

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FERN AND MANFRED STEINFELD PROGRAM IN JUDAIC STUDIES UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE

VOLUME THREE • FALL 1996



halom, Yes, we have a name. Thanks to the generosity of Fern and Manfred Steinfeld, the Judaic Studies Program at The University of Tennessee has received an additional pledge of \$250,000 towards strengthening our educational undertaking. The Steinfelds are not only friends of the Judaic Studies Program, but of the University in general and of the community. It is for this broad support that Mr. Steinfeld received UT's Volunteer of the Year Award in the Fall of 1995. Thank you and mazal tov!

We are making progress in our efforts to formally incorporate the Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies into the course curriculum. As a first step, in January of 1996, we convened a Judaic Studies Committee, consisting

of Nancy Lauckner, Amy Neff, Charles Reynolds, Palmyra Brummett, Linda Ehrlich, and Gilya Schmidt. Peter Hoeyng participated for Nancy Lauckner. The Committee elected Gilya Schmidt as chair of the Program, and Peter Hoeyng kindly agreed to serve as interim chair during my stay in Israel. Many thanks to all colleagues serving on our Committee, and thank you, Peter, for helping out. Our next step will be to submit our program for consideration to the Social Sciences and Humanities Divisions Councils.

We are delighted that Professor Lee Humphreys has returned full-time to the Department of Religious Studies. Professor Humphreys teaches courses on the Bible and Classical Hebrew.

A WORD FROM DR. CHARLES H. REYNOLDS, PROFESSOR AND HEAD OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

I want to begin by joining the many other voices in this newsletter who have commended Associate Professor Gilya Gerda Schmidt for the truly outstanding job that she did in organizing and supervising the Holocaust Conference held on our campus last October. This was truly one of the most outstanding programs sponsored at UT during my 28 years at this institution. I also want to thank all the people and programs at the university and those from the community who assisted Professor Schmidt in planning this program.

It seems that almost monthly I receive a copy of another publication Professor Schmidt has just authored. She is making an outstanding contribution to the field of Judaic Studies nationally and internationally, not simply at the University of Tennessee or in the greater Knoxville area. Her teaching, research, and public service are all a credit to our department and the university, as well as to all who have contributed private funds to supplement her state salary and to

support many of her activities. I especially want to thank Guilford and Diane Glazer, Manfred and Fern Steinfeld, and Mitchell and Natalie Robinson for the substantial gifts they have made to support Judaic Studies at the University of Tennessee. The Steinfelds' recent pledge of \$250,000 to supplement the salary of a faculty member in the History Department to teach the History of Judaism is only the latest of many contributions Manny and Fern have made to our University. He certainly deserved to be selected for the award of UT's volunteer of the year for 1995. Even though I have singled out for special thanks the three families mentioned above, the numerous additional contributions from families in the Knoxville area have brought our total amount in the Judaic Studies fund in our department to \$418,000. Other pledges are outstanding that will put us over our \$500,000 minimum goal. Thanks to all of you (and especially Arnold Cohen and Bernie Bernstein for their leadership roles) who have assisted

us in this important work. I also want to thank the Knoxville Jewish Federation for their annual contribution to our program which makes it possible for us to bring outstanding speakers and programs to UTK that complement and enrich Professor Schmidt's own work.

Our Judaic Studies program continues to make major contributions to the University and the greater Knoxville community. Thanks to most of you who receive this newsletter for making this a reality.

Additional contributions to Judaic Studies are still needed to enrich our library holdings, to provide scholarships for students to study in Israel, and to support visiting scholars in Judaic Studies at UTK. I would be happy to meet with any of you who might be in a position to set up an endowment to support any of these important objectives.

CHARLES H. REYNOLDS
RELIGIOUS STUDIES DEPARTMENT HEAD



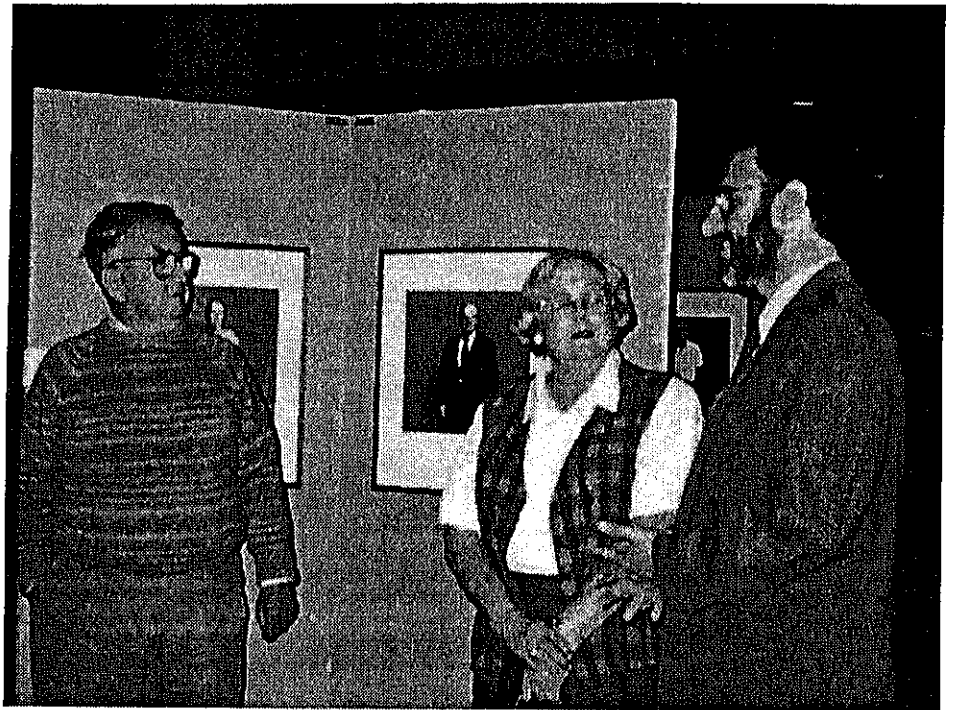
Public Service: HOLOCAUST CONFERENCE October 22 – 24, 1995

KUDOS FOR HOLOCAUST CONFERENCE, October 22-24, 1995 Knoxville experienced one of its finest moments during the Fall, 1995, Holocaust Conference which was organized and funded by The University of Tennessee in conjunction with the Tennessee Holocaust Commission and the Tennessee Humanities Council as well as the Knoxville Jewish Federation.

When all was said and done, the accolades wouldn't stop coming in. Approximately 6,000 people attended 16 sessions over the three-day period, with attendance at some sessions being near the 500 mark. Many individuals came for more than one session. From the registrations and evaluations we estimated that 2,000 different adults and young people participated in the conference. The media coverage of the event was great, helping with the high attendance. The response was overwhelmingly positive, both of the event and the programming. Many thanks to everyone who so graciously sent flowers, notes, and made contributions in our honor.

Following are some highlights from the notes we received:

"I want to extend my congratulations to you for the excellent Holocaust conference....The conference was extraordinarily successful, in my view, not only because of the meticulous attention to administrative detail but also because of the quality of the program participants. Rarely have I seen so many interested and enthusiastic people attending a conference. What was particularly impressive was the large number of public and private school teachers and their students, both at the intermediate and secondary level, who attended and who seemed to profit from the program....You certainly have the



PROFESSOR ROBERT HELLER AND VISITORS VIEW HIS PHOTO EXHIBIT AT HODGES LIBRARY

gratitude of the campus for bringing the conference, the first on the Holocaust, to the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. From the large number of individuals who attended...I know that you have reached the lay public, our academic colleagues, school teachers, and school children....Again, please accept my congratulations and my thanks."

MILTON M. KLEIN,
UNIVERSITY HISTORIAN

"I'm taking this means to express my sincere thanks and admiration to you for organizing the recently concluded conference on the Holocaust....The speakers were riveting, the topics superb and you managed to attract a startling mix of participants—both old and young, town and gown. I intended to sample the offering but couldn't pull myself away....Thanks so much for creating and presiding over

this important program. All of us are indebted to you for bringing this unprecedented cultural event to Knoxville."

PHILIP A. SCHEURER,
VICE CHANCELLOR

"Dear Dr. Ratner: Please accept my thanks and gratitude for the excellent opportunity provided for me and all who attended the excellent educational lectures, dance, photography exhibits, etc. during the Oct. 22-24 [Holocaust Conference]. What a wonderful [way] to reach the students and teach what we must remember to teach our grand-children. The quality of the speakers was superb. I feel privileged to live in an area that made such an event possible."

ROSE P. HOLZ, OAK RIDGE

"Many, many thanks for last week's splendid East Tennessee Holocaust



JOEL LOGIUDICE, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY, LECTURES ON KADAR EXHIBIT AT THE UNIVERSITY CENTER

Conference, which you all hosted!...I was greatly impressed not only by the high quality of the speakers, and of their scholarship and sincerity, but also by the attentiveness and reactions of the audience, many of whose members were quite young in age. Once can hardly think of a conference that could do more in the vital, and terribly necessary, work of promoting an end to racial, religious, and ethnic prejudice, hostility, and strife....Again, many thanks to you and to all responsible for the conference. God's richest blessings on you and your colleagues there."

DWYN M. MOUNGER, M. DIV., PH.D.,
MINISTER
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
OAK RIDGE

"I cannot thank you enough for your work in organizing the Holocaust conference these past three days at UT. As a participant, the sessions were 'smooth sailing' in the sense of being comfortable with the facilities. Where to begin, in commenting on the speakers, presents a dilemma. They were excellent. I had the privilege to hear Yaffa Eliach, Leon Bass, Beverly Asbury, and the Panel Discussion on Tuesday evening."

LINK ELMORE,
STUDENT MINISTRY INTERN
THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OF KNOXVILLE

We also received thank-yous from our speakers:

"Hope you're taking a well-deserved rest after that conference—such masterful planning deserves a special reward! You should be very pleased and proud. Thanks for letting me participate!"

KAREN SHAWN, THE MORIA SCHOOL,
ENGLEWOOD, N.J.

"I just wanted to let y'all know how much I enjoyed my stay in Knoxville and how impressed I was with the Holocaust Conference. I have been a speaker at numerous places and at several Holocaust conferences, but the quality of the speakers and organizers and the outstanding attendance made this one extraordinary."

LAURIE WOOD,
KLANWATCH, MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

"I was very impressed with the excellent conference "The Holocaust Fifty Years Later" which you organized at the University of Tennessee. The program indeed reflected your insight to the Holocaust, your skills as an organizer, and best of all, a wonderful scholar and warm human being."

YAFFA ELIACH, BROOKLYN COLLEGE

"I received your letter yesterday; it is I who wishes to thank you. My participation in the conference was my gift to the memory of those who lost their lives in the Holocaust, and [it] was a pleasure to see so many participants. I gratefully appreciate the opportunity to speak on the subject, which has now become my passion. I am glad to know my studies in Poland and Israel will be useful here in Knoxville."

MARY LYELL, MOUNTAIN VIEW
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTER,
DANDRIDGE, TN

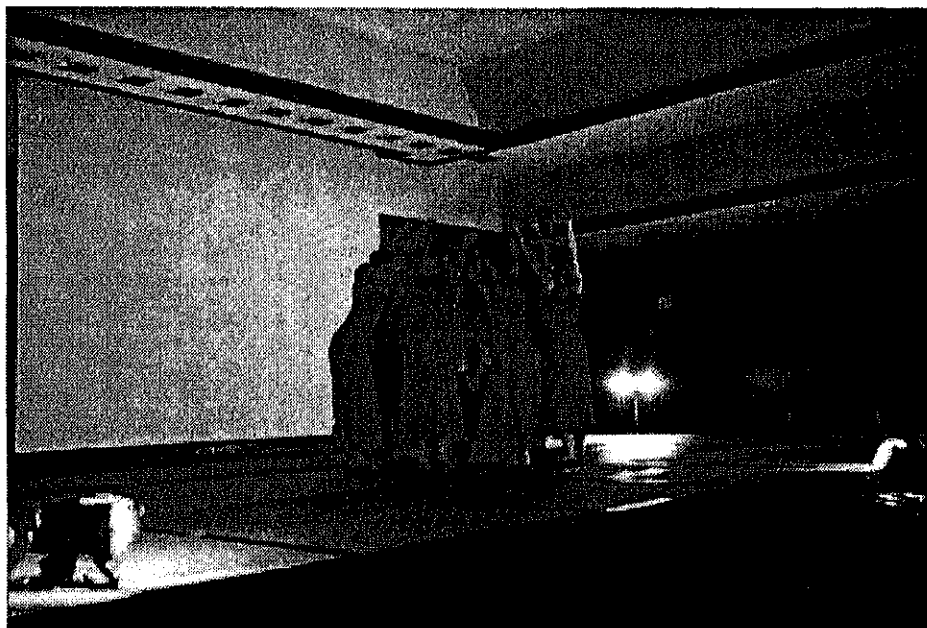
From the Knoxville community, we heard:

"The Holocaust Conference was one of the best things that happened in Knoxville. My coworkers and I appreciate the committee's hard work!"

DONNA HARDY, TEACHER,
BEARDEN MIDDLE SCHOOL

"I want to thank you and commend you on the Holocaust Conference this past weekend. It was truly a first class program, jam packed with quality speakers and sessions. You deserve many kudos for bringing all of this to our community..."

MARIAN JAY, PRESIDENT
KNOXVILLE HADASSAH CHAPTER



TENNESSEE CHILDREN'S DANCE ENSEMBLE

Holocaust Conference, October 22 – 24, 1995 (continued)

"Thank you for involving me in such a moving project. I was quite honored to be involved in both your advisory committee and your conference. Thank you also for bringing such an interesting group together. I believe many seeds were sown and good things will come from those contacts."

ELLEN BEBB,
ROBERTSVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL

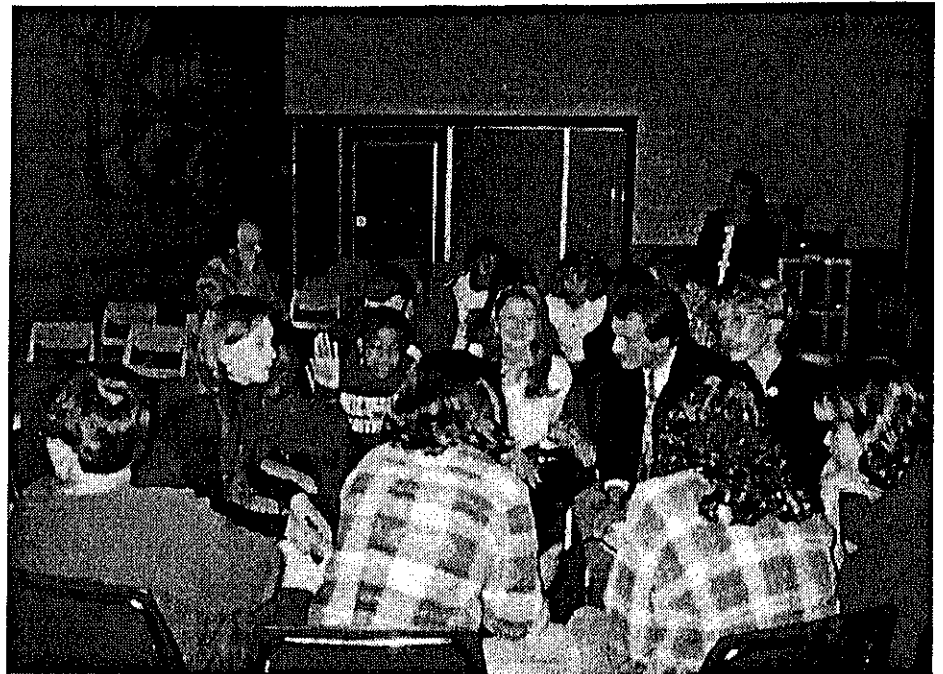
"You did it! With all your helpers. It was a great conference, you should have more of them."

ELAINE BROWN,
HESKA AMUNA LIBRARIAN

"Mazel Tov on the effective manner in which you planned and carried out the East Tennessee Holocaust Conference. We are proud of you."

KNOXVILLE CHAPTER OF HADASSAH

Your thanks and good wishes are accepted with humility and gratitude. Credit for the suggestion of the Holocaust Conference belongs to Dr. Robert Levy, Senior Vice President's Office, UT, who spoke with me about the possibil-



MARY LYELL (BACK RIGHT) LEADS WORKSHOP FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

ity of such a conference before I was even here!

It took an enthusiastic community-wide Advisory Committee, a committed and sacrificing Steering Committee, the endorsement and support of the University Administration, and the selfless sacrifice of innumerable individu-

als here at the University and in the community to bring this event off so well. I would like to single out Vice Chancellor Philip A. Scheurer; Professor Larry Ratner, then Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; Professor Charles H. Reynolds, Head, Department of Religious Studies; Lisa White Smith, who coordinated 250 teachers and students; Bradford Smith, my Teaching Assistant; Debbie Myers and Joan Riedl, secretaries in Religious Studies. These are the wonderful individuals who bore the brunt of the tensions involved with the organization of the Conference and who kept me sane. I thank you and all colleagues, students, and friends who helped and participated in the event. May the future be the brighter for it!



PROFESSOR YAFFA ELIACH SPEAKS TO CROWDED BALLROOM AT THE UNIVERSITY CENTER





Reflections of the Holocaust Conference or Putting It All Together

BY DONNA MARA HARDY

Black was not the dominant color in my housing project, even though most of us were called that. The colors ranged from vanilla white to ebony wood. The little boy next door wanted to know if my fair-skinned mother and little sister were white. He said he liked them better than me. So, from the time I could recognize images, color did make a difference. I had a hard time putting it all together. If my opponent got mad at me, a ginger brown skinned little girl, he called me BLACK. If he wanted to see fire in my eyes, he called me JEW. To be called BLACK was bad, and to be called JEW was bad bad. I had a hard time putting it all together. At LaRose Elementary school in Memphis, Tennessee, my teacher said that this man named Dr. Martin Luther King was coming to help Blacks and Jews get their acts together. Name-calling, she said, was tearing us all apart. It was 1968, and I wanted to hear this great man who was going to turn neighborhoods and nations around. My family lived next door to the temple where Dr. King was planning to speak. Mama said I couldn't go. She was afraid I would be shot. But, I wanted to be a part of history! There was no daddy, so mama always had the last word. She went to Mason Temple, and I stood at the window watching the silent feet slip solemnly into the sacred house. Tranquility ruled....One could hear King's voice if he sat still: I've been to the mountaintop and I've seen the promised land. The next day, the promised land was bleeding. The feet ran frantically, shouting. Death had killed all black hope.... For years Mama had Martin's funeral. Night after night, while I tried to sleep, she played his records. The words, like rolling mountains, moved into my memory and made hills of dreams: Perhaps I will be a writer and a teacher. I will teach black kids. I will

be QUEEN of the mountain. Nobody's gonna knock me off the mountain! In high school a white teacher questioned me, wanted to share MY mountain. "No, you can't share it," my conscious said. You are a Jew. Do you really care? What do you know about me?" His conscious answered, "Here, read Victor Frankl's

two stars stand together, I see my Jewish teacher and I working in the cotton fields and the concentration camps. We are one.... I am no longer having a hard time putting it all together. My mission is clear. I know what I must continue to do with others on the mountaintop.

★★★



EIGHTH GRADE ENGLISH, BEARDEN MIDDLE SCHOOL
TEACHERS: DONNA HARDY (UPPER RIGHT), MARIE RICHARDSON (UPPER LEFT),
VALERIE BREEDING (LOWER RIGHT).

Man's Search for Meaning. I read it twice and cried. I rethought: I will teach black kids, white kids, Jews, anybody who wants to learn. I must go back to the mountain and beyond.... The Holocaust Conference...1995 in Knoxville, Tennessee. I am a teacher, still struggling to write. My students—black, white, Jews, etc.—listen to the speakers and view the slides of happy families and then emaciated humans. The children take notes and squirm. My two white co-workers and I see learning faces. My moment comes the next day. Mira Kimmelman, a Holocaust survivor, introduces Leon Bass, a black eyewitness to the Holocaust atrocities. As the

MARA MEANS "BITTER" IN HEBREW. But Donna was able to turn the bitter memories of two participants in the Holocaust Conference (and her own!) into a sweet experience for students and colleagues at Bearden and Vine middle schools and Webb School. Applying and receiving a grant from WBIR-TV, Channel 10, Donna brought liberator Dr. Leon Bass back to Knoxville on February 23, 1996, where he was joined by survivor Mira Kimmelman, the two individuals who together made such a profound impression on Donna at the Conference. Congratulations, Donna Mara Hardy! We are proud of your work.



Faculty Research:

ASSIGNMENT IN ISRAEL

"IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM, MAY MY RIGHT HAND LOSE ITS CUNNING."

For centuries, these words from Psalm 137 were pronounced by poets and rabbis, singers and politicians. Before the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Jerusalem, symbolic of the Land of Israel, nourished the dreams and imagination of Jews for nearly 2,000 years. For those who have never been there, it still does.

But if one has been to Israel, it is impossible to ever forget Jerusalem with her ramparts and citadels, her parks and gardens, her fabulous architecture, her multi-ethnic population, houses of worship, museums, cultural programs, her joys and sorrows. Upon arrival in Jerusalem, I wrote this poem (with apologies to Marilyn Kallet):

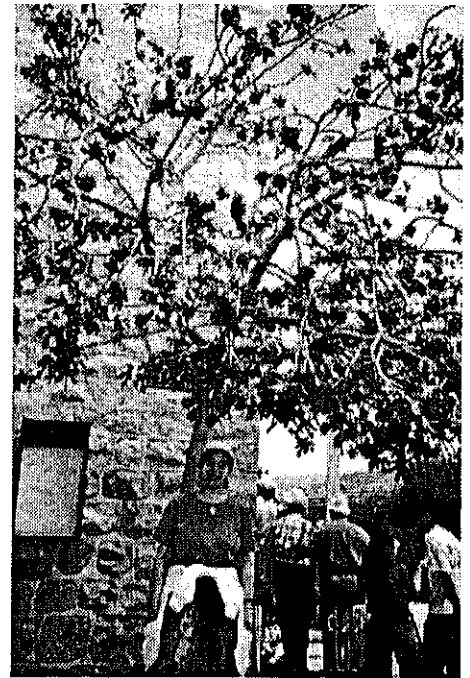
A Winter's Song

FEBRUARY 1, 1996

GENTLY THE WIND
BRUSHES AGAINST MY FACE—
FEBRUARY IN YERUSHALAIM.
I RUSH TO SEE
OLD FAMILIAR SITES,
THIS TIME DRESSED IN GREY.
YET THERE IS LIFE
AND BEAUTY
IN THE AIR AND HEARTS.
A YELLOW FLOWER
GUSHES O'ER THE WALL
IN MANIFOLD SPLENDOR,
AND A REGAL
FLAMING CACTUS
AMONG RUGGED JERUSALEM ROCK.
IN THE DISTANCE
THE TOWER OF DAVID
WITH A THREE-FOLD DEGEL ISRAEL
FLUTTERING BRISKLY
FROM ITS TOWER.
IT IS GOOD TO HAVE RETURNED—
A HOMECOMING
TO THE BELOVED LAND.

- This year, the celebration of "Jerusalem 3,000" provided an international cultural extravaganza that culminated in fabulous fireworks over the Old City on June 24. The event became an incentive for individuals and groups from around the world for a homecoming, even if temporary.

- One of the biggest decisions for any visitor to Israel is which ulpan (intensive language course) to attend. Because so many new immigrants and visitors come from all over the world—Jewish and non-Jewish—there is a great desire and need to learn the language of the land. However, two other languages dominate parts of Israel—English and Russian. Some speak of the Americanization of Israel, this is especially noticeable in Jerusalem, where Cafe Atara on Ben Yehuda Street was just recently bought by Pizza Hut. In Haifa and Netanya whole neighborhoods remind of little Russias. Only ten years after finally leaving the Soviet Union, the most famous refusenik, Nathan Sharansky, has been elected to the



PROFESSOR GILYA SCHMIDT,
YEMIN MOSHE, JERUSALEM

Knesset and appointed as Minister of Industry and Trade.

- Shabbat in Jerusalem. Peace and tranquility descend on the city as traffic comes to a near halt on Friday afternoon. At least the buses stop completely. A siren signals the beginning of Shabbat. A multitude of human beings criss-cross the various neighborhoods as they join family and friends for worship and Fri-



GILYA SCHMIDT IN KNESSET ROSE GARDEN, JERUSALEM

