

# The NEWSLETTER of the FERN & MANFRED STEINFELD Program in Judaic Studies

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE



## Dear Friends of Judaic Studies,



Another academic year and Jewish new year is already underway, and we are full of excitement about new projects and prospects.

Brimming with joy over the good things that have come our way this past year, we will try to make 2007-8 an even better and more successful year than the last.

I would be remiss if I didn't first thank Professor James Fitzgerald, Associate Head of Religious Studies, and Associate Professor J.P. Dessel for their wonderful collegiality this past spring when I was on leave. Professor Fitzgerald steered the Religious Studies Department through the semester with his usual commitment and wisdom, allowing me to spend optimum time on two current research projects. Dr. Dessel graciously organized three well-attended public lectures, and I am very grateful to him and to my assistant, Michael Booker, who saw to it that all the details were taken care of. Let's hope that there will be a time for me to reciprocate for their kindness and generosity. Thank you very much!

Congratulations to Professor Fitzgerald for receiving a coveted NEH grant for 2007-8 to continue his work on additional volumes of the *Mahabharata*. This might well have been sufficient gratification for him for all of the toil on his scholarship over many years, but nearly concurrently he also received an invitation to apply for an endowed chair in Sanskrit at Brown University. He received the position. Although this leaves a large void of a productive senior

scholar in our department, we are also proud that such an honor would come to a member of our Religious Studies Department. We will miss Jim and wish him all the best as he embarks on a new phase of his career in Providence, Rhode Island.

Faculty members who participate in Judaic Studies continue to model excellence in the profession, through their scholarly achievements and outstanding teaching. Dr. Johanna Stiebert stood for tenure and promotion this past year, and in June we were notified that her efforts were successful. Our heartiest congratulations to Dr. Stiebert on receiving tenure and promotion to associate professor. May she enjoy many happy and productive years at the University of Tennessee. Dr. Heather Hirschfeld, tenured last year, and Dr. J.P. Dessel, also tenured last year, both received College of Arts and Sciences Junior Teaching Awards for 2006-7. Congratulations! Our students are fortunate indeed to have you as teachers. Professor Vejas Liulevicius was honored by a reappointment as Hendrickson Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Jewish faculty was also honored to formally welcome Arts and Sciences Dean Bruce E. Bursten, who had joined us in 2005 from Ohio State University, and Provost Robert Holub, who joined us in summer of 2006 from the University of California at Berkeley. The Knoxville Jewish Alliance, the Jewish Student Organization/Hillel, and the Jewish faculty held two informal gatherings, one in fall 2006, the other in spring 2007, to introduce these new colleagues. We are delighted to have two such distinguished scholars in our midst.

As I serve my sixth year as Head of the Department of Religious Studies,

I look back on a flurry of activity, consisting of a series of retreats – for the campus leadership, for department heads, and for the Department of Religious Studies. It is most useful to receive updates on initiatives underway and to be apprised of plans for the future, whether at the campus level or in the department. Preceding the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, I also attended a full-day workshop for department heads in Religious Studies. These workshops are quite valuable to discuss issues that arise across the profession. In February 2007 I participated in a week-long Leadership Institute for the university in Gatlinburg, which was quite educational and inspiring. Some of us who participated in that exercise are now engaged in an experimental Conversation Circle for academic leaders at UT.

We also had a meeting of our full departmental Board of Visitors in fall of 2006. At the time we were working on a grant proposal to the Department of Education for funding of Arabic and for seed money for a Center for Middle Eastern Studies. This project had been the idea of the Arabic sub-committee of the Board of Visitors, and we were all very excited about the prospect of receiving federal funding. Unfortunately we did not receive the funding, which was disappointing, because it means that Arabic and Modern Hebrew will continue to be taught in a diminished fashion, through a tape program, rather than with a live instructor in the classroom – that is, unless we are fortunate enough to receive a large gift to endow such a position. However, the valuable feedback we received on our proposal will aid us in perhaps pursuing such

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a grant again in the future. Our effort showed that federal grants can also be pursued in the Humanities.

Judaic Studies is an interdisciplinary program and we have always benefited from a close collaboration with various departments. Several of our faculty members in Religious Studies are associated with other interdisciplinary programs, such as Global Studies, American Studies, and Medieval Studies. This past year four colleagues had the opportunity to work with the Marco Institute in the production of an exhibition at the McClung Museum, entitled "Sacred Beauty: A Millenium of Religious Art, 600-1600," as part of the "Marco Semester" this fall. Our thanks to Professor Robert Bast for this great collaboration.

We are very excited about two new scholarship and student support funds for Judaic Studies majors. This past year Fern and Manny Steinfeld committed \$100,000 for a scholarship in their name. This scholarship is now up and running, and we are looking forward to supporting deserving Judaic Studies students. Another long-time friend of the Judaic Studies Program, Dr. Ruben Robinson, kindly remembered us in his will. As a result, we established the \$25,000 Dr. Ruben Robinson Memorial

Fund for student support of study abroad and research in Israel, Europe, and other Judaic Studies ventures.

We are also in the process of updating our Judaic Studies as well as Religious Studies websites. The new Judaic Studies website has gone live. We think that it is informative and easy to read, and hope that you will take a look at it. Go to <http://web.utk.edu/~judaic/>. Let us know if we included all the information you would want to see. Our thanks to Jeremy Hughes for his fine work.

Congratulations are due to our long-time department staff member, Debbie Binder, who recently married Leon. Deborah Scaperoth, who did much of the spade work for our exciting "Living On" exhibition and programs last year in Knoxville, completed her Ph.D. and is now Dr. Scaperoth. Congratulations for a job well-done!

For me personally, 2006-7 was a great year, perhaps the best ever, although I have said that many times before. In my administrative capacity, I had the opportunity to expand the boundaries of both Religious Studies and Judaic Studies, and my research agenda took me to Israel and Germany. Teaching took on an entirely new meaning with a trip to China, where I found eager

and receptive students who were keen to learn about Judaism.

This particular effort was generously supported by a SARIF grant and a grant from our friends Diane and Guilford Glazer. More about all of these adventures inside the newsletter.

It goes without saying that none of these exciting activities would be possible without the support and encouragement of the institution, the college, and especially you, our friends far and near, who believe that education about things Jewish is important to living in our complicated twenty-first century global community.

With all good wishes for a peaceful and sweet 5768.

B'Shalom,



Gilya G. Schmidt, Ph.D.  
Professor and Head,  
Department of Religious Studies,  
and Chair,  
The Fern and Manfred Steinfeld  
Program in Judaic Studies

## NEW SCHOLARSHIP AND STUDENT SUPPORT FUNDS

For the first time, Judaic Studies at UT is able to help students who major in our discipline financially. Two new scholarship funds are in place.

The Judaic Studies Scholarship Committee consists of Professors Gilya Schmidt (chair), Marilyn Kallet, and J.P. Dessel. Students who are interested in a scholarship must be declared majors. Anyone interested in the criteria should check the Judaic Studies website at <http://web.utk.edu/~judaic> or contact one of the members of the scholarship committee.

### THE FERN AND MANFRED STEINFELD SCHOLARSHIP FUND IN JUDAIC STUDIES

- Applicants for the Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Scholarship in Judaic Studies must be currently enrolled at or admitted to attend the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and pursuing an interdisciplinary major concentration in Judaic Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences.
- Applicants must be **declared** majors with at least sophomore standing.
- Applicants must demonstrate successful academic performance, with a GPA of 3.0 in the major.
- Financial need may be considered.

### DR. RUBEN ROBINSON MEMORIAL FUND

- Applicants for the Dr. Ruben P. Robinson Judaic Studies Scholarship must be currently enrolled at or admitted to attend the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and pursuing an interdisciplinary major concentration in Judaic Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences.
- Applicants must be **declared** majors in Judaic Studies.
- Applicants must demonstrate successful academic performance, with a GPA of 3.0 in the major.
- Financial need may be considered.
- A student holding the Dr. Ruben P. Robinson Judaic Studies Scholarship shall have preference in the selection procedure in subsequent years with all other things being equal.

## JUDAIC STUDIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Judaic Studies Advisory Committee contributes to the discussion of and makes recommendations on academic matters for Judaic Studies. The committee is interdisciplinary in nature; the members belong to History, English, German, Art, and Religious Studies. Faculty are wholly owned and paid by the participating departments. We thank the departments for sharing their faculty with Judaic Studies, and appreciate faculty interest and commitment to quality education in Judaic Studies.

### ● Palmira Brummett

Palmira Brummett, gave the following presentations this year:

- "Venice to Constantinople: Itinerary, Trade, and the Matrix of Identity in The Merchant's Time," Symposium: Shakespeare in Venice, Università Cá Foscari di Venezia, Venice, Italy, Oct. 2007.
- "Envisioning Ottoman Wealth: Narrating and Mapping Ottoman 'Treasure' in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries," Symposium on The Ottomans and Wealth: A Comparative Perspective, Cambridge University, Skilliter Centre for Ottoman Studies, July 2007.
- "The Fortress: Defining and Mapping the Ottoman Frontier in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," Symposium on The Frontiers of the Ottoman World, British Academy and The British Institute at Ankara, London, February 2007,

and published the following articles:

- "Imagining the Early Modern Ottoman Space from Piri Reis to World History," in Virginia Aksan and Daniel Goffman, eds. *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, Cambridge U. Press, 2007.
- "Gender and Empire in Late Ottoman Istanbul: Caricature,

Models of Empire, and the Case for Ottoman Exceptionalism," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, v. 27, no. 2 (2007).

- "Visions of the Mediterranean: A Classification," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 37:1(Winter 2007).

### ● Heather Hirschfeld

Heather Hirschfeld received an NEH Summer Stipend for her project on English Renaissance revenge tragedy and Reformation theology, and she spent the bulk of the summer researching depictions of Jewish and Islamic characters as models of vengeance. Her article, "Confessing Mothers: The Maternal Penitent in Early Modern Revenge Tragedy," was published in a volume entitled *The Impact of Feminism in English Renaissance Studies* (Palgrave, 2007). She was awarded the College of Arts and Sciences Junior Teaching Award for 2006-2007. Also, Dr. Hirschfeld was the recipient of the English Department Graduate Award for most outstanding faculty member in the classroom for 2006-2007.

### ● Marilyn Kallet

This summer Professor Kallet had a fellowship to write poetry

in Auvillar, as part of the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts program in France. She spent a month in "deep France" writing poems every day and taking oral histories from elderly villagers who remembered the Nazis. Some of the townspeople were collaborators, others were Resistance members, and some were just trying to get by. One Jewish family, the Hirsch family, was denounced by locals. Dr. Hirsch, a radiologist, was taken to work with Mengele, and later testified against him at Nurembourg. His wife was taken to Auschwitz and killed there. The children were hidden by a family in the town and they survived, but the daughter lost her mind. That gives you a thumbnail portrait of a complex village.

Dr. Kallet has two new books out, a children's book, *Jack the Healing Cat*, from Tellico Books, which is being co-sponsored by the UT College of Veterinary Medicine, and an anthology, *The Movable Nest: A Mother/Daughter Companion*, from Helicon Nine Editions, co-edited by North Carolina poet laureate Kathryn Stripling Byer.

Finally, Professor Kallet had just four poems published in *Blood to Remember: American Poets on the Holocaust*, ed. Charles Fishman, Time Being Books, 2007.

### Today the River

Today the Garonne runs greener than the poplars,  
more limber, sky is smoke pierced  
with light. Gulls make dazzling punctuation  
marks like childhood on Jones Beach.

The river's more fluid than people,  
who get stuck in arguments,  
in graves. Jones Beach outings all but buried,  
my mother and father the ashes of driftwood--

they got stuck when their bodies  
deserted, my father one year older  
than I am now--what would I say to them  
if they drifted past on this grassy green river?

If they made the terrible effort to come back,  
my father who deserted me for his bad heart,  
my mother drifting past without her burdens,  
could I love them quickly enough to be grasped?

My childhood marks Jones Beach like a willow,  
flows greener than poplars by the Garonne.

— Marilyn Kallet

● **Vejas Liulevicius**

In the past year, Dr. Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius was reappointed Hendrickson Professor in the UT College of Arts and Sciences for 2007-9 and published an article entitled "Precursors and Precedents: Forced Migration in Northeastern Europe during the First World War" in *Nordost-Archiv*, Vol. XIV. The University of Oregon's Center for Educational Policy Research College Board Best Practices Course Study designated his undergraduate course on German history 1800-2000 a "best practices course," with specific elements judged exemplary. In 2006, the Teaching Company of Chantilly, Virginia, which produces taped "Great Courses" in audio and DVD formats, released his 36-lecture course entitled "World War I: The Great War" (for more information, see [www.teach12.com](http://www.teach12.com)), and the review in *Audiofile* magazine praised the "stunning clarity" of the lectures.

● **Daniel Magilow**

This past year, Dr. Magilow has continued to develop his research interests in the intersections of Jewish Studies and photography. His article "People of the (Photographically-Illustrated) Book. On Roman Vishniac's 'Polish Jews: A Pictorial Record'" appeared in the essay volume *Transmedialität. Zur Ästhetik paraliterarischer Verfahren* [roughly translated as *Transmediality: On the Aesthetics of the Paraliterary Mode*]. The article concerns photographs of Eastern European Jews taken before the Holocaust by the photographer Roman Vishniac that Vishniac published shortly after the war ended.

Dr. Magilow is also tentatively planning to publish his translated, introduced, and annotated edition of a baby book through Rutgers University Press that documents the entire life of a young Slovak Jew from her birth until shortly before her death in a Nazi death camp. In connection with this project, Dr. Magilow is collaborating with colleagues in the Public History programs at Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw, Georgia and Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio, as well as the

Embassy of the Republic of Slovakia in Washington D.C., to develop an exhibition based on the life of this otherwise anonymous young girl.

Aside from these research projects, Dr. Magilow has in the past year also taken on duties as the book review editor for a new academic Jewish Studies journal, *The Journal of Jewish Identities*. The official launch of this journal is scheduled to take place at the 39th Annual Conference of the Association for Jewish Studies in Toronto, Ontario, Canada this December. The review section will also include Dr. Magilow's own critical essay about the catalogue of the New York Jewish Museum's "Jewish Identity Project: New American Photography."

And finally, Dr. Magilow has also been actively involved with furthering Jewish Studies at UT and in the Knoxville area both through his talks to the faculty Research Seminar on Modern Europe and Central Europe and in several outreach lectures presented with Dr. Gilya Schmidt at ORICL, the Oak Ridge Institute for Continued Learning.

● **Amy Neff**

Amy Neff has continued writing and research on topics from thirteenth-century Italian art. She has published an essay, "Byzantine Icons, Franciscan Prayer: Images of Intercession and Ascent in the Upper Church of San Francesco, Assisi," in a volume titled, *Franciscan Prayer*, edited by Timothy Johnson, and a critical review of William Cook's book, *Franciscan Art*. Another article will be published in *Franciscan Studies* in December. She also continues to work on her monograph on a little known but splendidly illuminated late thirteenth-century manuscript.

For those interested in Judaic Studies, probably her most interesting work this year is participation in the planning and implementation of the exhibition currently on display at McClung Museum, coordinated by Dr. Jefferson Chapman, Director of the Museum. "Sacred Beauty: A Millennium of Religious Art, 600-1600" features medieval and Renaissance art from Europe and

Asia's five major religions: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism. We hope that viewers will not only enjoy the beauty of the works displayed but will also think about connections and contrasts in the various ways in which cultures have attempted to give visual form to sacred figures and ideas. The exhibit runs through January 6, 2008.



Left to right: Professors Gilya Schmidt and Robert Bast, Dr. Jefferson Chapman, Professors Miriam Levering and Amy Neff.

● **Charles H. Reynolds**

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have contributed to the UT Judaic Studies Endowment over the past twenty years. What was once a hope and a dream is now a small gem of a program with an excellent director in Dr. Gilya Schmidt and a number of strong faculty in History, English, Religious Studies, Art and other related departments. Gilya has also ably served the Religious Studies Department as Head over the past five years. Her campus leadership has been a boon to all of us. Just be sure to let her know how much all of us appreciate these leadership contributions that have taken her away from her first loves of teaching, research and writing!

As I near retirement and contemplate my own career at UT, two of my fondest memories are the on-going success of Judaic Studies and the *Journal of Religious Ethics*. This journal, which we started at UT in 1973 with support from local Knoxville citizens, is now without question the leading international journal in its field. It is published at Florida State and is governed and managed by a distinguished national and international Board of Directors

## J.P. DESSEL ACTIVITIES

### MANFRED AND FERN STEINFELD PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT JEWISH HISTORY



#### RESEARCH

The *Festschrift* I co-edited in honor of Dr. William G. Dever finally came out and looks marvelous. I also completed co-editing a

*Festschrift* for another of my mentors, Dr. Seymour Gitin, the Director of the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research. This has also appeared and there will be a formal presentation at the annual meetings of the American Schools of Oriental Research, this year to be held in San Diego. I spent this past summer again in Jerusalem and Turkey. In Jerusalem I was at the Albright Institute, of which I am the treasurer, and after a long and exhausting stay returned all of the archaeological materials from my excavation at Tell 'Ein Zippori (in the Lower Galilee) to the Israel Department of Antiquities. Part of this process included making final plates of the object drawing. This can now be done quite easily with a lap top, scanner, laser printer, and some facility with Adobe Photoshop. While it was time consuming, I was able to complete the catalog. Moving out of a lab I have been in for the last ten years or so was sad, but I had completed all the post-excavation analysis and it is time to move on.

I left Israel for Turkey and spent a day re-enacting the movie "Planes, Trains and Automobiles." First I flew west on a 6:30 a.m. flight from Tel Aviv to Istanbul, a relatively short hop. Then I reversed my direction and flew back east from Istanbul to Adana. In Adana I took a taxi to the bus station and took a three hour bus from Adana further east to Antakya. At the bus station in Antakya I was picked up by a colleague from the Tayinat excavation and we drove further east to the dig house, located in the small

village of Tayfur Sökmen. I arrived at the dig house (*kazi evi* in Turkish) at around 7:00 p.m. It would have been much faster to drive through Lebanon and Syria but not nearly as easy and the cost of insurance for the drive is off the charts.



Workmen Barati (left) and Sulieman (right) with Dr. Dessel at Tell Ta'yinat.

I spent a month working at Tell Tayinat with a University of Toronto team, headed by my colleague and friend Tim Harrison. It was another successful season, we reached the Early Bronze Age levels in several areas, and also exposed more of a huge Iron Age II monumental building complex first excavated by



Dr. J. P. Dessel at the Neo-Hittite site of Karatepe.

the Oriental Institute in the 1930's. Among the noteworthy finds this summer was a Luwian (Neo Hittite) inscription carved in basalt and an Early Bronze III kiln.

During and after the season we took field trips to nearby sites including Tell Kinet on the İskendurun Bay being excavated by Bilkent University, the new excavations at Zincirli undertaken by the Oriental Institute and Arslantepe, excavated by the University of Rome, in Malatya. We also had a busy social calendar, attending a July 4<sup>th</sup> party given by a Pennsylvania State University team who is surveying along the coast and an Arab-Turkish village wedding that was great fun. The entire village was at the wedding, there was a live band and as much tea as you could drink. There was lots of dancing as well as celebratory rifle shots (they now use blanks).

#### TEACHING AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE

I taught World Civilizations I and Biblical Archaeology in the Fall. I always try to add something new to the World Civilization survey and this year it was a lecture on Polynesia with an emphasis on Easter Island (this is the place with the large stone torsos and heads). In Biblical Archaeology I was once again able to include a lot of newly published data. In the spring I taught two archaeology courses, one on Egypt and one on Mesopotamia. With my own research now shifting to Turkey, my course on Mesopotamia has taken on a new dimension.

In the spring semester I was acting head of the Judaic Studies Program. We had a very stimulating roster of speakers throughout the year (*see below*) but it was especially exciting to have one of my former teachers and mentors, Peter Machinist from Harvard University give a lecture. Actually Gilya had run into Peter in Japan and proffered the invitation and it was wonderful to host him in Knoxville.

**SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION**

I am the treasurer of the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research (AIAR) located in Jerusalem. We are currently involved in a massive

renovation of the hostel – this is an incredibly exciting and long overdue project. The building is almost 100 years old, so this is a challenging renovation with careful attention

not to change any of the historical characteristics of the building. This past year we had a record number of applicants for the fellowship program which is the heart of the Institute.

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**Judaic Studies Advisory Committee**

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and Trustees and has its own endowed funds. I mention the *JRE* along with Judaic Studies because both of these projects have one important factor in common: neither would have been possible without private gifts. More and more we are in a situation where significant new projects and directions in higher education—in both public and private institutions—require private funds from individuals and foundations to be launched and to continue to develop with success. I am confident our near and distant friends of Judaic Studies at UT will continue to respond to the ongoing needs and opportunities of this important program.

● **Tina Shepardson**

Dr. Shepardson is happy to announce that her book on the anti-Jewish language of Ephrem, a fourth-century Christian leader from eastern Syria, has been accepted for publication, and should be out within a year. She has also had several articles accepted for publication this year, including one on the anti-Jewish language of three fourth-century Christian leaders from Cappadocia (in modern Turkey), and another on the ways in which eastern fourth-century Christian leaders talked about the first-century destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in order to promote their particular kind of Christianity as religious orthodoxy. She is currently working on her second book, which will be about the city of Antioch (modern Antakya, Turkey). In December her first article on this topic will appear in the premier journal in her field, the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*. In August she presented a second part of this large project at an international conference in Oxford, England. In September she presented

a third essay about Antioch at UT's faculty seminar on the Mediterranean World, which she continues to chair this year. This faculty seminar, sponsored by the Humanities Initiative, continues to be one of the most rewarding experiences she has had at UT, as it provides a regular opportunity for high-level academic discussions with graduate students and faculty working on late antiquity.

It is "Medieval and Renaissance Semester" on campus this Fall, and faculty who are involved with the Marco Institute, like Dr. Shepardson, are particularly busy. They are happy that the McClung Museum exhibit "Sacred Beauty" has turned out so well, and that the concerts by the Boston Camerata, artists-in-residence this semester, have been so well received. The Marco faculty has also been encouraged to offer seminars related to the themed semester, so in addition to her usual Christianity in Late Antiquity course, she is also teaching a senior seminar on Sexuality and Gender in Early Christianity, and a small seminar for first-year Honors students on a related theme. She is pleased to say that both seminars have been extremely rewarding so far. This summer she had the opportunity to visit some Roman and early Christian remains in western Bulgaria, as well as some more modern churches and monasteries there, and she looks forward to introducing some of that material into her classes this semester.

She very much enjoyed the Late Antiquity conference in Oxford this August, and is looking forward to the annual AAR/SBL conference in November, for which she has put together a session on Syria for the Early Jewish-Christian Relations section. Several prominent scholars have agreed to participate in the

session, and Dr. Shepardson is very excited about the meeting. She will also present two papers at the conference, one in her own session and one in a session about Paula Fredriksen's new book, *Augustine and the Jews*. She also still enjoys lecturing to off-campus groups of various sorts.

● **Johanna Stiebert**

In the summer of 2007 Dr. Johanna Stiebert traveled to Botswana to assist with the organization of and to participate in the African Association for the Study of Religion Conference, which was focused on healing, religion and HIV/AIDS. Given that Johanna taught for three years prior to coming to Knoxville at the University of Botswana where the conference took place, this was a particularly marvelous event. Her presentation, entitled "'The African Holocaust': What Is In a Name?" examined the word "Holocaust" alongside other names (such as Churban and Shoah) used to designate the brutal decimation of primarily Jews and also other minorities by Nazi Germany and its collaborators. From there the paper questioned the appropriateness of calling the AIDS pandemic, which is particularly devastating in sub-Saharan Africa, "the African holocaust." The paper was well received and led to a lively discussion. This semester Johanna is teaching Biblical Hebrew language at the intermediate level, as well as the large intake World Religions course and an honors seminar, focused on the first century CE and the emergence of Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism. Johanna's long article on shame and the body as they are depicted in Psalms, Lamentations and the Thanksgiving Hymns from Qumran, has just been accepted for publication.

## JUDAIC STUDIES LECTURE SERIES

This past academic year was very busy with diverse offerings through five lectures by colleagues from Harvard, the Université de Nancy, and Israel. Again, most of these lectures were organized by Professor J.P. Dessel in my absence, with the help of Michael Booker. My heartfelt gratitude to both of them.

### Solomon-Schwartz Distinguished Lecture

On September 6, 2006, Professor Peter Machinist, Hancock Professor of Hebrew and Other Oriental Languages, Harvard University, came to Knoxville to give the Abraham and Rebecca Solomon and Ida Schwartz Distinguished Lecture on "God and Humans in the Creation Stories of Genesis." Professor Machinist was our colleague J.P. Dessel's teacher at the University of Arizona. We all were enriched by Peter's erudition and congeniality. A good time was had by all, including a very special reception compliments of an anonymous friend of Judaic Studies.

### Judaic Studies Lecture Fund



*Professors Marie-France Rouart and Paul Barrette.*

On February 16, 2007, Professor Marie-France Rouart, Professor of Comparative Literature at the Université de Nancy II, gave a talk entitled, "Jews, Gypsies and

Aborigines: Comparative Myths and Mythologies about Wanderers."

On March 8, 2007, Professor Vivian Mann, Morris and Eva Feld Chair of Judaica at The Jewish Museum and Advisor to the Master's Program in Jewish Art and Visual Culture at the Graduate School of the Jewish Theological Seminary, presented a lecture entitled, "Jewish Art/Christian Art/Islamic Art: Symbiosis and Otherness."



*Left to right: Barbara Bernstein, Professor Vivian Mann, Bernard Bernstein.*

On April 23, 2007, as part of the ongoing Abraham and Rebecca Solomon and Ida Schwartz Distinguished Lecture Series sponsored by the Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies, Dr. Ehud Toledano of the Graduate School of Historical Studies, Tel Aviv University, presented a lecture entitled, "As if Silent and Absent: Bonds of Enslavement in the Islamic Middle East," in the Black Cultural Center on the campus of the University of Tennessee. Dr. Toledano's well-attended lecture was based on some of the concepts introduced in his recently published book by the same name. Dr. Toledano focused on examining the experience of slavery in the Islamic Middle East from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century. In his lecture, Dr. Toledano moved past the traditional master/slave domination paradigm by telling the story of Ottoman slavery from the point of view of the slaves themselves. Dr. Toledano's original

insights into this subject provided the audience in attendance with new ways of thinking about the practice of slavery. Dr. Toledano's lecture was co-sponsored by the Departments of Religious Studies, History, the Marco Institute for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and the Abraham and Rebecca Solomon and Ida Schwartz Distinguished Lecture Fund for Judaic Studies.

### Robinson Family Lecture on Modern Israel

On April 16, 2007, the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Robinson Family Lecture Series on Modern Israel sponsored a lecture entitled, "Israel's Disengagement from the Gaza Strip: What Has Israel Learned?" by Professor Michael Feige, The Ben-Gurion Research Center, Ben-Gurion University, and Visiting Professor at the Institute for the Study of Modern Israel of Emory University. Dr. Feige is a sociologist-anthropologist, who studies Israeli society, and specializes in issues of collective memory and political myth. Dr. Feige's lecture at the International House on the campus of the University of Tennessee addressed various aspects of the way in which Israelis view and interpret their past and construct the meaning of historical space. His talk touched on how social movements like Gush Emunim and Peace Now attempt to re-evaluate the Jewish, Zionist and Israeli past; the changing place of archaeology in the Zionist ethos; the commemoration of Prime-Minister Yitzhak Rabin; and symbolizing the nation in various sites, such as Mini-Israel. Dr. Feige is currently working with Professor David Ohana on a study of Ben-Gurion's place in the memory of Israeli society.

## GILYA G. SCHMIDT ACTIVITIES

As I alluded to in my greetings, 2006-7 was a very exciting year for me. Having spent more than a month during summer 2006 in Germany, I made good progress on my book project, so that I was able to focus totally on Department of Religious Studies and Judaic Studies matters in fall 2006, in anticipation of my upcoming leave in spring 2007. During that time I intended to nearly finish the draft of the manuscript, and I did much of what I had planned, only to discover that there were more sources yet to analyze. And so I did, with the result that there will still be more to integrate into the existing manuscript. This I hope to complete in 2007-8.

Also last fall, I was invited to meet with a delegation from Shanghai University, with whom UT has established a linkage. This led to a trip to China in July of this year to teach the Holocaust to Chinese colleagues and graduate students, something entirely new for me.

Together with the "Living On" exhibition and programs at the East Tennessee History Center in fall 2006, progress on the "Living On" book project, the many different leadership opportunities, the preparations for the "Sacred Beauty" exhibition at the McClung Museum, and trips to Israel and Germany, it was a full and exhilarating year.

### TEACHING

In fall 2006 I taught RS 381/JS 381, "Introduction to Judaism," to about 35 students. It is a favorite among students because of the variety of Jewish topics that the course covers. Since I was on leave in spring 2007, I did not teach a regular course, although I did guest lecture in German 415, Professor David Lee's Berlin class, on January 24 and March 7, 2007, on Jewish art in Berlin and the Holocaust respectively.

This semester I am teaching RS 385/JS 385, "Contemporary Jewish

Thinkers," which this time deals entirely with German Jewry since Roman times. During the second half of the semester the students are studying and critiquing part of my book manuscript. In spring 2008 I will again teach RS 386/JS 386, "Voices of the Holocaust."

I was also happy to see one of our graduate students, Jamin Carlisle, graduate with an M.A. in Philosophy, with a concentration in Religious Studies. Jamin's interest for a number of years has been the study of Judaism, and especially religious Zionism. For his master's thesis he did a very interesting comparison of the Christian religious right and religious Zionists. Congratulations, Jamin!

Two other Ph.D. students have come my way, one of them in Psychology, who works on forgiveness, and a student in History, working with Professor Vejas Liulevicius, who has Yiddish language skills, and is interested in World War I rabbis (*Feldrabbiner*). It is exciting to find students who are interested in topics that are part of my own research agenda.

### A CHINA EXPERIENCE

Shanghai was probably not foremost on my radar in November of 2006 when the call came to join a



*Professors Gilya Schmidt and Changgang Guo, Shanghai University.*

delegation from Shanghai University for dinner. It was due to that coincidence that I was able to travel to China at the end of June 2007 to join

more than 80 Chinese scholars and graduate students for a conference, "Teaching the Holocaust: International Task Force Seminar."



*Group picture of Holocaust Seminar participants at Shanghai University.*

This conference/seminar was organized by the London Jewish Culture Centre and the History Department of the College of Liberal Arts at Shanghai University, as well as the Center for Jewish Studies in Shanghai, under the auspices of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research, an organization of about 25 member



*Stateless Persons Memorial in Shanghai.*

countries. The organizer was Professor Changgang Guo, of Shanghai University, my dinner partner back in November of 2006. This is how I came to travel to China. I would like to thank Mr. Jerold Gotel, the Overseas Director of the London Jewish Culture Centre, and Professor Guo for including me in this truly outstanding undertaking. Not only did I enjoy meeting the Chinese colleagues and students, who teach and study the Holocaust, but also my

colleagues from The Wannsee Haus in Berlin, Wolf Kaiser; Irit Abramski from Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Dr. Dan Greene from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and Trudy Gold from the London Jewish Culture Centre. Survivor Joanna Millan was enveloped with love by all who met her, and I will never forget her riveting presentation of her tragic childhood. Professor Guo and I are currently exploring the possibility of strengthening the cooperation between our two institutions, and I hope to return to China next spring to lecture at Shanghai University, perhaps also at Kaifeng and Nanjing Universities. For the future we hope to raise travel funds for additional faculty to participate.

After the conference I traveled to Nanjing to visit the Diane and Guilford Glazer Institute of Jewish Studies at Nanjing University. The



*The Diane and Guilford Glazer Institute of Jewish Studies at Nanjing University, China.*

Center, administered by Professor Xu Xin, and endowed by Diane and Guilford, was dedicated in November of 2006. But that is not the beginning of Professor Xu Xin's efforts to teach Judaism to Chinese students, and to raise the money for scholarships so that Chinese students could travel to Israel to study Hebrew. Mrs. Beverly Friend of Chicago describes in the dedication booklet how Xu Xin's interest in Judaism came to be. She relates how, back in 1984, her husband Jim was invited to go to China for a semester to teach and how Xu Xin took care of him from the moment he stepped off the plane. She says, "Xu Xin not only whisked Jim through customs, he whisked Jim through every difficulty, smoothing his path,

solving every problem as he acted as Jim's mentor and colleague while in China. He also became closer than a brother. The meeting transformed both men. Xu, at that time teaching a course in Jewish American Authors, had never actually met a Jew! Jim was his first!" Professor Xu lived with the Friends' for a year in 1986, learning all about Judaism, and from there the journey continued. In 1992, when China recognized Israel, Professor Xu established the first Institute of Jewish Studies in China. In his dedication speech he said, "The Institute of Jewish Studies at Nanjing University was first established in May 1992 in order to meet a growing demand for Judaic Studies in China and to promote the study of Jewish subjects among Chinese college students and a better understanding between the two peoples following the establishment of full diplomatic relations between China and Israel in January 1992." It was a long road to the Glazer endowment in 2006, an article on Professor Xu Xin's work in the *Forwards* that caught many a Jew's attention in the United States, and our meeting in July of 2007, when he was shepherding a group of American Jews around China for two weeks. We envisioned our meeting as the beginning of a linkage between UT and Nanjing University much the way it exists between Shanghai University and UT. I hope very much that such a liaison will come to fruition in the future.

Upon my return, the UT homepage prominently featured my visit to China under "Ready for the World." Please see the Judaic Studies website at <http://web.utk.edu/~judaic>, on the homepage under "Notes."

## RESEARCH

I enjoy few things more than secluding myself with my research papers and writing. This past year brought a number of wonderful opportunities to present on my current research on rural German Judaism, from the "Living On" lecture in September to the German Research Seminar and a lecture in German at the Jewish Museum in Göppingen-

Jebenhausen, Germany, in May. For the website of the Jewish Museum, please see [http://www.edjewnet.de/jewmuseum/jmus\\_en.htm](http://www.edjewnet.de/jewmuseum/jmus_en.htm).

## GERMAN RESEARCH SEMINAR

In spring 2005, it was my good fortune to be invited to become a core member of a lecture series "German Identities and Encounters" that was convened by Professor David Tompkins from the History Department. From this lecture series came the idea to submit a proposal for a German research seminar to be funded by the Humanities Initiative of the College of Arts and Sciences. This proposal, on the theme of Insiders/Outsiders in Modern Germany and Central Europe, was successful and the seminar has now been renewed for a second year. Other core members include Professors Vejas Liulevicius and Denise Phillips from the History Department, and Professors Daniel Magilow, Stefanie Ohnesorg, and David Lee from German. The seminar explores different aspects of modern Germany and Central Europe, with faculty presentations and invited guest lecturers. In fall 2006 Daniel Magilow and I recreated our lectures from the "Living On" lecture series for the seminar, and on February 28, 2007 I also gave a lecture on reparations entitled, "Requisitions—Restitution—Reparations: The Story of the 'Judenhaus' in Süssen." For this year's activities, please see [http://web.utk.edu/~mfil/languages/german/research\\_seminar](http://web.utk.edu/~mfil/languages/german/research_seminar).



*Dr. Gilya Schmidt explains family of Jacob Lang, Süssen, Germany.*

## RURAL GERMAN JEWS

I returned from Israel on April 12 and stayed just long enough to repack for Germany to continue with



Hosts Werner and Bärbel Runschke, Süssen, Germany.

the book project. Since I had been there only last summer, my home away from home was ready, and I went to work without much delay, taking breaks for evening walks and weekend hikes in the lovely countryside and enjoying my hosts' wonderful meals at lunchtime. There were few forays to other places, as I was really pressed for time. However, while in Israel I had visited the Research Institute at Yad Vashem and found information about the Ottenheimer family of which I had not been previously aware. I now traveled to the State Archive in Ludwigsburg to look up these documents, only to be told that there were many more files on the Ottenheimers and the Langs. Naturally, I couldn't resist peeking into the folders, and found much of interest, including hand drawings of Hedwig Ottenheimer's jewelry that was confiscated by the Nazis. Hence, chapters already written will become a bit more colorful.

I also had the good fortune to be interviewed about my research by a reporter from the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, thanks to the efforts of Dr. Karl-Heinz Ruess, the Director of the Göppingen City Archive. This article yielded several phone calls and emails with information. One of the phone calls was quite unique. It was from a man in Stuttgart who regularly visits Cuba. The name Ottenheimer in the heading of the article caught his eye, and he called to tell me that he has been visiting the missing Ottenheimer

son, Werner Ottenheimer, for the past fifteen years on his annual trips to Cuba. He not only provided telephone number and address, but even called him for me to pave the way for my talking with him. This we did, for two hours, and I learned some interesting information about the Göppingen Jewish community. If all goes well, I shall visit 91-year old Werner Ottenheimer later this year to interview him about his childhood in Göppingen.

Another bonus of the newspaper interview was an email from Lilo Guggenheim Levine in Saranac Lake, New York. I was well familiar with her name and the history of her family, also from Göppingen, and was so excited to be contacted by her. In August I went to visit her and her husband Mel, and Lilo had a surprise.



Mel and Lilo Levine.

Her childhood friend Isolde Netter Vandermeulen and her daughter joined us for the weekend. So I got to interview not only Lilo, but also Lilli (Isolde's middle name). We had a wonderful time, and in addition to learning many interesting things about the Göppingen Jewish community, Mel and Lilo as well as Lilo and Lilli regaled us with musical interludes.



Lilo Levine and Lilli Vandermeulen revive a childhood pastime.

What a treat! My very sincere thanks to Lilo and Mel for hosting me, and to Lilli and Debbie for making the journey to join us. It was a precious experience.

Upon my return from Germany I also paid a visit to Inge and Hugo Lang in New Jersey to share with them all of the new things that had happened during my stay in Germany.



Inge and Hugo Lang.

While in Germany, Dr. Ruess extended an invitation to lecture on the Jews of Süssen at the Jewish Museum in Jebenhausen. It was a well-attended lecture by a diverse audience, with a number of questions following.



Dr. Karl-Heinz Ruess introduces Gilya Schmidt in Jewish Museum, Jebenhausen, Germany.

A relatively new German undertaking is the placing of "Stolpersteine," or "stumbling stones" into sidewalks throughout German towns to call attention to locations where Jews once lived.



Kirchheim stumbling stones.



*Kirchheim on Teck.*

In Göppingen, and Kirchheim/Teck -- another satellite community of the Jewish community of Göppingen -- this has already been done.



*Rabbi Aaron Tänzer house in Göppingen, Germany.*



*Stumbling stone for Berta Tänzer in Göppingen.*

Currently such a program is also being discussed in Süssen. Mr. Werner Runschke, the Director of the Süssen City Archive, gives regular lectures to school classes and other interested groups on the Jews of Süssen, so that awareness has been raised greatly over the past ten years.

There also are other visible signs of commemoration, a historical fountain in the center of the town



*Gilya Schmidt at historical fountain in Süssen, Germany.*

with a deportation scene, a memorial plaque in the municipal cemetery, and two alleys named for the two families, the Ottenheimers and the Langs. The stumbling stones would be one more way to "never forget."



*Close-up of deportation scene on fountain in Süssen, Germany.*



*Holocaust memorial in Süssen cemetery.*

## Congratulations!



*Werner Runschke displays Bürgermedaille, Süssen, Germany.*

Congratulations are in order for Mr. Runschke, who was being honored by the City of Süssen for his dedication and the excellent work he does on behalf of the municipality in his capacity as director of the municipal archive. On November 26, 2006 he was presented with the *Bürgermedaille* (citizen's medal) in a ceremony that was attended by all living mayors of the town and a large group of grateful citizens.

## ISRAEL AND JEWISH LITURGY PROJECT

After working on the rural Judaism book project for about two months between January and March,

I traveled to Israel on March 22 of this year to work on the next big undertaking, my Jewish Liturgical Music Project, on the life and work of Cantor Mordecai G. Heiser



*Host Carol Caplan and midrash artist Jo Milgrom, Jerusalem, Israel.*

of Congregation B'nai Israel in Pittsburgh, and to celebrate Passover with my friends in Israel. In organizing the tapes that we had digitized for this book project, I came across a tape I had never noticed before, of a fairly complete Kol Nidre service. I was anxious to study this

tape with my teacher, Professor Eliyahu Schleifer at Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem, and to find the actual music Cantor Mordecai G. Heiser had used for the service.

Since much of Jerusalem shuts down for Pesach, I needed to

get to work quickly and intensively. The HUC librarians actually ushered me out the door on Erev Pesach, but I was pleased with what I had achieved. I spent much of Pesach with our good friends Joe and Marion Goodstein, formerly from Knoxville, and their family. During the holiday week, former UT student Avi Shem-Tov paid us a visit, and we traveled to



Avi Shem-Tov and Gilya Schmidt, Jerusalem, Israel.



Gilya Schmidt in Har Homa with Herodion in background.

Tekoa to visit with Yoseph and Lesley Urso, formerly from Knoxville, and I also had a chance to visit a friend's new home in Har Homa. For my reflections on this trip, please see my essay on the Judaic Studies website at <http://utk.edu/~judaic> on the homepage under "Notes."

#### CONFERENCES

I participated in three scholarly conferences, the American Academy of Religion annual meeting, the Association for Jewish Studies annual meeting, and the International Humanities Conference which I enjoy very much because of its heavy emphasis on the arts. I also evaluate

paper proposals on Judaism for the organizers of this conference. At the AJS meeting I presented a paper on "The Concept of 'Israel' in Martin Buber's Mind and Life," and at the Humanities conference I discussed Jewish settlement patterns in rural German communities in a paper entitled, "Oh Little Village Mine."

#### PUBLICATIONS

Recent publications include a long awaited article on scholar Richard Bernstein, "Richard Bernstein on the Jewish Question," in *The Pragmatic Century. Conversations with Richard J. Bernstein*, published by SUNY Press in 2006. *Soundings* published a book review on Hugh Nissenson's *The Days of Awe*, a delightful tale of Jewish life on the Upper West Side in New York. I was also invited to contribute to a number of projects, among them an article on the concept of "Awe" for a new *Encyclopedia of Love in World Religions*, recently published.

I was also honored to contribute the text for the Judaism section of the catalogue for the "Sacred Beauty: A Millennium of Religious Art, 600-1600" exhibition, organized by Marco. It was great fun working with Jeff Chapman and Debbie Goodiel of the McClung Museum on the information they needed, from the history to the captions to Jewish population centers in various periods and an example of a distinctive synagogue. We had several meetings, and I learned a lot in the process. The docents, during our training session, had many questions, not all of which I had answers to! My thanks to all, as well as to Rabbi Louis Zivic and Arnold and Mary Linda Schwarzbart with whom I consulted on many aspects of this exhibition. The exhibition is on display until January 6, 2008. For more information, see the Marco website, <http://web.utk.edu/~semester>.

#### SERVICE

##### To the Profession

I continue to serve as chair of the Judaism Section of SECSOR, the South East Commission for the Study of Religion. Last spring I did not attend the annual meeting in Nashville, as I

was in Israel. I would like to thank Jamin Carlisle for attending in my stead, chairing a session and attending the chairs meeting. We just completed putting two sessions together for spring 2008, one on post-biblical topics, the other on the Dead Sea Scrolls, a regular favorite.

##### To the University

From February 18-23, I was invited to attend a university-wide Leadership Institute in Gatlinburg, which was very informative and fun.

I continue to serve as Head for the Department of Religious Studies, which automatically makes me a member of the Humanities Initiative and the Space Committee.

I also continue to chair the Judaic Studies program.

##### Public Service

Local talks included ORICL in Oak Ridge. The organizers invited Professor Daniel Magilow and me to give a mini course based on our lectures for the "Living On" exhibition. On January 25 I lectured on "Recovering Lost Jewish Communities" and on February 8, together with Dan Magilow, on the uses of historical sources. On February 1 the Oak Ridge Jewish Book Group asked me to speak to them about Glueckel of Hameln (1646-1724), and on February 3 I spoke to the Knoxville Jewish History Group, also on the German research.

## TENNESSEE HOLOCAUST COMMISSION

In my capacity as a Commissioner on the Tennessee Holocaust Commission, I was asked to take on the task of overseeing the "Living On: Portraits of Tennessee Survivors and Liberators" exhibition while in Knoxville. Created by photographer and UT Professor Rob Heller, in collaboration with Dawn Weiss Smith, the exhibition contains portraits and biographies of Holocaust survivors and liberators in Tennessee. Curated

by Susan Knowles, it had traveled to Nashville, Chattanooga, Clarksville, Memphis and Kentucky prior to coming to Knoxville. The exhibition was on display at the East Tennessee History Center from July 17 – October 22, 2006. It was a very great pleasure to partner with the East Tennessee Historical Society, and I would like to thank especially Chere Henderson and Dr. Michael Toomey for their exemplary cooperation.

In collaboration with ETHS, we created nine diverse educational



programs for the public and an opening reception, which was a fundraiser for the Tennessee Holocaust Commission. My co-chair for the opening reception on August 27 was Dr. Bernard Rosenblatt, former executive director of the Knoxville Jewish Alliance. The reception, catered by our very own Marilyn Burnett, was very successful, with nearly 200 invited guests, including a number of local dignitaries, such as Mayor Bill Haslam and UT President John Petersen. Honorary co-chairs of the event were Bernard Bernstein, Esq., Senator Tim Burchett, Robert Goodfriend, and Dr. Robert A. Levy, UT. We raised approximately \$8,000 locally, and received a surprise gift of \$10,000 from Diane and Guilford Glazer for the work of the Tennessee Holocaust Commission. Thanks are

due to a host of individuals – the donors, ETHS, the THC, the University of Tennessee, including the College of Arts and Sciences, Heska Amuna synagogue, Temple Beth El, Oak Ridge Jewish Congregation, Chabad, and the KJA. A very special personal thank you to Dr. Bernard Rosenblatt for his great work on behalf of the exhibition, and to Dr. Deborah Scaperoth, my assistant.

The programming surrounding the exhibition started as soon as it was installed.

On July 24, Lisa Oakley, Education Curator of ETHS, organized a Teacher Seminar which was very well attended.

On September 6, Professor Gilya Schmidt presented an illustrated noon-time lecture on her current research, "Recovering Small-Town German Jewish Life: The Instance of Süssen."

On September 7, Rabbi Beth Schwartz convened a Panel of Holocaust Survivors. As it was an evening event, several busses brought students from surrounding communities, and there were about 200 people present.

On September 10, Professor Daniel Magilow, UT, presented a paper on "The Short Life and Death of Kitty Weichherz" (1929-1942).

On September 13, Professor Kurt Piehler, Center for the Study of War and Society, UT, spoke on "Veterans of World War II," with some veterans present.

On October 4, Rabbi Louis Zivic, Heska Amuna Synagogue, moderated a Panel of Children of Survivors entitled, "Second Generation: Inheritors of Kaddish."

On October 9, Professor Marilyn Kallet, UT, and Rabbi Beth Schwartz, Temple Beth El, spoke on their trip to Poland and read some of the poetry they had written. The program was entitled, "Packing Light: Poetry Returns to Riga."

On October 16, Professor Robert Heller, UT, and Susan Knowles, curator, spoke about the process of creating the exhibition in a presentation entitled, "'Living On': An Artistic Perspective."

The final event occurred on October 22, the last day of the exhibition. Will Pedigo, UT graduate and documentary filmmaker, showed and discussed the award-winning video which he created about the making of the exhibition, "Living On: Tennesseans Remembering the Holocaust." Will, who works for public television in Nashville, received an Emmy for his effort.

The exhibition has gone on to Clarksville and Johnson City over the past year, and looking back a year later, one has a sense of accomplishment and the satisfaction of a job well done. Again, my heartfelt thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make this exhibition a success in Knoxville. And it was a success, and an eye-opener. As my students wrote after seeing the exhibition, "I had no ideas that survivors and liberators live among us right here in Tennessee."

An exciting outcome of the exhibition is the production of a book which will be published by UT Press. I was honored to write the Preface for the book. This way not only our generation is witnessing to the experience, but we will also be able to pass the memory on to posterity.

## STUDENTS

Igor de Souza, former top UT College Scholar, is pursuing his Ph.D. in medieval Judaism at the University of Chicago.

Jamin Carlisle received his M.A. in Philosophy, with a concentration in Religious Studies this year. His area of interest was religious Zionism and fundamental Christianity.

Lauren Shey graduated this past year with a double major in Sociology and Judaic Studies. She accepted a position as Assistant Director for Programming with the Milwaukee BBYO.

Evan Bronstein, a Psychology major, double majored in Judaic Studies, and graduated this past year.

Congratulations to all!

(<http://www.tennesseeholocaustcommission.org>)

## JEWISH FACULTY OUTREACH

The Knoxville Jewish Alliance has been very proactive in bringing together Jewish faculty at UT for a social hour and some programming over the past year. In fall 2006, we were honored to be able to meet Provost Robert Holub, who had arrived from the University of California at Berkeley. Professor Gilya Schmidt introduced Provost Holub, who is a scholar of German, with a focus on two giants in German intellectual history, Friedrich Nietzsche and Heinrich Heine. Dr. Holub was president of the North American Heine Society for ten years. Professor Holub, a faculty member in the German Studies Program, is a prolific scholar, who published about a hundred book reviews, an equal number of articles, and a dozen books during his active career as a scholar. He was trained by legends in German Jewish scholarship such as George Mosse and is a contemporary of other scholars like Klaus Bergahn and Alexander Orbach who became teachers to some of us. He truly comes from an academic tradition where standing on the shoulders of those who came before us is valued highly.

In February 2007, we were honored to formally introduce Dr. Bruce E. Bursten, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, who came to UT from Ohio State University in 2005, to the Jewish faculty. Professor J. P. Dessel delivered an eloquent introduction, elucidating Professor Bursten's illustrious career as a chemist and distinguished professor. He has been widely honored not only for his scientific endeavors, but also

for his teaching. Over the span of his career he has authored and co-authored over 150 research papers, co-authored one of the leading textbooks in general chemistry, and presented over 130 papers at professional conferences and symposia. Professor Dessel added an at once remarkable and humorous note when he informed us that "Bruce headed up a team which for the first time bonded uranium to argon." In this Dr. Dessel saw a parallel to an earlier event, when "another Jewish guy, Kal-El, AKA Superman, did this same kind of stuff with another noble gas – Krypton – back in the '40s." This got a good laugh from those assembled. Professor Bursten's professional standing among chemists led to his being chosen President-Elect of the American Chemical Society (ACS) for 2007. He will serve a one-year term as president-elect before becoming president of ACS in 2008. With more than 160,000 members, the ACS is the world's largest scientific organization. We congratulate Dean Bursten on this richly deserved honor and wish him all the best in his very full life.

On October 29 of this year we welcomed Ambassador Reda Mansour, Consul General of Israel to the Southeastern United States. Ambassador Mansour, who is a Druze, demonstrates the diversity among Israeli citizens.

## SHTETL NEWS

Dr. Bernard Rosenblatt, very able leader of the Knoxville Jewish Alliance, was succeeded this year by a new executive director. We welcome into the community Jeff and Charlene Gubitiz. Jeff and Charlene are not new to Knoxville,

as they lived here a number of years ago, though in a slightly different context. Between 1985 and 2007 Jeff and Charlene lived in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. For the past 18 years Charlene has been a Jewish educator. She also performs as a cantorial soloist and works as a reading interventionist. Jeff and Charlene have three children. We are very happy to have the Gubitiz family in our community, and are happy to work with Jeff on Jewish programming for UT and the community.

As head of the Human Immunology and Cancer/Alzheimer's Disease and Amyloid-Related Disorders Research Program at the University of Tennessee Graduate School of Medicine, Dr. Alan Solomon has accumulated many honors and distinctions over the past 40 plus years, among them holding the longest-running research grant at the University of Tennessee. This past summer he became an instant celebrity, being interviewed by *The New York Times* and the BBC, among many, for his discovery that *foie gras*, a culinary gourmet favorite, could contribute to a number of diseases, including Alzheimer's, rheumatoid arthritis, and type-2 diabetes. Dr. Solomon is a long-time supporter of Judaic Studies at the University of Tennessee, and we congratulate him wholeheartedly on the success his dedication has brought him.

Long-time friends Moshe and Ilana Siman-Tov celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary this past year. Mazal tov v'brachot!

## JEWISH STUDENT CENTER/HILLEL

Jewish students at UT are thriving under the very able leadership of Deborah Oleshansky. Deborah has found creative – though we hope temporary -- solutions to the dilemma of the Jewish Student Center/Hillel. Since we lost our house on campus several years ago, it has been difficult to find a gathering place for the group, in spite of the kind offers of several campus groups to share their space.

Deborah holds regular “office hours” at Starbucks in Hodges Library, uses the International House for very successful outreach events, including the International Festival, and places students with families in the Jewish community for Shabbat and holiday meals. Professor J.P. Dessel serves as faculty advisor to the group. The Jewish Student Center/Hillel is wholly financed by the Knoxville Jewish Alliance. If you would like to find out about their activities, please contact Deborah at [doleshansky@jewishknoxville.org](mailto:doleshansky@jewishknoxville.org) or visit the website at <http://www.utk.edu/~uthillel>.

## JEWISH BOOKS FOR CHINA

On November 27 and December 11, the Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies held a book drive to collect Jewish books for universities in China. Thank you to Jeff Gubitz and the staff at the AJCC for all of their help with this project. And thank you all for your participation!

Visit the Knoxville Jewish Alliance Web site:  
[www.jewishknoxville.org](http://www.jewishknoxville.org)

## Become a friend of Judaic Studies at UT

The Fern and Manfred Steinfeld Program in Judaic Studies is in its second decade. Public lectures, in collaboration with other UT departments and the Knoxville Jewish Alliance, Holocaust Conferences, book discussions, as well as cultural experiences such as trips to the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., have helped to educate on campus as well as in the Jewish community and the community at large. Your support can help to make our program better and stronger. If you wish to make a contribution, the following funds are available:

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You can also find us on the Web:  
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The NEWSLETTER of the  
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