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JEWISH SPIRIT

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Dear Friends,

It is with mixed emotions that I write the introductory letter to this issue of the Atlanta Jewish Spirit, knowing that this is the last time I will have this privilege and opportunity.

As I'm sure you know by now, I am moving on to a new position and to new challenges in Jewish outreach beginning in April of the upcoming year. My new role as Director of North American Campus Programming for the Horn-Wolfson Foundation is really a continuation of the work and experience I have gained as Dean of the Atlanta Scholars Kollel, just on a larger scale. The urgency and importance of Jewish outreach during the vulnerable college years is a lesson I learned from the Kollel's work at Emory, GA Tech, UGA, and our other local campuses. The impact ASK has had on building Jewish lives and Jewish families is nothing short of inspiring, and I look forward to continuing this work in my new role.

I am grateful that my family and I will still be living in this wonderful community, and that we do not need to say good-bye to so many precious friends and relationships. I am also extremely grateful and indebted to my colleagues, Rabbi Doniel Pransky and Rabbi David Silverman, who have stepped up to assume the mantle of leadership of this amazing organization. After investing so many years in ASK, it is truly gratifying to see it being passed into such capable hands. Rabbi Silverman was one of the founding members of the Kollel, and has been its outreach soul and spirit for over 23 years. Rabbi Pransky has served as our Rosh Kollel and as the rabbi of our rabbis for the past four years. Both are natural leaders and are deeply committed to the mission and values of the organization. It gives me great satisfaction to know that the Kollel will continue to grow and flourish under their leadership in my absence.

And to you, dear readers, I offer my thanks for your friendship, your support, and the inspiration I received daily from working with you and for you. Dena and I never cease to be awed by the commitment to learning, and the courage and Jewish growth which we have been blessed to witness from you, our students and supporters. It is because of you that we believe in the possibility of Jewish renaissance, and that we are optimistic that this same excitement can be created on college campuses throughout North America. So in short, it is your fault that I am moving on and taking this new position!

Enjoy this edition of the Atlanta Jewish Spirit and keep the ASK spirit burning bright. I wish you and all the extraordinary members of the ASK family continued success and nachas from this incredible organization.

*With love, respect and gratitude,
Rabbi Menachem Deutsch, Dean*

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ASK U GRADUATES!

For the past six years, Jewish adult education at the Kollel Dome in Dunwoody has been re-defined. The Kollel Institute (a.k.a. ASK U) was established in 2004 by ASK Rabbis Binyomin Friedman and Daniel Freitag with the goal of empowering Jewish adults of all ages and backgrounds to fill in the gaps in their knowledge of the Bible, as well as Jewish beliefs, history and living. By 2010, graduates of the 3-year institute are clamoring for more. The result: ASK U expands to include the Kollel Institute Graduate Level Program. What are these graduate students studying? Modern Jewish History is taught by Rabbi Binyomin Friedman, who is covering the incredible drama of the development of the modern Jewish world: the rise of Zionism, stirrings of Chassidism, Russian Jewry and Reform, Orthodox and “in-between”. Rabbi Michoel Friedman leads an intensive line-by-line study of the Book of Beraishit (Genesis), which delves into the mysteries and meanings of some of the most fascinating narratives of the Torah, spanning from Adam and Eve to the uniqueness of each of the Twelve Tribes. You’ve just got to see it to believe that near ninety students, in the two levels combined, file in every Wednesday evening to study at the Kollel Dome – it’s contagious!



*Arthur and Roni Tillem
engrossed in ASK U*

A SINGLE-MINDED FOCUS

Where do Atlanta Jewish singles meet to expand their Jewish minds - to ask questions and get answers about the whole gamut of Jewish life? They join the Atlanta Jewish Young Professionals Heritage Program for men and women, ages 20-35, led by Rabbi Dave Silverman and Rabbi Daniel Freitag. Each rabbi offers this bi-weekly social study-group in a different part of town, in order to provide convenient access to participants both inside and outside the perimeter. Rabbi Dan’s group meets Mondays at 7 at the Kollel Dome in Dunwoody, and Rabbi Dave’s meets on Wednesdays at 7:15 at his home on Hol(l)y Lane in Toco Hills. The topics, both provocative and relevant, such as “Environment, Animal Rights and Abortion”, “Kosher Sex, Kosher Food and Shabbat”, and “Personal Growth and Character Development”, give the participants a refreshing new outlook on Judaism. One commented, “I really enjoyed that fact that the topics were tied to the larger picture of spirituality - something I have not had much exposure to.” The best part is that they feel comfortable and uninhibited about asking questions. “Everything was up for discussion, and no question was a bad question!” By the way, participants are welcome mid-course, so if you are reading this, come join us!



*Good food, good learning and
good friends at Heritage*

A Letter of Love: Abe and Teri Levine Dedicate the Lavista Beis Midrash Aron Kodesh

Dear ASK,

Judaism has always been a major force in our lives. I (Abe) grew up in a home in Jersey City, New Jersey, where my mother and grandmother placed great emphasis on Jewish Day School education and weekly synagogue attendance. Teri’s parents, Betsy and the late George Kaplan, of blessed memory, raised their family in the Beth Jacob neighborhood in Atlanta, guided by the warmth and non-judgmental nature of Rabbi Emanuel Feldman. This upbringing continues to help us to become more observant.

Since 1988, Teri and I have been learning with the wonderful Rabbis of the Kollel, who inspire us daily by bringing us closer to Hashem. They model behavior that we want to instill in our children and, G-d willing, our grandchildren. It is a great honor for us to dedicate the Aron Kodesh in the Kollel’s Lavista Beis Midrash. We wish to memorialize my parents - Abraham and Loretta Levine, Teri’s father George, and her brother Jonathan, all of blessed memory. We also honor those we are blessed to have with us: Teri’s mother Betsy, and our three sons: Josh, Jeremy and Zachary. We pray that the “Levine-Kaplan Aron Kodesh” will elevate the souls of our loved ones in the Eternal World and bring nachas and inspiration to our loved ones who are with us in This World!

Love,
Teri and Abe



Article Title and here goes the subtitle

BY AUTHOR

Cacophony of intense discussion. Abode of spiritual synergy. These images aptly describe the Beis Midrash (Torah Study Hall) experience within a Yeshiva. The history of the Yeshiva - generally referring to a post-high-school institution of intensive Torah study - dates back thousands of years. For the young scholar, it was during his Yeshiva years that he formed a lifelong enthusiastic commitment to the study of Torah. But what of the one who was not privy to such an experience in his youth? Would there be a possibility of exposure to that same intense, exciting encounter with this timeless Divine wisdom?

In late spring of last year, Dunwoody and its environs were introduced to a Yeshiva-experience to call its own. Kollel Freestyle is a weekly event, held every Tuesday evening in the Kollel Dome, which brings together men of varied backgrounds and skill levels, and allows them to taste the sweetness of synergistic Torah study. Our Sages teach that while it is meritorious for an individual to study Torah, the mental and spiritual effect of that study is boosted exponentially when done in a group setting. Each member of the group benefits from the collective energy, insight, and mere physical presence of the other participants. This is the supreme benefit that Kollel Freestyle offers.



Dan Cohen and David Weissmann enjoy chavrusa-time

An eclectic potpourri of study-topics avails itself to meet the appeal of all who participate. Currently, Kollel rabbis lead most of the groups. Rabbi Binyomin Friedman leads Yesodei HaTorah (i.e. Talmud for Beginners) – where the students jump right in to the live “give and take” of Talmudic discourse. Rabbi Daniel Freitag hosts a relaxed and candid “schmooze” in the “Tuesday Torah Live” discussion group. Rabbi Michael Friedman moderates a weekly session on Torah truths vs. contemporary science. As Kollel Freestyle develops, more topics will be available



Rabbi Binyomin Friedman plumbs the Talmud with students of Yesodai HaTorah

for the choosing; we've only just begun!

One of the key goals of Kollel Freestyle is to empower a “plainclothesman” to study in, or even lead, a group without the immediate aid of a rabbi. Hal Schroeder, a long-time ASK supporter and member of Congregation Ariel in Dunwoody, is blazing this trail as he collaborates with several others weekly to study in-depth the Torah commentary Rashi, assisted by the popular text *What’s Bothering Rashi*, by Rabbi Avigdor Boncheck. “It is wonderful to see our group encouraging and supporting each other,” Hal remarks. “It is amazing to hear different insights and to gain clarity from the group discussion. I constantly come away with a better appreciation for, and comprehension of, the portion we are learning, through the thoughts and ideas that are shared.”

A number of “chavrusa” (study partner) pairs also meet at Kollel Freestyle. These two-man teams come together each week to grapple over a page of Talmud, Jewish Law, or even an English contemporary book! That is precisely the beauty of Kollel Freestyle: everyone learns the Torah topic of his choice, at a pace he is comfortable with. “At first, I didn’t think I would be able to get anything out of my studies at Kollel Freestyle,” reflects Dennis Yaschik. “I felt I had little to offer, by way of my own Biblical

knowledge, to others who might attend. However, that feeling quickly dissipated, as I found myself among contemporaries who were all engaged in candid, non-intimidating discussion. I begin to feel

empowered to think of my own views of what a passage might mean. It is truly an exhilarating feeling!”

Of course, no event that nourishes the soul would be complete without some delectable nourishment for the body as well. A sophisticated Kuering® coffee machine, bearing an array of varieties (just like the learning!), offers a personalized steaming cup to those entering the Beis Midrash. Platters with a medley of delicious cakes, cookies and freshly cut fruits add a this-worldly touch to this other-worldly encounter. For more information, to suggest a topic, or to initiate a new group, please contact Rabbi Michael Friedman or the Kollel office. Looking forward to seeing you at Kollel Freestyle – Dunwoody’s Yeshiva - this Tuesday @ 7:30PM!

maybe
another
photo
here?

ASK NETWORKING EVENT 2010 58



Guest Speaker Mike Leven at the ASK 2010 Networking Event



Mike Leven having a ball while his wife, Andrea, looks on!



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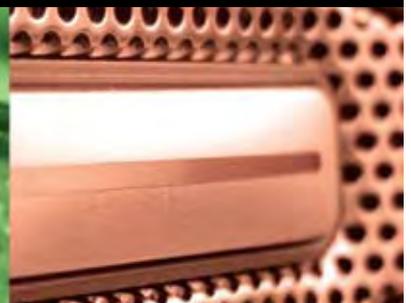
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Spotlight on ASK's Jewish Unity Live 2011 Honorees Jonathan and Ilene Miller

The last Biblical prophet Malachi foretold one of the signs that the Final Days are approaching: "The hearts of parents will be brought back through their children, and the hearts of children through their parents." If you have attended an ASK event within the last 10 years, you have probably met Jonathan or Ilene Miller. They can be found at classes and lectures, services and celebrations. Ilene's ubiquitous little note pads capture every ASK lecture, and if Jonathan can't attend, he gets a private review session when he gets home.

The Millers are a family through whom we witness the fulfillment of Malachi's prophetic words. It all began in the school year of '95-'96. Jonathan and Ilene's daughter Kerry heard that ASK Rabbi David Silverman brings a weekly injection of Judaism and Kosher pizza to teens in Atlanta's prestigious private schools. She and a friend promptly organized the first Jewish students' group at Pace Academy. When Mom, a student-for-life, heard about this rabbi and his organization, she was intrigued. Upon further research, Ilene was amazed to find that ASK Rabbi Binyomin Friedman offered a bi-monthly class at Habif, Arogeti and Wynne, the accounting firm where Jonathan is partner. She attended one class and knew she had found her place. Although Jonathan had met ASK Dean, Rabbi Menachem Deutsch years earlier, his entry into ongoing learning was through Rabbi Daniel Freitag's Adult Shabbat Beginners Service. Growing up in Danville, KY, with limited opportunity for formal Jewish education, Jonathan enjoyed learning about the prayers and their



meaning, and he began to feel at home. In time, The Kollel Institute (ASK U), Kollel Shabbatons and retreats followed for the Millers.

Today, Jonathan and Ilene have added to their wide circle of friends, many others who share their passion for Jewish learning. In the process, they have also added the Kollel and other community learning institutions to the list of worthy causes they support. Professionally, Jonathan serves on the AICPA Management for Results Board and formerly served on the National AICPA Major Firm Group Advisory Committee and the Georgia State Board of Accountancy, where he was elected Chairman. Ilene served on the American Heart Association's Medical/Nutrition advisory board, among other positions in the medical and nutritional fields. In the community, Jonathan and Ilene have sat on boards at the Atlanta Jewish Community Center, the Epstein School, the Atlanta Jewish Federation, Hadassah Women and Brandeis University. Currently, Jonathan is involved with the Yad L'Yad Hebrew Free Loan Fund, and is a mentor at the Emory University Goizueta Business School. Ilene currently serves on the advisory board of the Atlanta Scholars Kollel, and both serve on the board of the Torah Day School of Atlanta.

In recognition of their dedication to the Kollel and community, and for their role in heralding Malachi's era, ASK will be honoring Jonathan and Ilene at Jewish Unity Live 2011 on March 13 at the Woodruff Arts Center. We hope that Jonathan and Ilene's friends, together with all students and supporters of Torah learning, will be on hand to pay tribute to this great couple!



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