school in Kazan in Tatarstan where we have a technology center, and ORT's immediate response.

In another organizational development, the creation of zones for the ADCs has brought great excitement to our regional and local leaders, and the national organization closer to you.

I am excited about these new initiatives and about working together with you over the next three years. I will continually be in touch through messages in FOCUS!, *The Reporter*, and ongoing updates on our web site.

Carol Linch

convention corner

National President

Reflections on Convention 2001

More than a year of volunteer and staff collaboration went into the planning of Convention 2001, and based on the reviews received from throughout the country, it was time well spent! Which were your "favorite moments?"

Meeting ORT students Mickey Mogilevsky, Val Furman and Sofia Safirsztein, whose presence reminded us why we're doing all that we do?

The presentations by World ORT Director General Robert Singer, ORT Israel Director General Haim Ben-Ami, ORT Operations USA Director Ephraim Buhks – where we kvelled at how our efforts affect the global ORT program?

The elegant-but-fun Saturday evening ceremony featuring the launch of the French-flavored fund-raising campaign benefitting ORT Montreuil and the touching installation of the Officers and National Board?

The classy Contributors Dinner at the Yale Club, or the wonderful Major Gifts Cocktail Reception at the Posters Please Gallery?

The WAO/AO-sponsored Sunday Brunch With a View featuring two articulate, fascinating women of our time, **Rebecca Lieberman** and the Honorable **Susan Molinari**?

The ever-popular Table Topics: Peer-led sessions on successful events and techniques used by chapters and coordinating bodies that you can now try with your own, and Tools for Success Fund-raising Mini-workshops?

The "new edition" – pORTraits – a photo review of the last three years, filled with congratulatory ads from all over the country?

Many of you have told us that they were **all** your favorites. **Gail Verlin**, President of the Bay Horizons Chapter, writes: "I really enjoyed attending the Convention and now am beginning to understand why people are so strong about their commit-

ment to ORT. Hearing from so many people "live" brought ORT to life for me even more so than it has been over these 25 years. Being with other committed ORTists and hearing speakers with my own ears made it much more real to me. I made sure I attended EVERYTHING I could that would teach me about ORT, help our chapter grow, get stronger and stay alive."

And this is why we have Conventions, and why we encourage **every** area to send a delegate!

*Kay Freeman
Chair, Convention 2001*

Visiting students bring program to life

The importance of the World ORT program came alive in many ways during Convention, but none was more dramatic than the personalized presentations made during the Saturday morning plenary by three ORT students: **Mickey Mogilevsky** from ORT Israel, **Sofia Safirsztein** from ORT Argentina, and **Valerie Furman**, a graduate of Bramson ORT College, and chaired by **Marcia Friedman** and **Shelley Fagel**. Each of our visitors told of their personal experiences as ORT students,

**Deadline for next
FOCUS! is Tues.,
September 4.**

reflecting some of the distinctions of ORT in the different countries.

Mickey Mogilevsky is a 17-year-old student at the ORT Comprehensive High School in Holon, where he is enrolled in an accelerated degree program for gifted students offered in conjunction with Bar Ilan University. Upon graduation, he will have earned a college degree in addition to a high school diploma and be prepared to pursue a master's degree in physics before fulfilling military service obligations as an officer.

Sofia Safirsztejn, also 17, will complete her studies in December at ORT Esceula Numero 2 in Buenos Aires, a school noted for its academic excellence and advanced training, and plans to study architecture and psychology in pursuit of a professional career.

Valerie Furman, an immigrant from the former Soviet Union, arrived in the United States in 1992. As a means to augment his employment prospects, as well as ensure his family's financial stability, Mr. Furman enrolled at Bramson ORT College in 1998, graduating in 2000 with a degree in computer technology. Through

Bramson's job placement program, Mr. Furman was able to secure a position with Bell and Howell as an electromechanical field engineer immediately after graduating. Currently, he is employed as a web designer and quality assurances manager by the online division of Scholastic.

Each student's presentation was enhanced by a broader profile of the ORT programs in those countries and included: a video presentation on ORT Israel's AVIV Virtual School, a computer-based online instructional program; a more comprehensive description of the ORT program in Argentina delivered by **Myriam Schlossberg**, Assistant to the Director for Special Projects; and additional profiles of successful graduates from the schools comprising ORT's U.S. Operations.

Following Convention, Mickey and Sofia embarked on individual regional tours to meet more WAO members around the country and spread news of the ORT programs' growth and success. Sofia charmed ORT audiences in Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, and New Jersey, while Mickey spoke at meetings and receptions in Atlanta, Florida and Long Island.

Sofia was accompanied by Myriam Schlossberg and Mickey by **Gideon Goldstein**, Director of Telecommunications and Assistant to the Director General of ORT Israel.

*Alex Rosenberg
Director, Major Gifts, Florida*

Congratulations, graduates!

At the Saturday afternoon plenary session, members of PYLC Class #6 and Protégée Class #3 were graduated.

National Mentoring Program Class #3

Mentors – Protégées

Terry Azose – Lorraine Kaye
Cheryll Engel – Barb Goldenberg
Naomi Finger – Ann Baum
Marcia Friedman – Fern Oliphant
Susan Levine – Lynn Levy
Roz Vermut – Shari Naman
Rhonda Wolfson – Trudy Lythberg

President's Young Leadership Council #6

Laura Abramson
Bonni Baron

assignment update

As of July 31, our year-to-date assignment income is \$644,699, which is 9 percent of the 2001-02 annual assignment of \$7,269,500. Last year at this time, our total fulfillment was \$349,461, which was 5 percent of the 2000-01 annual assignment of \$7,377,500.

*Office of the
Controller*

Editor: Marlene Heller
mheller@waort.org

Assistant Editor: Amy Fiedel
afiedel@waort.org

Women's American ORT
315 Park Ave. South
New York, NY 10010-3677

800.51.WAORT 212.505.7700
fax: 212.674.3057
Web site: www.waort.org

Shari Berman
Julie Epstein Blankenship
Julie Ewing
Nancy Kaufman
Gail Lanznar
Cindy Pitts

Special thanks to the outgoing Chairs of both programs: PYLC Chair **Linda Kirschbaum**, Associate Chair **Ruth Rosenberg**, and National

Mentoring Program Chair **Rita Torf**.

news in brief

August 1 dues increase: *getting to the heart of the matter*

In 1980 the cost of a first-class postage stamp was \$.15, a loaf of bread would only set you

back \$.48, and you could buy a new car for \$5,412.

1980 was also the last time that WAO increased its dues. It is no secret that the cost of living has increased dramatically in the past 20 years. Likewise the cost of funding the ORT program has also increased.

At Women's American ORT's Convention 2001, delegates approved revisions to our

staff update

In order to take better advantage of **Julia Chernyak's** skills and experience, Julia has moved to the Young Leadership Department as its new Associate Director, working under Rachel Kossoff, Director of Young Leadership. Julia will focus on the Mid-Atlantic and Bay Area Young Leadership initiatives to ensure that event objectives are met, including fund raising and outreach. She will also assess the need for YL initiatives in other areas, particularly in the northeast.

Stephen Shafer is the new Associate Director of Marketing and Public Relations, working with Roberta Zulawski, Acting Director of Marketing, Communications and Public Relations. Stephen assists Roberta in all aspects of internal and external marketing, including the web site and promoting fund-raising initiatives.

Congratulations to **Ruth Davidson** on her promotion to Administrative Secretary II. Ruth now works full-time to provide support to Randi Farber, Chief Operating Officer, and Fran Pector, Associate Director of Finance.

Ronda Robbins has joined as the Administrative Assistant to Michelle Passon in the Michigan Region Office. Ronda previously worked at a Jewish Community Center, where she handled a variety of administrative and member service functions.

Barbara Adler is Judy Siegal's new Administrative Assistant in the Midwest Office. For the past six years, Barbara worked at National-Louis University in the Advancement/Fundraising Department, where she planned and coordinated fund-raising events and managed various projects within the department.

Jeff Cohen has joined the National Office as our new Member Services Coordinator, reporting to his predecessor in that position, Special Projects Coordinator Tanea Hammond, and working jointly with the Leadership Development Department and the Meeting & Convention Planning Department.

Controller **Suzanna Davidson** has left WAO to assume a similar role at a major nonprofit organization. We thank her for her dedicated service and wish her much success in her new endeavor.

Jennifer Kunin has stepped down from her full-time position as Associate Director of Public Relations as of Aug. 10 to devote more time to her own business. She will continue her relationship with us as a consultant on a corporate dinner.

Abigail Alexander has completed her temporary position as a clerk in the Data Entry Department. We thank her for her service and wish her well.

*Lauren Glaser,
Associate Director of Human Resources*

bylaws, including **increasing the basic dues by \$11 – to \$36 – beginning August 1.** The recommendation came from members of the Bylaws Committee who represented a cross-section of our membership.

What does an \$11 increase add up to, and why? Simply put, the expense of managing a quality fund-raising program for educational and vocational training has increased dramatically since 1980. To ensure that more of every dollar raised for ORT schools and projects around the world goes to the program, we must cover more of Women's American ORT's overhead ourselves. An \$11 dues increase amounts to just three cents per

WAO web wanderings

www.waort.org – the new, improved website of Women's American ORT! Come visit and see all the new offerings!

www.socialaction.com – an online Jewish community dedicated to pursuing justice, building community and repairing the world.

www.kosherfinder.com – offers restaurant, travel, recipe, and consumer product databases.

www.microsoft.com/insider/internet – Microsoft Insider Internet Guide. From the basics

of browsing the web to the details of banking online, this site provides you with knowledge to venture onto the Internet, explore its vast offerings, and make it work for you.

www.adl.org/learn – Site of the Anti-Defamation League. Includes news on extremist activities, archival information, trends and analysis.

www.jewz.com – an online community offering articles and discussions on topics including holiday observance, parenting, life cycle events, cuisine, and books.

E

Share your Success:

How have you used *The Visionaries* Program?

Other members across the country would like to know how you have used *The Visionaries* program. Please share the details of gatherings, events, and meetings where you've used it, and we will print the results in future issues of FOCUS! (see page 7)

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

Chapter or Region name _____

Contact person _____

Phone (day) _____ (eve) _____

E-mail _____

Type of event (i.e., chapter meeting, donor or honoree event, at-home reception, new member lunch, etc.) _____

Using the space below, please give a general description of what took place, and the results, including how many people attended, funds raised, new members, publicity secured, and any tips you'd like to offer to other chapters.

day – less than the cost of a stick of gum. How can anyone say that this is too much to spend in support of the enormous mission of this organization?

As an ORT leader, it is up to you to convey this message verbally and through local newsletters and correspondence. The strength of ORT is in the generous spirit and strong commitment our members feel for our mission. It is our role to educate our current membership – as well as potential members in our communities – about the work we do, and to make our own best gift to ensure that the work continues, and ask others to do so as well.

When we join the Automobile Club of America or another such organization, we join for the benefits they can provide to **us**. When we join Women's American ORT, we join for the benefits we can provide to **others**. Although we do not know all our students by name, there are hundreds of thousands of children and adults who are thriving because of the power of our dollars. The programs we support are so very necessary – here in the U.S., Israel, Odessa, and throughout the world.

Ask yourself, what are the lives of our ORT students worth? Certainly, more than a stick of gum a day.

ORT Shabbat 5762

In what is becoming a tradition, ORT Shabbat is once again scheduled for the third weekend of November (16-17). A *d'var Torah* on that week's portion, *Parshat Toldot*, written by

Board Member and ORT Shabbat Chair Haya Varon, will be available in the fall. Although the *d'var Torah* is specific to the portion read on that Shabbat, the section of the speech that offers general ORT information is useful for a program held at any time. Keep us informed of your area's ORT Shabbat plans. Contact Amy Fiedel at the National Office, ext. 221, or afiedel@waort.org.

Computer lab dedicated at Miami day school

A new Technology Resource Center for exclusive use by faculty members was dedicated at the Samuel Scheck Hillel Community Day School in North Miami Beach in March. Instructors can preview new software for classroom instruction, create web pages, and conduct training. Attendees at the ceremony included **Carol Lynch, Pepi Dunay, Alice Herman, Parvene Motamed**, retired Director of ORT Operations USA and former Director of ORT Iran; and **Barbara Feifer**, Chair of the Dedication Planning Committee.

California chapter stages surprise for veteran member

At the Fullerton/North Orange County Chapter's Installation and Donor/Honor Roll /Life Member Appreciation Luncheon on June 25, 170 members sur-

prised **Edith Goodman** with a special Honorary Golden Circle Pin in appreciation for all she has accomplished.

Edith has served as Chapter President **13 times**, not necessarily consecutively, over a period of 37 years. Throughout the life of the chapter, Edith has also worked diligently as Program Chairman and Fund Raiser. She is active in her community and is a past president of Temple Beth Tikvah, Fullerton.

young leadership

Houston fund raiser is jewel of an event

While covering the fashion beat for *PaperCity Magazine* in Houston, ORTist **Karen Sommer Shalett** had the opportunity to have dinner with jeweler David Yurman. After hearing about the humanitarian awards Yurman had been passing out around the country that month, Sommer Shalett told him of the ORT fund raiser she was chairing for the B'Yachad Chapter and dropped hints about how exciting it would be to have a Yurman original up for bid in the silent auction. To her surprise, not only was Yurman familiar with ORT and its mission, he said he was certain that ORT was having some kind of revival as that was the third time he'd heard people speak of the organiza-

tion that week. He donated a \$750 piece of jewelry, helping to raise \$13,000 for B'Yachad's Shake, Rattle and Bowl 2001 Bowling Ball.

visionaries

Sharing Success: chapters use *The Visionaries* program

Eastern Massachusetts:

For our *Visionaries* program, the Eastern Massachusetts Region chose to honor two community leaders as "Women of Vision": Nancy Kaufman, Executive Director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston, and Shulamit Reinharz, Professor of Sociology at Brandeis University and Founding Director of the Hadassah International Research Institute on Jewish Women. Both women truly possess the imagination and foresight needed to make a difference in the world around them.

Our "Women of Vision" event took place on May 2 at Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley, Mass., and had about 75 attendees. The evening began with a cocktail hour. Most of the food was prepared by our members, and children of members volunteered as servers. (We were pleased when many guests asked who the caterer was.) **Sandy Salaman** acted as our mistress of ceremonies, and Co-chairs **Linda Magalnick** and **Marlene**

Sheena did the welcome and introduction. We screened the short version of *The Visionaries*.

We used WAO cards as invitations, and invited our members as well as lists of people provided by our honorees, thereby attracting a number of non-members. Much of the event income came from ads in our program book recognizing the honorees.

There were pre- and post-event articles in our two local Jewish papers, and ads were placed in both papers as well. We plan to follow up with two different letters – to members and non-members. While we didn't raise a lot of money (under \$1000), we needed the exposure in the community that this event accomplished. It also was a boost for our own membership who saw it as a positive step for us in the community. We are going to make both honorees members of Women's American ORT, and will ask them to join our committee next year when we select the new honorees.

*Linda Magalnick
Marlene Sheena*

Michigan:

A *Visionaries* 2001 event jointly hosted with the Detroit Chapter of American ORT and honoring WAO Michigan Region Immediate Past President **Andi Wolfe**, and her husband, **Larry**, outgoing President of the local JCC, raised \$640,000 towards the million-dollar campaign goal. The funds have been earmarked for the Michigan ORT Resource

Center, which is in partnership with the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit.

The May event was preceded by a parlor meeting last fall at which \$350,000 was pledged. This was then followed up with two phon-a-thons, one asking for pledges, and the other, securing attendance at the event. Event Chairs were **Harriet Jacobson** and **Robbie Segel**, and Honorary Chairs were **D. Dan** and **Betty Kahn**. Honorary Committee Chairs (donations of \$1,250 and above) were the late **Ambassador David Hermelin** and **Doreen Hermelin**.

*Dana Burnstein
President, Michigan Region*

good & welfare

congratulations to...

ADC **Delcy Harber** on the marriage of her son, **Norman**, to **Beth Kirsner**.

sincere condolences to...

ADC **Abbie Laderberg** and husband, **Steven**, on the passing of her father-in-law, **Albert**.

Board Member **Patti Hershorin** on the untimely death of her 25-year-old nephew, **Tom Fleckner**. A memorial fund has been established at the Atlanta Jewish Federation. Contributions may be sent to: Helen Kelley, Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta, 1440 Spring St. NW, Atlanta, GA 30309.

The **Hinden family** on the loss of longtime American ORT member **Henry Hinden**. Mr. Hinden served on the Board of Directors, as a Past President of their Chicago Chapter and Vice Chair of Zarem/Golde.

Howard Lockshin on the passing of his mother, **Jeanette**, a former Board Member.

Board Member **Sandy Salaman** on the loss of her mother, **Lillian Manalis**.

Arthur Kay on the passing of his mother, **Mimi Kay Kazmirsky**, a member of Arlen House Chapter of the Southeast Florida Region.

ACTION ALERT

AIPAC (America-Israel Public Affairs Committee) asks that we e-mail Secretary of State Colin Powell (secretary@state.gov) urging him to hold Chairman Arafat accountable for the recent acts of terrorism. *You can make a difference!*

WOMEN'S AMERICAN ORT

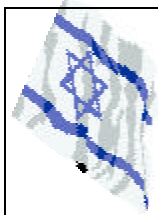
FOCUS!

leadership matters

Distributed to: Board of Directors, ADCs, Resource Teams, Presidents of Chapters and Coordinating Bodies, Chairs of Bulletin, Marketing/PR, ORT Education, Community Action, Major Gifts, PYLC 1-7, Protégée Classes 1-3, Past National Presidents, Honorary Vice Presidents, Past Executive Committee Members, Professional Staff, Region offices, American ORT, ORT Resale Shops.

STANDING TOGETHER

SOLIDARITY RALLY WITH THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL



Sunday, September 23, 2001

1:00 pm, New York City

2nd Avenue @ 47th Street

ISRAELNOW

AND FOREVER

Join Women's American ORT, a proud co-sponsor of the solidarity rally, as we gather in Manhattan to express our solidarity with the people of Israel.

Call our Rally Hotline at 800.51.WAORT, ext. 300, or use the coupon below and let us know you want to stand with Israel on Sept. 23. Give us your name and phone number and you will be contacted with information on how to join us.

Name _____

Address _____

Daytime Phone (____) _____

E-mail _____

Mail to: Solidarity Rally
Women's American ORT
315 Park Ave. S., NY NY 10010