

French impressions

It has often been repeated that there is nothing more inspiring and rewarding for contributors than to witness the results of their donations. This sentiment is reflected in the impressions of several of the more than 30 participants who, for a week, experienced "April in Paris" and became acquainted with the students, teachers and administrators of ORT France.

A dozen years had passed since the last Women's American ORT delegation visited France. ORT Montreuil, located in a low-income suburb of Paris, had deteriorated and was badly in need of repair. The successful ORT Montreuil Campaign has enabled the necessary renovations, currently under way, to occur. The high point of the mission, which also included visits to ORT Strasbourg and ORT Villiers-Le-Bel, was the dedication ceremony at ORT Montreuil.

Participants received a briefing by the Israeli Ambassador to France, **Elie Barnavi**, on both the situation in Israel and the concerns of French Jewry, followed by a tour

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leadership matters

May/June 2002

of Paris's Jewish Quarter. Of course, the most memorable aspect of any mission, whether in Israel, Argentina or the Newly Independent States, is always meeting the students.



"Our Women's American ORT Mission to France was a resounding success. We saw firsthand that ORT's program in France is one to be proud of. We observed ORT France's desire to renovate a school (housed in an old spaghetti factory) while not disturbing the continuity of the program. The difference between the already renovated parts of the school and the sections of the school not yet renovated are like night and day.

"Our school in Strasbourg (housed in an old Gestapo headquarters) is a shining star. The students and staff treated us like royalty. Amazingly, each teacher and staff person is an ORT graduate. Villiers-Le-Bel was a treat. We had an opportunity to interact with many students and were even interviewed by a journalism class for their school magazine. I'm ready to go back. Any takers?"

*Shelley Fagel
Board Member and Co-chair,
"April in Paris" Mission
Highland Park, Ill.*

"ORT Montreuil is really a marvel. An old factory turned into a school, it's now being completely updated and renovated – it even houses a robotics lab. The students

are so enthusiastic about what they're learning, too; it's a pleasure to visit the school and actually see what you are supporting. I feel proud to be a part of it."

*Grace Mendelson
Board Member
Hackensack, N.J.*

"Before the recent renovations, the building housing ORT Montreuil reflected its surroundings (i.e., somewhat rundown). Walking through this amazing work-in-progress (through areas renovated, partially renovated and yet-to-be renovated), one realizes that what goes on in this school is nothing short of phenomenal and, thankfully, totally out of step with the neighborhood. The WAO pièces-de-résistance of course are the Shultz multimedia lab, **Grace Mendelson's** robotics lab and **Shelley Fagel's** classroom – each magnificent in its own right, but no more magnificent than our beautiful students!"

*Sara Trub, Board Member
Virginia Beach, Va.*

"Going on an ORT mission gives you such a warm and proud feeling. Beginning with the opening dinner, we were welcomed and made to feel a part of the ORT family. At every school we visited, we felt so appreciated and were excited to meet the students. We visited three schools, each unique, which shows the flexibility of the ORT programs and the ability to meet the needs of their communities and students.

✓ INSIDE

News in Brief.....	3
Assignment Update.....	3
Mission Montage.....	5
Focus on Fund Raising.....	6
Good & Welfare.....	6
Staff Update.....	6



“ORT Strasbourg, a combination junior high, high school and junior college, is a wonderful school. It has dorms that house ORT students and university students, a kosher cafeteria and a video conferencing facility used by companies. The students are of Sephardic and Ashkenazic descent. In all ORT France schools, two hours of Hebrew and two hours of Jewish history per week are mandatory. The network of schools is so well managed. It makes what we do so meaningful. If you really want to see what ORT is all about, please try to go on the next mission.”

*Marcy Wiseberg
Board Member
Great Falls, Va.*

“I wanted to go to France because of the rise in anti-Semitism. Several people we met expressed the fear felt by the Jewish community. People living in the smaller communities, like Strasbourg, were more alarmed than those living in Paris.

“In Montreuil, the school is being transformed. It is located in a depressed community that is undergoing regentrification. The town and the mayor are behind the project. They are trying to redevelop the area. Montreuil had undergone some minor renovations a number of years ago, but nothing on this scale. It was heartening to see the quality of education being provided. And ORT Strasbourg was also wonderful to see.”

*Reese Feldman, Chairman,
World ORT Executive Committee
Englewood, N.J.*

“My quote is actually one that I’ve stolen. **Marcel Benichou**, Chair of ORT France, joined us for the dedication of the new computer lab at the ORT Montreuil school. Marcel, who has been an ORT leader for many years, frequently tells me of his deep appreciation for the steadfast commitment of Women’s American ORT to the ORT France

program. In his sparkling French wit, Marcel notes, ‘Lafayette crossed the Atlantic once to help the Americans. The Americans crossed the Atlantic twice to help the French. Women’s American ORT keeps coming to help us again and again.’ What more is there to say?”

*Alice Herman, Executive Vice
President/Executive Director
New York, N.Y.*

“To me, the exciting part of the ORT Mission to France was meeting and mingling with the students and teachers and seeing the new, innovative programs being initiated in the ORT schools. It was heartening to see the renovations being done at ORT Montreuil and that the monies raised by Women’s American ORT are being put to very good use.

“The Mission was well planned and the week was very organized. I was happy to be a small part of it.”

*Marilyn Rosekind
Mission Participant
Foster City, Calif.*

“The week before we arrived, a synagogue was set on fire in Strasbourg. Our ORT students can no longer take public transportation to school. The community reports 10 to 20 incidents of anti-Semitism each week. I cannot help but recall the plight of European Jews in the 1930s.

“I think about the struggle of these Jewish families, as well as those in Argentina and, of course, Israel. I realize that my ancestors gave me a gift, and it is called America. We are surely the luckiest Jews alive in the world today. Perhaps we are the luckiest Jews to live in any time, ever. Given this extraordinary fate, what is our responsibility to Jews around the world?”

*Sheryl Solomon, President
Suburban Chicago Region
Wilmette, Ill.*

“We were enthusiastically welcomed to all of the ORT schools in France by both the students and the faculty. We had the opportunity to visit many classrooms and were so impressed with the high caliber of the equipment that the students had available to use and the high educational standards of all the schools.

“Each school was different and had its own charm – from the very technical to the very musical. The students and their instructors showered us with warmth. They were anxious to practice their English on us and we were sorry that we couldn’t respond in French. It was very exciting for us to be a part of ‘April in Paris’!”

*Bobi (ADC) and Ray Levine
San Jose, Calif.*

“ ‘April in Paris’ – more than a song or a trite phrase. I first visited the Paris of ORT France in 1990, and returning now, seeing what I remembered through the eyes of my colleagues, many of whom had not been there before, was like seeing the program for the first time.

Women’s American ORT played a major role in the development of ORT France and we are privileged to be able to participate in its renewal. Each of our students is living a journey, discovering a path, shaping his or her destiny. Each of us, whether participants on the mission or members at home, is a partner in that journey. Together we – you and I, the students, the staff, the members of ORT from France and around the globe – are creating a legacy for the future.”

*Judy Menikoff
First Vice President
Houston, Tex.*

**See “Mission Montage”
on p. 5.**

Annual Meeting update

The 2002 Annual Meeting will be held on July 28 at Chicago's Westin O'Hare. At a morning Town Meeting, the financial report will be presented. This will be followed by the Annual Meeting Luncheon featuring The Honorable **Moshe Ram**, Consul General of Israel to the Midwest, as the keynote speaker. The *Tikkun Olam* Award will be presented to **Claire** and **Bob Mazer**. For more information, including hotel packages, please call the National Office, ext. 340.

Direct mail schedule update

The April advanced renewal mailing for 2002-03 went out to all members who have contributed under \$1,000. In early June, a renewal mailing (for those who have not renewed for 2002-03), a special appeal (for those who have renewed) and a major donor appeal will all highlight the ORT Israel Hope Campaign. These mailings will include an Annual Meeting notice as required by Women's

American ORT's Bylaws. The next mailings are scheduled to be sent out in August and will include a renewal, special appeal and major donor appeal. Direct mail is a growing source of revenue for Women's American ORT and should be considered a part of your area's fundraising and outreach strategies. Together, we can make a difference for our students.

WAO pub. garners industry honors

The eye-catching Women's American ORT 2000 Annual Report has been selected as one of the top 100 Annual Reports of the year in The Black Book AR100 Award Show. This competition is the largest and one of the most prestigious design competitions for the annual report industry.

ORT Shabbat 5753

As you plan your 2002-03 calendar of events, be sure to include the dates for ORT Shabbat, Nov. 22-23. A flyer announcing the new dates will be mailed to Presidents. And once again, a *d'var Torah* on the week's Torah portion, *Vayishlach*, 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 on general ORT information is useful for a program held at any time. If you'd like to initiate ORT Shabbat in your community, please contact Amy Fiedel at ext. 221 or afiedel@waort.org.

Moscow on the Olentangy

Members of the Columbus Region's Eastside Chapter gathered for a reunion on April 24 at the home of National Zone Advisor **Marcia Friedman** and her husband, Al. They were joined by Columbus Region Board Members and received an ORT update from National Lead Co-advisor **Rhonda Wolfson**. The highlight of the evening was the participation of two ORT Moscow students and their teacher, **Lev Flitman** and **Tanya Kravtsova**, along with five other students; their literature teacher, **Tanya Kuklina**; and their principal participated in a two-week exchange program at Reynoldsburg High School.

The students attend the Moscow ORT Technology School which opened in 1995 and now enrolls 400

**Deadline for next FOCUS!
is Monday, Aug. 5.**

assignment update

As of May 31, our year-to-date assignment income is \$5,533,800, which is 77 percent of the 2001-02 annual assignment of \$7,191,500. Last year at this time, our total fulfillment was \$5,575,337, which was 75 percent of the 2000-01 annual assignment of \$7,390,500.
Phyllis Reiss, Controller

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students. Lev and Tanya are very proud of their school and feel they are attending the best school in Moscow, citing the importance placed on giving students individual attention. Most graduates continue their education at the university level.

Their teacher established the exchange program with an English teacher from Reynoldsburg. She shared that her students had studied and discussed Shakespeare via the Internet with a Reynoldsburg High English class.

Donations in honor of the guest students and teacher were received from 27 members, including seven new members.

*Marcia Friedman
National Zone Advisor*

The following article appeared on the UJC web site:

ORT Israel students aim high at technology competitions

On April 21, the ORT Henry Ronson School in Ashkelon won First Prize in the International High School Robotics Contest held at Hartford University in Connecticut.

This is the fourth contest of the like in which Israel was represented, but it is the first time that ORT Ronson took part. The school qualified for the competition after placing second in the Israeli Ruboner 2002 National Contest, held at Ben Gurion University in Beer Sheva.

The group of students designed and built a robot that can move independently. During the exhibition the team demonstrated how the robot moves and can extinguish a lit candle.

The team from the ORT Givat Ram College in Jerusalem was awarded second prize in the same category.

Of the achievement, National Director of ORT Israel Zvi Peleg said: "This distinguished honor is an enormous achievement for ORT Ronson as well as a great source of pride for the ORT Israel Network and the State of Israel."

On May 2, Alon Cohen from the ORT Givat Ram College in Jerusalem won first prize for practical engineering at an exhibition held by Tel Aviv University's Engineering Department.

Alon's invention would enable patients in advanced stages of paralysis to use their lips and tongues to control wheelchair steering and motion. He was awarded a partial tuition scholarship to attend the Tel Aviv University Engineering Department.

Other first-prize winners include Arye Arbitman from ORT Ronson Afridar College in Ashkelon, who won in the technicians category, and Eyal Weinberger from the ORT Hermelin College in Netanya, who won in the military operation category.

Also on May 2, The National Mechatronics Model Building Contest was held at the Technion in

Haifa. ORT Cramim in Karmiel won second place, and ORT Schein in Rehovot won third place.

Zarem/Golde lends hand to 'Yad L'Yad'

A new Jewish communal organization, *Yad L'Yad*, Hebrew for "Helping Hand," is being formed to meet the needs of members of the Jewish community seeking vocational and/or technical training. The Zarem/Golde ORT Technical Institute is playing a major role in the development of the program. WAO Board Member **Linda Kirschbaum** is a member of the organizing group.

Yad L'Yad's first project is the compilation of a directory of local vocational/technical training programs for members of the Jewish community. One section will feature Jewish-sponsored training institutions like Zarem/Golde. Another will list training programs at local community colleges, and a third section will highlight course offerings at private vocational schools in the Chicago area. The second phase of *Yad L'Yad's* mission will be training Jewish community members to serve as both mentors and resources on available vocational training opportunities to others in the community.

WAO on the road

Cruising around Broward County, one might spot a license plate frame bearing the following: "Education For Life" and "www.waort.org." This automotive initiative, which serves the dual roles of fund raising and publicity, was started by Ruth Abend, Fundraising Chair and Past President of the North Broward Region. The license plate frames are sold to the

continued on p. 6

WOMEN'S AMERICAN ORT

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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.

Mission Montage



DEDICATION OF GRACE MENDELSON'S ROBOTICS LAB AT ORT MONTREUIL. (L. TO R.) REESE FELDMAN, MONTREUIL MAYOR JEAN-PIERRE BRARD, ORT FRANCE DIRECTOR GUY SENIAK, GRACE MENDELSON, ORT FRANCE PRESIDENT MARCEL BENICHOU, WORLD ORT DIRECTOR GENERAL ROBERT SINGER, AND ORT MONTREUIL PRINCIPAL DAVID LHAYANI.



STANDING (L. TO R.): EMILY LEVIN, RONNA HEFTMAN, CINDY LIPKA, BOARD MEMBER AND MISSION CO-CHAIR SHELLEY FAGEL, SUBURBAN CHICAGO REGION PRESIDENT SHERYL SOLOMON, AND SHULIM KLINGER WITH STUDENTS AT ORT MONTREUIL.



EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT/ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ALICE HERMAN, MARCEL BENICHOU, MARTINE LEVY, AND SHELLEY FAGEL AT ORT MONTREUIL.



BOBI LEVINE, EVA BLUESTEIN, AND ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE ELIE BARNAVI, MARILYN ROSEKIND AT MAISON FRANCE D'ISRAEL.



VICE PRESIDENT JUDY MENIKOFF AT THE MISSION'S CLOSING CEREMONIES AT ORT VILLIERS-LE-BEL.



ORT STRASBOURG STUDENTS PERFORM FOR MISSION PARTICIPANTS.

region's chapters for \$5 each, netting a nice profit. Sales have been doing well, and some of the other regions in the area have requested them.

*Roberta Hutner
President, North Broward Region*

Sweet new year

To ensure that 5763 will be a sweet one, the Atlanta Region is holding its 11th Annual Rosh Hashanah Honey Sale. A nationwide initiative, there are now more than 50 WAO chapter franchises participating. Last year, 5,500 jars were sold. Each eight-ounce jar comes with a New Year's card indicating that a donation in the recipient's honor has been made to Women's American ORT.

This year, a web site has been launched and there is a pilot program to order honey online in four cities. Based on results, a national rollout is planned for 2003. To order honey or inquire about becoming a franchise, contact the Atlanta Region office at 800.294.8281 or Mindy Weinberg, Honey Chair, at moeeylooe@aol.com.

focus on fund raising

WAO's recently launched ORT Israel Hope Campaign is an effort to raise an additional \$500,000 to support ORT Israel by June 30, 2002. As you may know, the ongoing violence in Israel has forced the government to reduce its support of ORT Israel by millions of dollars in order to pay for necessary security measures throughout the country. As a result, ORT Israel is facing a major budget deficit this year and has had to eliminate more than 200 teaching positions, reduce the number of hours in the school day and suspend academic support services for students, including stu-

dents with learning disabilities and those preparing for matriculation exams. Additionally, in order to help students and faculty cope with the loss of loved ones and the extraordinary stress related to the Intifada, ORT Israel has started providing a range of counseling and support services. Unfortunately, these vital and critically needed services are placing additional strains on ORT Israel's scant financial resources.

To "jump start" the campaign and maximize the fund-raising potential of this project by June 30, the ORT Israel Hope Campaign has been incorporated into the ongoing Golden Circle and Major Gift Recommitment Campaign. WAO's volunteer solicitors have been asked to solicit supplementary gifts for Israel when talking with our major donors about renewing their annual gifts. To further encourage WAO members to participate in the campaign, a \$200,000 challenge grant has been established.

For ORT Israel's students, the violence of recent months, coupled with the reduction in school staffing and services, is profoundly demoralizing. Additionally, the current lack of financial resources severely compromises ORT Israel's ability to provide its students with a comprehensive and high-quality education, leaving a generation of youth vulnerable and ill-prepared for their future professional lives.

Please join us in our efforts to raise these critically needed funds to ensure that ORT Israel is able to continue its mission and help reestablish a sense of stability in the lives of its students. If you would like to contribute to the ORT Israel Hope Campaign or need additional information, please contact the Fund Development Department at ext. 245.

Special thanks

WAO would like to acknowledge the hard work of Major Gift Co-chairs **Sandy Isenstein** and **Grace Mendelson**, Vice President **Dorene Berger**, members of the Fund Development staff and our many committed volunteers in the field for their invaluable efforts in coordinating the ongoing Golden Circle and Major Gift Recommitment Campaign. The Campaign is WAO's systematic effort to secure renewed annual gifts from our Golden Circle and Major Gift contributors by providing a more personal connection to the organization and informing them about recent WAO updates and the invaluable educational programs we support around the world.

WAO would also like to acknowledge the efforts of **Shelley Fagel** and **Françoise Rothstein**, Co-chairs of the ORT Montreuil Campaign and the "April in Paris" Mission. **Ethel Feigon**, who served as Honorary Chair of both the Campaign and the Mission, provided the lead gift to launch the Campaign. Their leadership played an important role in the success of both the Campaign and the Mission. ORT Montreuil continues to provide the finest in state-of-the-art vocational and technological training programs to students in the Montreuil suburb of Paris. *Merci beaucoup, Mesdames!*

Fund development helpdesk

A variety of naming opportunities at ORT schools in the U.S. and abroad are available in recognition of gifts of \$5,000 and above in support of Women's American ORT. For more information, please call Jackie Robinson, Donor Relations Representative, at ext. 245.

Need information about Golden Circle forms, pins or stones? Please call Judy Mason, Donor Relations

Representative, at ext. 237.
Clemente Luna
Associate Director of Grants

Dear Ms. Organization:

Ms. Organization is taking a much-needed vacation this month. Filling in for her is Ms. Ann U. Ity.

Q: I've been hearing a lot about Charitable Gift Annuities. What are they and how do I know if they are right for me?

A: Charitable Gift Annuities are very popular because they enable the donor to receive a safe and stable income for life at an attractive rate while also securing the future for ORT students.

A gift annuity is a simple contract between a donor and Women's American ORT, in which WAO pays the donor an annual sum based on the value of the gift. The rates take your age into account: The older you are, the higher the rate. The annuity can even be set up to continue for a survivor when the donor dies. This is known as a "two-life" gift annuity.

Furthermore, if you fund your gift annuity with appreciated securities, you not only receive a current tax deduction but also save on the one-time capital gains tax on the appreciation since you bought the security. For more information on how you can make a planned gift that makes a significant difference to our ORT students, perpetuates your values and provides lasting satisfaction, please contact me at 888.802.6088.

Debbie Hammer, CFRE
National Director of
Planned Giving



good & welfare

Mazel tov to...

Past National President **Ruth Eisenberg** on her marriage to **Leon Moskowitz**.

Board Member **Judy Levin** and her husband, **Stephen**, on the marriage of their son, **Jordan**, to **Elise Drazin**, in March.

Former Board Member **Gloria Chekanow** and her husband, **Fred**, on the marriage of their son, **Mark**, to **Lauren Gersten**.

National Zone Advisor **Marcia Friedman** and her husband, **Al**, on the marriage of their daughter, **Suzy**, to **Dave Kahle**.

Terrie Temkin, former Executive Director of the Florida District, on being honored as Woman of the Year by the Atlantic-Florida Chapter of the Association for Women in Communications. The award is given to a woman who is a great communicator and plays a starring role in her community.

New York/New Jersey Planned Giving Committee Chair **Sandi Omansky** and her husband, **Stuart**, on the graduation of their son, **Scott**, from the University of Hartford. Scott was named to the President's List and is now a graduate assistant in the School of Communications.

Get well to...

ADC **Sheri Adler** who is home recuperating after being hospitalized.

Bobby Flam, husband of **Dale**, who is recovering from surgery.

Bernard Finger, husband of Honorary V.P. and National Zone Advisor **Naomi**, who is at home recuperating from surgery.

Sincere condolences to...

Board Member **Patti Hershorin** on the loss of her father, **Herbert Schiff**.

Louise Droker, Associate Advisor of Zone #7, on the passing of her father-in-law, **Wayne Droker**. Louise's mother-in-law, **Hilda**, is a member of the Greater Seattle Chapter.

Judy Mason, Donor Relations Representative and a long-time member of the WAO National Staff, on the loss of her mother, **Edna Tanenbaum**.

Marilyn Haberlach, of the Greater Seattle Chapter, on the passing of her father, **Leonard Khajet**.

staff update

Phyllis Reiss, CPA, has joined WAO as our new Controller. She comes to us from a national Jewish organization where she served as Controller for four years.

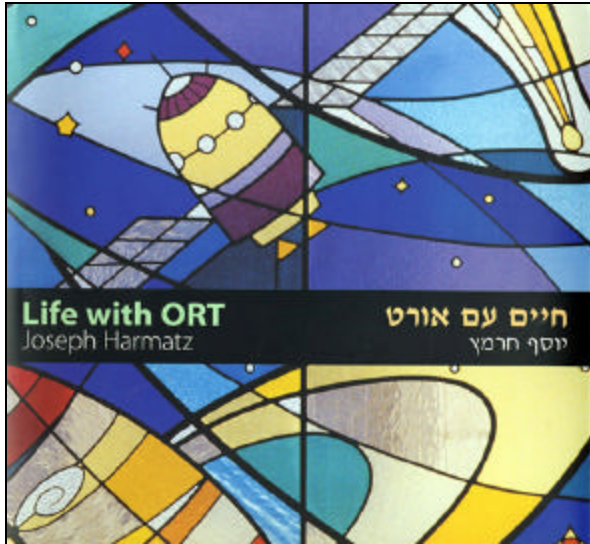
Phyllis will oversee the strengthening of our internal controls, maintenance of our financial reporting systems, development and monitoring of our annual budget, and the cash management function, as well as supervise the activities of the accounting unit. She will also be responsible for creating internal and external reports and will act as the primary liaison with our auditors. We wish her the best of luck in her new position.

Jim Deadwyler, National Director of Fund Development, has accepted the position of Sr. Director, Development at Safe Horizons, a New York City victims' services agency. Jim's last day is June 14. We wish him much success in his new job.

Lauren Glaser
Associate Director of
Human Resources

Life with ORT

Joseph Harmatz



Reflecting on his 30-plus-year ORT career – from the 1960s to the 1990s – Joseph Harmatz, who served first as Director General of ORT Israel and then Director General of World ORT, recounts the organization's remarkable history and growth.

Mr. Harmatz introduces us to the people who shaped ORT's development: educators; government ministers; international industrialists; ORT graduates; and the lay leaders, donors, and executive directors of the various ORT organizations, including Women's American ORT.

Life with ORT is essential reading for ORT supporters. It includes human interest anecdotes, interwoven with the fascinating complexity of the organization and the impact it has had on so many people's lives.

Order Form

Life with ORT by Joseph Harmatz

Price: **\$42.00** via airmail, including postage & handling.

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English & Hebrew

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Women's American ORT Rosh Hashanah Cards

**Rosh Hashanah 5763 begins on
Friday, September 6**

Get a great deal on cards to send to family and friends and help support the global ORT network of technological and vocational schools at the same time. Purchase for your own personal use or as a fund-raising tool for your chapter.

**8 cards and envelopes per pack.
Prices include shipping & handling.**

Prices for "Jerusalem Sunset":

\$11 (1-4 packs) \$7 (5-24 packs) \$5 (25+ packs)



Jerusalem Sunset: *May this be a sweet beginning of a joyous, peaceful New Year. L'Shana Tova to you and those dear to you.*

Sale

\$2 per pack



L'Shana Tova: *May the beauty of the season impart its wonder and peace into your heart for a happy and healthy New Year.*



Village People: *May you and those dear to you be blessed with good health, happiness and prosperity in the coming New Year.*

To order, call 800.51.WAORT, ext. 228,
or e-mail mdavis@waort.org.