

executive message

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on Sept. 11 have forever altered our nation's sense of security and safety. Our false impression of the United States being separate from the rest of the world, by default of our geography or our notions of American political, economic and cultural superiority, must give way to the idea that the people of all nations are interconnected and interdependent. To paraphrase this famous quotation, humanity is only as great as its most impoverished people.

As leadership of Women's American ORT, you have undoubtedly read with concern recent articles about charitable organizations across the United States who fear that contributions and funding to their causes will be greatly diminished by the outpouring of financial support to the terrorist attack relief efforts. Indeed, the agencies directly involved with the relief effort are urging people not to forget the many other causes that depend on our long-term support.

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November 2001

It is essential that we get out the message, loud and clear, to our own members and to the greater community that ORT's work is more important now than ever.

ORT's network of schools and programs in over 60 countries is a part of the solution. ORT's history is

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rich with examples of what we have done and can do to transform lives. Our schools assisted tens of thousands of displaced persons in reclaiming their lives in the wake of World War II and the Holocaust, and in the 80s and 90s helped thousands of Russian Jews fleeing political turmoil to build new lives in the United States. Today, ORT Israel's student population includes a tapestry of young people from diverse backgrounds – Jews from Asia and Africa, Arabs, Christians and Druze. All are learning skills

to prepare them for a productive and self-sufficient life.

I know that your dedication to the important work that ORT does around the world stands firm. Particularly as a Jewish organization, the job-skills education that we provide to those in need – Jews and non-Jews alike – is our way of standing up against terrorism and the chaos and fear that it represents. I urge you to lead by example and, in turn, request that you appeal to your members to increase their level of giving to Women's American ORT. Whether it is sending in a check for a greater amount than usual, becoming a Golden Circle member, or establishing a bequest or life insurance policy naming Women's American ORT as beneficiary, your contribution will make a tremendous difference in the health and well being of the global network of humanity.

Alice Herman
Executive Director

For information about becoming a Golden Circle member or establishing a bequest or life insurance policy with Women's American ORT as beneficiary, call our National Office at 800.51.WAORT.

Reflecting on Sept. 11...

From Florida: I am Co-president of the North Broward Region in Florida, but I spend the summer in New York. I just returned home about 10 days ago and wanted to share some good tidings. My younger son, Eric, an attorney in private practice, had his office on the 85th floor of the World Trade Center. He had gone into work early that awful day, and after he heard the first airplane hit the building, he grabbed his secretary, his wallet and jacket, and walked down 85 flights of stairs. They both survived, but everyone else on his floor is gone. Tara, his secretary, walked all the way to Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. Eric walked eastward, at first could not get to a phone, but finally reached me about 11 a.m. He could not reach his wife (the circuits were busy). I called the emergency operator and was finally put through to her. He worked his way back west to the Hudson River and uptown to where a cruise boat ferried him to New Jersey, where he lives with his family, in Glen Rock.

I prayed so hard, and finally, when I heard that he was alive, I was so grateful. My first decision was to send in my Golden Circle contribution. Although I have done this before, my pin will be more meaningful now than ever before. We were one of the lucky ones!

Roberta Hutner

From New Jersey: In a letter to her members, **Buffy Aronstein** of the Greater Wayne Chapter in New Jersey reflects on how the recent tragic events spurred her to assume the chapter's presidency:

In the wake of the World Trade Center attacks, I found myself

repeatedly asking, "What can I do to help?" The desire to DO something was so strong - but what? My thoughts turned toward ORT. I found myself wishing that ORT missions had more to do with the efforts on behalf of the World Trade Center victims. Until I finally realized, in fact, ORT's causes are exactly like the World Trade Center causes. HELPING PEOPLE.

Just because Ronen Landau of Givat Ze'ev was not a personal friend does not make his death any less tragic than the deaths of our friends in the World Trade Center. He was an innocent 17-year-old student killed by a terrorist attack. The difference is that I felt the devastation first hand and I feel (as well as observe) the strong desire to do something. I have to help. So whether it is through giving socks to firefighters in NYC or chairing an event for ORT, the bottom line is the same - caring, helping and giving.

I know that our members and contributors ask themselves the same question I do, "What can I do to help?" And so, I decided to take on the presidency of the Greater Wayne Chapter of ORT. There are so many excellent events in place, and I have several new ideas on which to build. I have seen the determination that people have to help others and I look forward to doing what we can to make a difference.

Chicago Baroness event attracts new inductees

With Lake Michigan as a majestic backdrop, the Highland Park, Ill., home of **Judy** and **Bruce Bernstein** was a splendid setting for "An Afternoon of Casual Splendor." The Aug. 26 luncheon, sponsored by the Chicago Area Planned Giving Committee and

chaired by **Rhoda Oif**, honored members of the Baroness de Gunzbourg Society and inducted new members.

In her "Portraits of a Baroness" presentation, Co-chair **Dorothy Rothenberg** informed guests about available opportunities for planned giving, such as bequests, life insurance and life income gifts.

Luncheon attendees described their reasons for becoming members of the Society. **Chuck Kurland** wanted to perpetuate the legacy of his parents, who had been active ORT supporters for more than 40 years. **Howard Dan** wanted to carry on his late wife's long-time interest in the organization. **Sylvia Lipski** and Board Member **Judy Levin** hoped to validate the many years of time and effort they had given to ORT by making gifts that would extend beyond their lifetimes. And ADC **Sharon Weiner**, a young mother of two, resolved to teach her children by example that even a family of modest means can share with those less fortunate.

The event was the culmination of a six-month recruitment effort to enroll new members in the Baroness Society. The Chicago Area Planned Giving Committee's goal for fiscal year 2002 is to add 20 new members. The committee, under the leadership of Chair **Roz Flegel**, invited current Baroness members to become part of the recruitment process. Baroness prospects were identified from a target group of Golden Circle, Global Donor and Life Members. Over 20 recruiters called prospects and encouraged them to become members. Baroness members **Shelley Fagel** and **Sharon Isenstein** reported, "These were the easiest calls we have ever had to make on behalf of ORT."

Ten new members were enrolled in the Baroness Society: **Marcy**

Diamond (Vernon Grove and PYLC #5), **Fran Dvorkin** (West Valley), **Helene Fuchs** (Bob-O-Link), **Ronna Heftman** (Deerwoods and National Mentoring Program Class #2), **Julie Isaacson** (Harmony Way), **Alice Kohn** (Brittany), **Carolyn Lieder** (Crescent), **Jeri Rosauer** (Vernon Grove), **Dorothy Ross** (Briargate), **Marvin Rothman**, and **Sheryl Solomon** (Highcrest and Suburban Chicago Region President). National President **Carol Linch** awarded Baroness pins to new members as well as to **Louise** and **Rolf Stein**, who received the pins for their previous enrollment. Another dozen members are in the process of completing the steps to become Baroness members. The Chicago Area Planned Giving Committee is well on the way to completing its goal.

*Judy Siegal
Midwest Director of Major
Gifts and Planned Giving*

FOCUS! online: a collaborative effort

As we mentioned in an insert to the September issue of *FOCUS!*, we are moving towards phasing out print distribution of our newsletters, replacing it with online versions.

We pointed out that it isn't necessary to have web access at home. When **Marilyn Selevan Wesler** of the Arlen House Chapter in Florida was told that Web TV does not provide her with the capability of downloading documents like *FOCUS!*, Marilyn replied that she'll simply ask a member of her chapter to print out a copy for her. This is exactly the type of group effort we want to encourage to help us save on printing and postage costs. Thanks, Marilyn!

You might want to appoint one member to be "Internet Chair." That person would have an e-mail address and Internet access, could download *FOCUS!* and *quORTerly*, and report at each meeting on what is new on our web site.

Attention: leaders in sun belt states

WAO is a national organization. Once dues are paid for the current fiscal year, members are entitled to attend events and meetings throughout the country.

When members arrive for winter months, they are entitled to all ORT has to offer. Please be sure that "snowbirds" are made to feel welcome at all local-area events.

staff update

Good luck to **Kelli Dickan**, Human Resources Assistant, who has joined the Cardiovascular Research Foundation as Human Resources Coordinator.

Vocational training center established in Moscow

A new Vocational Training Center for the Moscow Jewish Community opened in September with funding by Carole and Geoffrey Lawson. Robert Singer, World ORT Director General, said the Moscow project was "very important both for the Jewish community there and in Israel. Many from the community make aliyah, but it takes them two years to learn the language and retrain to Israeli-standard qualifications. The new center will mean that they can start retraining courses in Moscow months before they go to Israel. We also want these people to have a Jewish identity, so that is also part of the package."



What's new at WAO?
Visit www.waort.org
and find out!

Deadline for next FOCUS! is Mon., December 3.

assignment update

As of September 30, our year-to-date assignment income is \$1,338,559 which is 18 percent of the 2001-02 annual assignment of \$7,269,500. Last year at this time, our total fulfillment was \$983,696, which was 13 percent of the 2000-01 annual assignment of \$7,377,500.

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'Sunflowers' receive recognition

MK Matan Vilnai, Israel's Minister of Science, Culture and Sport, was the guest speaker at a special gala organized by ORT Israel honoring some 300 "Sunflowers." The student-volunteers, ages 15-18, visit children in oncology wards of eight different hospitals and medical centers throughout the country, providing much-welcomed companionship and teaching them to use computers donated by ORT.

Moscow students win design competition

ORT Moscow College design students placed first out of 22 colleges in The Student Works City Competition organized by the Moscow Committee of Education. The objective was to produce a multimedia presentation about the college. Their project, entitled "The Future Starts Here," was presented with a 10-minute multimedia show using 3-D animation technology with music and video.

WOMEN'S AMERICAN ORT

FOCUS! leadership matters

Distributed to: Board of Directors, ADCs, Planned Giving Resource Team, Major Gifts, Young Leadership & Financial Management Specialists, Presidents of Chapters and Coordinating Bodies, Chairs of Bulletin, Marketing/PR, ORT Education, Community Action, 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.

Two of the contest's nine judges were the owners of companies that develop multimedia programs.

Developing the left side of the brain

ORT Venezuela held its first Exhibit of Drawing and Painting, a joint effort with the Margarita Soto Home-Museum Foundation. Over 200 students between the ages of 16 and 18, who are studying maintenance mechanics, industrial electro-instrumentation, administrative assistance, secretarial training and computer operation, attended workshops given by well-known painters. The students were able to complement and integrate their industrial training with the exploration, discovery and development of their artistic abilities.

Guidance counselor Zulay Ortega pointed out the importance of giving teens a chance to participate in art activities. "It lets them explore unknown facets," Ortega said. "Often they surprise themselves with what they can do." Seventeen-year-old Kelly Chirinos agreed. "These are unforgettable experiences that only institutions such as ORT can provide and promote for their apprentices," she said.

Reestablishing Italian ties

An ORT Technology Center opened in June at the Jewish school in Milan, the only Jewish school, aside from Chabad, in this city of 10,000 Jews. World ORT collaborated with Keren Hayesod in establishing the computer laboratory that will cater to the school's 550 students.

Until five years ago, ORT was involved with the school, but relations had since been severed. ORT

decided to renew the relationship after World ORT Director General Robert Singer traveled to Milan. "When I visited the school, I found it to be an important institution which is the main tool that prevents full assimilation and intermarriage within the community," he said. "We have decided to reactivate our involvement there by opening a big computer center in the school."

Mr. Singer said that there is potential for ORT to carry out many new projects, including sending 10th-grade students to Israel for five weeks to study Jewish education, Hebrew, and Jewish history and heritage at an ORT Israel school, combined with tours of Jewish interest. Another aim is to integrate ORT's Information Technology programs, such as Navigating the Bible, EnglishSpace (ORT's online resource for ESL students and teachers – www.englishspace.ort.org), Learning about the Holocaust through Art (see link under "web wanderings") and DO IT (ORT's online, interactive course in information and communications technologies – <http://doit.ort.org>) into the school's curriculum for Jewish education.

ORT Uruguay initiates business incubator

The Technological Laboratory of Uruguay, known as LATU, and Universidad ORT Uruguay signed an agreement to jointly create a business incubator that will promote the creation of new information and telecommunications technologies firms. The project will provide basic services, such as legal and accounting counsel, tax advice, secretarial support, and access to a good technological infrastructure to IT entrepreneurs for a maximum of two years. Experienced management consul-

tants will closely monitor the nascent firms' business plans.

"Within the framework of the agreement, LATU will contribute physical infrastructure, administration and basic services, while ORT will contribute the access to technology and academic resources," said Charlotte de Grunberg, Director General of ORT Uruguay.

ORT Uruguay's decision to propose the incubator to LATU was prompted by the success experienced by several of its graduates in developing products or services in the IT field, which is among the most dynamic in Uruguay.

The project has already received the support of several firms and institutions, among them the Latin American division of Oracle Corporation and ANTEL, the Uruguayan telecommunications company.

leadership development

The following members have been selected as PYLC Class #8:

Shelli Dinerstein

Northern Virginia Area Council

Wendy Fairhurst

Howard County Chapter, Md.

Stacey Friedland

Brandywine Chapter, Del.

Ruth Furman

Desert Suburban Chapter, Nev.

Andrea Levy

North Fulton Chapter, Ga.

Jacquie Lewis

Harmony Way Chapter, Ill.

Kathryn Lipoff

Makefield Chapter, Pa.

Gayle Maller

Clearwater Chapter, Fla.

Joelle Moses

B'Yachad Chapter, Tex.

Robbie Sherman

Koach Chapter, Mich.

good & welfare

congratulations to...

Pamela Silverblatt, a Life Member of the Palm Beach Chapter, North Palm Beach County Region, and husband, **Howard Tanz**, on the birth of **Michael Harris**, the first baby born to a member of the chapter. Mazel tov to great-grandmother **Helen Bilawsky**, a past President of the region and a Major Gifts Chair for the past 12 years.

ADC **Lenore Kagen**, on the birth of her grandson, **Derek Matthew**, born to her children, **Cathy** and **Mike**.

A double mazel tov to National Zone Advisor **Marcia** and husband **Al Friedman**. Granddaughter **Rebecca Rae** was born to their children, **Jill** and **Chuck Friedman**, in Seattle. Also, their daughter, **Suzy**, who lives in Chicago, became engaged to **David Kahle** and is planning a May wedding.

Annette Israel, Development Associate in the Florida Office, on her marriage to **Phil Holland**.

Former editor of *The Reporter*, **Aviva Patz**, on the birth of her first child, **Sadie**.

Board Member **Grace Mendelson** on the bar -mitvah of her grandson, **Eric**.

speedy recovery to...

Ida Passis, who is home, recuperating from knee surgery.

Bertha McMillan, secretary in the National Office Operations Department, who is recovering from an accident.

sincere condolences to...

Honorary Vice President **Jo Jo Fruchtman** on the passing of her husband, **Morris**.

Jackie Levine of the Hollybrook Chapter, South Broward Region, on the loss of her husband, **Nate**.

Erv and **Beverly Colton** on the passing of Beverly's mother, **Ida Zilberbrand**.

The family of **Susan Wald**, a member of PYLC #1.

Suburban Chicago Region President **Ronna Heffman** on the loss of her mother, **Dinah Lazar**.

Ellen Snyder, President of the Central Florida Chapter, on the passing of her mother, **Fay Darlow**.

The family of **Daniel Lewin**, a graduate of an ORT school in Jerusalem and the co-founder of Akamai Technologies who died on Sept. 11, aboard American Airlines flight 11 which crashed into the World Trade Center.

calendar

November 14

Michigan Region – Women's American ORT Day at the JCC Book Fair. Call 248.723.8860.

November 16

San Pasqual Valley Chapter, Greater Cincinnati Chapter, Philadelphia Region – ORT Shabbat.

November 17

Michigan Region, Philadelphia Region – ORT Shabbat.

November 23
Philadelphia Region – ORT Shabbat.

November 30
South Palm Beach County Region – ORT Shabbat.

December 2
South Palm Beach County Region – Golden Circle Dinner, 6 p.m. at Benvenuto's Restaurant, Boynton Beach. Guest speaker: National President **Carol Linch**. Call 561.470.9006.

January 3
Gulf Coast Planned Giving Committee – Baroness de Gunzbourg Society High Tea at the Ritz Carlton, Sarasota. Guest speaker: **Carol Linch**. Call 561.470.9006.

WAO web wanderings

www.snopes2.com – debunks rumors about the Sept. 11 disaster, including one that says a terrorist released from Israeli jail on U.S. urging took part in the airplane hijackings and subsequent disasters in New York and Washington, D.C.

<http://art.holocaust-education.net> – Learning about the Holocaust through Art, is a result of the collaboration between World ORT, Beit Lohamei Haghetat (Ghetto Fighters' House Museum), which was established by survivors of the Warsaw ghetto and includes one of the most important collections of Holocaust-related art, and The Claims Conference. Visitors can view high-quality reproductions of drawings and paintings

and then read the life-stories of the artists who produced them.

www.russianancestors.com – A source of historical information aimed at people of Russian ancestry who are intrigued about their roots. Users can create a genealogical tree, locate a missing relative, or even find a grave of an ancestor and improve its condition.

www.redcross.org/services/ecard/holotracer/media.html – Since it opened in 1990, the American Red Cross Holocaust and War Victims Tracing and Information Center has been helping victims of the war reconnect with family and loved ones. In the last year alone, seven families were reunited after more than 60 years apart.

Dear Reader

In order to reduce our overhead, we are encouraging all leadership to access *FOCUS!* and *quORTerly briefing* via our web site. Cutting the expenses of printing and postage will enable us to contribute more funds to ORT programs. This initiative will begin to take effect with the January 2002 issue of *FOCUS!* and March 2002 issue of *quORTerly*. The eventual goal is to phase out print distribution entirely.

One of the highlights of our recently redesigned web site is the availability of *FOCUS!* online. Please visit www.waort.org/newsletters.html. (*quORTerly* has been online for several years. It can be found at the same address.)

It is not necessary to have Internet access at home. Appoint a member of your chapter or another WAO leader in your area to print out a copy for you, or a relative or friend may be able to do so. Also, many public libraries have computers with web access.

We appreciate all your efforts in helping us to achieve our goal of using the web to keep in touch with, and inform, our members while reducing our operating costs.

If you are unable to view *FOCUS!* online or to find someone else to print it out for you, you may contact us to continue receiving a print version in the mail. Please send your request to Women's American ORT, 315 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010, or fax it to 212.674.3057, attn: Soretta Rodack, before Dec. 1, 2001.