

# Chat Room

This week the Forward launches THE SHMOOZE, a weekly romp through the lighter side of the news. Please see PAGE 2.

## the Shmooze

Ms. Ali G. Mullis Tribal Rite

S

For Yiddishists, Summer Is A Picnic — At the Cemetery



Weddi

### ARTS & CULTURE

## A Lost Chapter From the Life of Oz

By ANDREW R. HEINZE

If you've read Amos Oz's powerful new memoir, "A Tale of Love and Darkness," in English, you missed something I'm not referring to the "something" that is "lost in translation," those poetic nuances that will not migrate from Hebrew to English. I mean, you missed an entire chapter.

You wouldn't know this, because the English edition doesn't indicate that it is both a translation and an

ed Oz airing a pet peeve: the abuse of novelists by their readers. For anyone interested in what an outstanding writer has to say about how we should, and should not, treat a work of fiction, the chapter is indispensable reading.

When I stumbled upon the deletion, I thought it might have something to do with the same editorial advice Richard Rodriguez received, but rejected, prior

# FORWARD

שפירא פארוארט

FOUNDED APRIL 22, 1897

\$1.00

SUBSCRIPTIONS: 1-800-901-3875

VOLUME CIX, NO. 31,559

JULY 22, 2008

©2008 FORWARD ASSOCIATION, INC.



STANDOFF: Protesters attempting to march on Gaza to challenge disengagement confront a line of soldiers who halted them and penned them in July 19 at the Negev village of Kfar Maimon.

## Religious Troops Torn Between Faith, Duty

TEL AVIV — There was a time when Captain Asaf Yemini, a religious officer in Israel's elite Golani brigade, would have been a hero in the Gaza settlement of Gedid, where he

### THE SITUATION

OFER SHELAH

grew up. But last Tuesday, friends and neighbors were calling him a traitor, as he stood with his unit, blocking anti-disengagement protesters from entering Gaza.

Yemini and his troops are sta-

tioned at the Kissufim border crossing, guarding against nightly assaults by protesters who try to infiltrate Gaza to join the opposition to withdrawal. Confrontations have been violent. In recent days fellow settlers even published his cell phone number, urging allies to send him instant messages telling him to disobey orders. Yemini has stood fast, but his personal plight has become a symbol of the rift between belief and duty that threatens to harm the Israeli military long after the evacuation.

SHELAH Page 5 ▶



STEADFAST: Asaf Yemini briefs troops facing protests.

## Battle Over Tactics May Split Labor Federation

By E.J. KESSLER

A looming fight may lead to the breakup of the country's

Laborers' International Union and the combined needle work-hotel worker union Unite

in Chicago.

Whether the unions stay in the AFL-CIO or pull out, most

## Israeli Report Calls Argentina Bombing Payback for '92 Raid

### Leaders Urged: Weigh Policies' Impact on Jews

By MARC PERELMAN

A quasi-governmental Israeli body has acknowledged formally that the 1994 bombing of a Jewish communal center in Argentina, in which 85 people were killed, may have been an unanticipated consequence of Israeli military actions in South Lebanon.

The acknowledgement came in the second annual report of the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, a Jerusalem think tank affiliated to the Jewish Agency for Israel. The report, released July 11, cites the bombing of the AMIA building in Buenos Aires as a possible consequence of Israel's assassination in early 1992 of the leader of Hezbollah, Sheikh Abbas Mussawi.

The Mussawi assassination and AMIA bombing are cited to back up the institute's call for Israel to weigh consequences on Diaspora Jews when formulating government policy.

"It seems that the question of whether the Israeli action might trigger an attack on Jewish people targets was not considered," the institute said in its executive report. "There exists no formal mechanism in the Israeli government to systematically take into account considerations pertaining to the Jewish people."

The 11th anniversary of the bombing, the world's deadliest antisemitic attack since World War II, was marked this week in Buenos Aires with a call by the country's main Jewish groups for a thorough investigation of the attack. No one was ever convicted.

A call for formal Israel Diaspora policy consultations appeared in the policy institute's first annual report, issued in September 2004. The decision to cite the deadly Lebanon-Argentina causality link appears intended to ratchet up the pressure on Israeli leaders to enact the recommendation of the first report.

The past year has seen the virtual collapse of

dream of becoming a trainer only after attending her last child to Yeshiva Kaufman, who worked out with a number of trainers before becoming religiously observant, said that she "give[s] more spiritually and emotionally than [she] ever got."

Kaufman is not alone in seeing training as a form of giving. Jonathan Fass, a 28-year-old graduate student from New Brunswick, N.J., said, "When I help someone in the gym, I am performing a mitzvah, and I am very proud that I have studied and devoted myself to a field that allows me to do just that."

Some trainers likened their work to prayer.

rabbi from Pittsfield, Mass. said that his Jewish background has been effective in helping him to adopt his clients into his own "fitness family." Salzman began his career in the athletic world. In the mid-1970s he wrestled for Israel on the same team that lost three members at the 1972 Munich Olympics. He wound up working as a conditioning coach for the Maccabi Tel Aviv basketball and soccer teams and, through various soccer and other connections, made his way to London in the mid-'80s, hoping to break into sports conditioning with British soccer players. That never panned out,

because there one had to study for five years to become a trainer, whereas here some personal training certifications can be gotten after only two days. Although not religiously observant, Dyskin, who now lives in Forest Hills, N.Y., considers himself a fervent Zionist, two of his five daughters live in Israel. When asked if he thought it was important to have a Jewish trainer, Dyskin responded, "Just as important as having a Jewish doctor."

*Avi Dresner is a freelance writer and personal trainer in Manhattan and the Berkshires.*

## A Century Later, Immigrant Story Finds Its Coda

By ADAM J. SACKS

When a young real estate developer acquired some property on Manhattan's Lower East Side, he figured he'd gotten a deal. But it took some time before recognizing the magnitude of his find.

In 1982, Manhattan's Lower East Side was not yet the gentrifying wonderland it is today. Judah Klausner was, nevertheless, drawn to the neighborhood's tenements and their shabby charm. Together with friend Richard Freedman, Klausner bought and renovated a building at the corner of Ridge and Rivington Streets. A year later, the two bought a second building on Ridge Street, and finally they

*A New York builder unearths family history by chance.*

bought the empty lot between their two purchases, at 114 Ridge.

Waiting for the value to increase, Klausner left the plot fallow for the next decade-and-a-half. (His patience would be handsomely rewarded.) But as he began to develop the property, Klausner discovered that he was in possession of the site where his immigrant grandparents had lived almost a century earlier.

While breaking ground on the empty lot, he discovered some buried bricks. Realizing that likely they were once part of a building, he decided to save them. At a family get-together soon thereafter, a cousin informed him that from 1903 to 1905, right after the family's immigration to the United States, his grandfather and a number of other relatives lived there. The bricks that Klausner saved may once have formed the walls shielding his family.

Klausner's new building, The Coda, opened in August 2003, just as the neighborhood was booming. "Coda was the



**FULL CIRCLE:** Elena Neustadter (above) recently moved into a building on Manhattan's Lower East Side (left). It was built by a cousin of hers, on the spot where her immigrant great-grandparents (whose pictures she is holding) lived a century ago.

PHOTOS BY ADAM J. SACKS

first luxury high rise on the Lower East Side," Klausner said.

Klausner is a musician, and he named the building with a nod toward the area's musical history. He decorated the lobby walls with scores written by such area Jewish songwriters as Sammy Cahn and Irving Berlin.

While The Coda's interior is sleek and modern, Klausner adorned the building's windows with variations on the arched lintels that decorate the windows of the neighboring tenements. The six stone lion heads on the building's facade are an acknowledgement of Klausner's great-grandfather Aryeh (Hebrew for lion) Neustadter. A farmer, Neustadter lived in Podkamen, which is located outside Brody, Galicia, once a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. After the First World War it was part of the Polish Republic, and since the Second World War it has been part of Ukraine. Though most of Neustadter's family immigrated to America, he never did.

One final twist remained. Two great-granddaughters of one of the Neustadters who once lived on the street, Sarah and Elena Neustadter, already had spent months in a fruitless apartment search when their mother informed them that their cousin had some property he was looking to rent. Elena coincidentally called Klausner on the day The Coda opened. She went down to the site and was informed by her cousin of the familial connection to the property. After making that discovery, she and her sister determined that "we had to live there." Elena, who grew up on the Upper West Side and graduated from the Ramaz Upper School, views the process as circular. The descendants of the original immigrants are returning to the Lower East Side. The one big difference: They're paying a lot more in rent.

*Adam J. Sacks, most of whose great-grandparents were avid Forward readers, is currently a New York City Teaching Fellow. He recently served as associate producer on two films in the recent Jewish Museum exhibit on Jewish Women and their salons: "La Juive" and "Sundays at Salka's."*