

executive message

Witnessing the crises in Israel and Argentina, we are deeply affected in so many ways. As members of Women's American ORT, we know that these two countries are home to vital ORT programs. The horrific, unrelenting violence of the 18-month intifada has taken its toll psychologically and economically on Israel's citizens, including our almost 100,000 ORT Israel students. In Argentina, economic collapse and political instability have plunged a once thriving, predominantly middle-class Jewish community of some 220,000 into poverty. Unemployment is rampant and approximately 25 percent of the Jewish community is living below the poverty level. Ironically, ORT Russia, itself a community in need, recently donated \$25,000 to ORT Argentina.

It is impossible to live in Israel and not be affected by the bloodshed. More than 20 ORT Israel students and graduates have been murdered in terrorist attacks. All

FOCUS

leadership matters

March/April 2002

members of the ORT Israel family – students and staff – must cope with severe stress. Understandably, students' emotional health, and consequently, their academic performance, suffers. ORT Israel has

These services desperately need to be expanded.

Not only must the schools address the psychological needs of their students, they have to ensure their physical security as well. Israel's Ministry of Education cut 4% from its budget in order to finance the country's pressing security requirements. As a result, ORT Israel suffered a multi-million-dollar loss, at a time when funds are needed to enhance school security. The schools are also facing the realities of operating in a country that has been hard hit by the dramatic decline in tourism. In communities near the ORT High School in Migdal HaEmek, unemployment is so pervasive that the school started a lunch service.

Widespread unemployment, unfortunately, has become characteristic of life in Argentina, where ORT's highly regarded schools enroll some 7,000 students – in two technical high schools, two post-secondary institutes of technology, and a teacher training college, all in Buenos Aires. Nearly a third of students enrolled in a Jewish school in Buenos Aires attend an ORT school.

The schools have long provided tuition assistance – both partial and full scholarships – to many students in need. With the failing economy, the number of families unable to afford the tuition has increased. At the same time, the government has slashed school

**ORT Israel has
responded by estab-
lishing emergency
counseling and grief
therapy programs
around the country**

responded by establishing emergency counseling and grief therapy programs in many schools around the country. When the ORT Yad Lvovitch High School in Netanya lost two of its students to a suicide bombing, such a program was implemented. In Karmiel, The Advice Center for the School Community at ORT Horowitz Comprehensive High School provides students, their parents, and the school's staff with counseling and academic support services.

✓ INSIDE

News in Brief.....	2
Assignment Update.....	3
Leadership Development.....	5
Good & Welfare.....	6
HR Update.....	6
Calendar.....	6

budgets. For the first time, ORT Argentina has had to turn away students. In an effort to cover the costs of supporting disadvantaged students, ORT Argentina has reduced teaching hours, cut teacher development courses, and suspended educational projects. If ORT Argentina is unable to provide subsidies, these students may lose their ties to the Jewish community. The schools are also incurring the expense of providing 200 students with two meals a day, at a cost of \$22,000 per month. For some students, the only hot meal they receive is at school. Additionally, school security costs \$600,000. (Security had been increased following terrorist attacks – the bombings of the Israeli Embassy, in 1992, and the Jewish Community Center, in 1994.) ORT Argentina needs \$5.9 million to carry it through the current school year, which began in mid-March.

In the next several weeks, members will receive a letter asking them to renew their membership and making a special appeal highlighting ORT Israel and ORT Argentina. Please encourage members to respond generously so that we can meet the urgent needs of our ORT family.

*Alice Herman
Executive Vice President/
Executive Director*

Hold the Date!

**WAO Annual Meeting
Sunday, July 28, 2002
Westin O'Hare, Chicago**

More information to follow.

news in brief

ORT graduation time draws near

As spring rolls around, and we all look for meaningful and fun things to do, why not consider a trip to one of our schools at graduation time? There is nothing more compelling or meaningful for an ORTist than a visit to an ORT school, and graduation has been a very emotional experience for all who have attended. Trips can be as simple as a couple of friends or spouses, or you may want to plan a group trip to the area, with the commencement ceremony as the highlight. Be creative! Please call in advance to inform the schools that you plan to attend, so they will arrange for sufficient seating.

Graduation ceremony dates are as follows:

Bramson ORT College

June 26, 6 p.m.
Lincoln Park Jewish Center
718.261.5800

LAOTI

June 18, 7:30 p.m.
Temple Beth El
Contact Sally Stevenson at
323.966.5444

Zarem/Golde

June 9, 3 p.m.
Exercises held at the school
Contact Richard Reeder at
773.761.5900

*Janet Berman
ORT Operations USA
Committee*

New case statement promotion

For your fund-raising and promotional endeavors, we are offering

the case statement "faces" brochure free of charge to your area. We encourage you to use this attractive piece, which has a pocket in the back for inserting local information and includes a giving card. To order copies of the brochure, please contact Michele Davis in the National Office Supply Department at ext. 228. If your order is under 100, there is no shipping charge. For orders of 100 and above, the shipping charges are as follows:

100-199: \$7.00
200-299: \$14.00

The fee increases by \$7.00 for every 100 ordered.

Diamond Jubilee winners announced

At a celebration sponsored by Winn-Dixie supermarkets, long-time ORT members **Marilyn Selevan-Wesler** and her husband, **Nat**, were named the winners of the North Palm Beach County Region's Diamond Jubilee Raffle. Only 200 tickets were issued, at \$100 each. The winning ticket was worth \$10,000 and the other \$10,000 has been designated for ORT Operations USA schools.

*Joan Mazurek
President
North Palm Beach County
Region*

Party planning showcase in the headlines

The Long Island Region's Party Planning Showcase was prominently featured on the front page of not just any hometown newspaper, but the Feb. 24 edition of the

Add 'SPARC' to your local activities!

Did you know that all new members joining between March and June 2002 remain members through June 2003? Women's American ORT's traditional spring membership campaign has been a way for areas to reach out to new supporters. It can still work today. **SPARC** members can be found everywhere – at chapter events, in the business community, at your synagogue. Whether their first contribution is basic dues, Silver Donor, Golden Circle or more, new members add vitality to WAO and provide a strong base for future support.

Long Island Section of *The New York Times*. The showcase, held three times a year, attracts 700 to 800 families from Long Island and New York City.

Incorporating new ORT logo

In addition to the Women's American ORT logo, we are now using the World ORT globe logo with "Educating for Life" tag line (see bottom of p. 6) in National print publications. The logo should also be included in new local printed materials (e.g., newsletters, chapter bulletins, flyers, letterhead), in conjunction with the WAO logo.

The logo has been e-mailed as a jpg file to Advisors and ADCs. To obtain the logo, please contact your ADC. You may also contact Soretha Rodack in the National Office at srodack@waort.org.

Advocacy in the face of crisis

This year's Plenum of the JCPA (Jewish Council for Public Affairs) recently convened in Washington, D.C., against the terrifying and unsettling background of current headlines – from Middle East peace prospects and Israeli security to the protection of American civil liberties; from the crisis in Argentina to sound federal welfare

policy; and from the rise of anti-Semitism in Western Europe (particularly France) to the war on terrorism.

The JCPA, the public affairs arm of the organized Jewish community, is a voluntary association of 122 local community relations councils and 13 national agencies (Women's American ORT among them) throughout the United States. It is the instrument through which its members determine positions on issues of concern and coordinate ways to most effectively advocate those positions to both the Jewish and non-Jewish populace.

Over 800 people – including Hillel students from across the country – gathered to discuss the topics mentioned above, and an entire range

Deadline for next **FOCUS!** is Mon., April 29.

assignment update

As of March 31, our year-to-date assignment income is \$4,607,990, which is 64 percent of the 2001-02 annual assignment of \$7,191,500. Last year at this time, our total fulfillment was \$4,755,649, which was 64 percent of the 2000-01 annual assignment of \$7,390,500.

Office of the Controller

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

of issues that affect American Jews, such as the environment and public health, poverty and social justice, international human rights, immigration, and faith-based initiatives.

The opening session mirrored the frustration delegates felt as they struggled to understand the current crisis in the Middle East. Rabbi **Michael Melchior**, Israel's Deputy Defense Minister, and Ambassador **Dennis Ross**, former peace negotiator and currently Distinguished Fellow and Counselor, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, never minced words as they both emphasized the need to change the climate of hate and its effect on the Palestinian people.

Both men decried the "filth" and "poison" in the media and schools that permeate Palestinian homes every day and stressed the need to promote tolerance so a climate of peace can be established.

Rabbi Melchior explained that the current atmosphere, coupled with a possibility of weapons of mass destruction, posed a real threat to Israel's existence. He condemned the attempt to both delegitimize

and demonize Israel, Zionists and Jews throughout the world as a threat to humankind, decency and democracy.

Ambassador Ross lamented the fact that Arafat didn't say "yes" when offered the opportunity and characterized the failure of Camp David, 2000 as "not a tragedy, but a crime." He pointed to the Clinton Administration's mistake in not preparing the groundwork with the Palestinian people, and therefore, allowing Arafat to use the absence of public support as a reason to reject Camp David.

Acknowledging sorrow for the Palestinian victims, who should not be "paying the price" for the policies of their government, Ambassador Ross summed up the dilemma as the need to reconcile Israeli security with not punishing the Palestinian people as a whole, and stressed that the answer is not a military solution, but a political one requiring a partner.

A lively panel discussion was held on Civil Liberties and the War on Terrorism and the American Jewish community's responsibility to guarantee those rights in the face of terrorism threats at home. A representative of the ACLU, which opposes the current Justice Department policies, faced off with a spokesman from the American Jewish Committee and a former Justice Department official. One of the most hotly debated JCPA resolutions dealt with this issue. Expressing their desire to have measures that increase national security without violating personal rights, delegates passed the resolution.

Three resolutions of particular concern to ORTists were on Support for Israel, International Anti-Semitism, and Solidarity with the Jewish Community in Argentina. **Philip Autie**, First

Counselor, Embassy of France, and His Excellency **Diego Ramiero Guelar**, Argentine Ambassador to the United States, both led briefing sessions. Mr. Autie tried to minimize the recurrence of anti-Semitic acts in France. Ambassador Guelar, who is Jewish, talked about the effects of his country's economic crisis, the possible emigration of Jews, and the progress of the trial of those responsible for the bombings of the AMIA Jewish Center and Israeli Embassy.

Other issues of interest to WAO – education/literacy; the rights of women, children and the family – were also on the agenda. **Marian Wright Edelman**, legendary activist and founder of the Children's Defense Fund, urged delegates to support domestic programs to end poverty. Invoking President Bush's use of the phrase, "Leave No Child Behind," she called upon the Administration and Congress to enact the law that would add two million uninsured children to the nation's health care rolls.

A highlight of the meeting was the acceptance of a JCPA Award by U.S. Supreme Court Associate **Ruth Bader Ginsberg**, for her service to the country and for her commitment to social justice.

My participation in the Plenum once again reinforced for me the importance of WAO's advocacy efforts in this country and the importance of ORT's programs to the worldwide Jewish community. As speaker after speaker addressed domestic issues or the problems in Israel, Argentina, France and the Newly Independent States, I couldn't help but feel intense pride, knowing that our organization's mission is more relevant today than ever.

Lynn Leeb

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; Bulletin Chairs; PYLC 1-8; Protégée Classes 1-4; Past National Presidents; Honorary Vice Presidents; Professional Staff; Region offices.

Dear Ms. Organization:

Introducing a new column for the inquisitive volunteer. Please e-mail programming/fund-raising questions to srodack@waort.org

Inquiring Member:

Our area is looking for a good venue for a fund-raising event. We want to raise substantial funds and minimize the cost of the event. Any suggestions?

Ms. Organization:

Consider holding a High Tea. Many upscale hotels have high tea packages that are lower priced than traditional luncheons or dinners and can be very elegant.

IM:

Our area has been very successful at Golden Circle recruitment this year. A sizable "group" decided together to upgrade their gift from last year, and we had a "pinning ceremony" at our fall event. The goal of the March event is to bring in new prospects and gifts from those who did not participate in the fall, although all Golden Circle and above contributors are invited. The "group" already made it clear that they have made their full contribution for this fiscal year and are planning to attend the spring event, which they are entitled to do. The fund-raising committee for the event believes that the "group" should be invited to become Life Members since they will not upgrade their gifts this year and Life Membership would be a good option. The event is doing well without the "group," but the committee believes life membership would work for them as one option. What to do?

MO:

At least one area has made Life Membership an option on their spring fund raiser response card, followed by a telephone push. A number of contributors who would not have made an additional gift this fiscal year decided to become Life Members, and it was an easier "ask." Some contributors who said that they had already given their annual gift, surprised the committee by making an additional contribution when asked. Response cards should always offer appropriate options/opportunities to support ORT (even if the person cannot attend the event).

IM:

We have a young chapter whose members have busy schedules. Any suggestions for a program that is easy, fun and profitable?

MO:

One Young Leadership chapter in the northeast has an annual program that is easy to plan and brings in several thousand dollars. It's a mid-week evening out for chapter members, held in the private room of a "hot" restaurant. Often, the establishment is new and encourages the business. Each person is asked to bring one item/service that will be auctioned off. The item can be solicited or donated by the participant. The idea is to get high quality auction items. A dynamic auctioneer is asked to run the bidding/purchasing process. At the northeast event, the following items were donated by attendees: hard-to-get theater and sporting event tickets, a spa day, a dessert a week from a local bakery, sports memorabilia, a gourmet dinner for eight served in someone's home, a two-hour interior design consultation, a weekend package at a resort, artwork, a private lesson with a known chef, and more. Almost everybody has at least one good contact, and that is the trick to making this event successful.

Retreat for PYLC Classes #7 and #8

On Feb. 2-3, PYLC Classes #7 and #8 participated in a retreat in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., that coincided with the National Board of Directors Meeting and the National Mentoring Program, giving class members the opportunity to mingle with many WAO leaders.

The weekend was kicked off with National President **Carol Linch** sharing her vision for the WAO's future and discussing the important role of Young Leaders. Weekend highlights included a Tea and Torah session with Vice President **Randi Brenowitz**, a visioning exercise conducted by Secretary **Sharon Ufberg**, and a slide-show of her visit to ORT programs in South America presented by Board Member and PYLC alumna **Ruth Rosenberg**.

Class members also participated in an intense leadership training workshop facilitated by **Debbie Berman**. Participants were given tools and guidance on how to attract new leadership, identify and develop "hidden" leadership in others, and motivate people to remain involved.

The weekend was a huge success and participants left for home energized and inspired.

*Rachel Kossoff
National Director
Young Leadership*

First face-to-face for NMP Class #4

Members of the National Mentoring Program Class #4 gathered for their first face-to-face meeting, held in conjunction with the National Board of Directors Meeting and PYLC retreat, in Ft.

Lauderdale, Fla., on Feb. 2-3. Protégées spent quality time with their Mentors, engaged in leadership and team-building experiences, participated in interactive fund-raising programming, and established relationships with their peers. They dined with National President **Carol Linch** and First Vice President **Judy Menikoff** and schmoozed with the Board of Directors at the Board Luncheon. Protégées also saw how the Board functions by accompanying their Mentors to a portion of the Board Committee meetings.

Leaders must understand why they are needed! Executive Vice President/Executive Director **Alice Herman** emphasized this point when discussed the relevance of mentoring in today's world. Vice President **Randi Brenowitz** spoke about the importance of leadership from a Jewish perspective, incorporating a spiritual component. Board Member and Mentor **Ruth Rosenberg** inspired the group with descriptions of her participation on the last Mission to South America and showed slides of the students and programs in Argentina and Uruguay. The events in Argentina and ORT's growing need to provide scholarship funds and hot meals to a dramatically increasing Jewish population living in poverty were discussed.

Debbie Berman facilitated two sessions on the Mentoring Process and Developing Leadership in the field. **Ina Green**, Associate Director of Fund Development, presented a fund-raising session. **Shoshana Ben-Yoar**, Director of Field Development, facilitated the meeting. The Mentoring Program is chaired by Board Members **Cheryll Engel** and **Lynn Warner**, with the professional support of **Tanea Hammond**, Special Projects Coordinator.

Tanea Hammond
Special Projects Coordinator

good & welfare

mazel tov to...

Ann Cohen, Vice President of the Philadelphia Region, and **Susan Kochman**, Main Line Chapter President, on being honored by State of Israel Bonds.

speedy recovery to...

Board Member **Roz Vermut** who had an accident at home, cutting her leg very badly.

sincere condolences to...

Sidney Lieberman on the loss of his wife, **Sylvia**, of the Greater Lake Worth of Covered Bridge Chapter. Sylvia and Sidney are long-time supporters and major contributors to WAO, including founders at ORT Braude College where Sylvia was on the Board of Governors.

Lynn and Stan Leeb on the passing of Stan's mother, **Ruth Leeb**.

Cheri Kalvort, President of the Valencia Isle Chapter, on the passing of her mother, **Paulette Turner**.

Shoshana Ben-Yoar, Director of Field Development, on the loss of her grandfather, **Aldabert "Pappy" Freedman**.

Beth Barnett, President of Eastern Massachusetts Region, on the passing of her mother, **Selma Black**.

The family of **Jane Maller**, a long-time member of the Brooklyn Region.

staff update

Susan Davis Friedman, Suburban Chicago Region Director, is leaving WAO to become an independent fund-rais-

ing consultant to the nonprofit sector. Her last day is April 26. We wish her a happy, successful and prosperous journey!

calendar

May 11

Northern Virginia Area Council Spring Musicale – a cabaret of songs by several popular Jewish composers, including Stephen Sondheim, performed by a trio of musical theater veterans. Call 703.471.6160.

May 14

Long Island Region – *The Thinking Woman's Lunch & Lecture Series* with **C. Hugh Hildesley**, Executive Vice President of Sotherby's North and South America. Roslyn Claremont Hotel, 11 a.m. Call 516.876.8150.

May 20

New Jersey Region – *Dinner & Dialogue* with radio personality and author **Arthur Schwartz**, host of WOR's "Food Talk." A full-course dinner will be followed by a book signing. Greystone Manor at Van's Freehold Inn, 4 to 8 p.m., \$50. per person. Call 908.686.2889.

May 22

Michigan Region – *Visions of Hope*. Cocktail & Dessert Reception benefitting the ORT Israel Hope Campaign and featuring an ORT Israel student, 6 p.m. Minimum donation: \$180.; \$100. for attendees 35 and under. Call 248.723.8860.



Educating for Life