

The Jewish Association of the Philippines

Tammuz/Av 5769

July 2009

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Parashat

July 4	<i>Chukat-Balak</i>
July 11	<i>Pinchas</i>
July 18	<i>Matot-Mase'ei</i>
July 25	<i>Devarim</i>

SHABBAT CANDLE LIGHTING

July 3	6:11PM
July 10	6:11PM
July 17	6:11PM
JJuly 24	6:09PM

ROSH CHODESH

July 22

WEEKLY

Sunday: 8:00 am Minian/ 9:30 am Hebrew School

Monday: 7:15 am Minian Shacharit

Tuesday: 11:00 am class with Rabbanit

Thursday: 7:15 am Minian Shacharit

Friday: 6:30 pm Kabbalat Shabbat

Shabbat: 9:30 am Minian followed by Kiddush
12:45 pm Mincha/ 4:15 pm class with Rabbi Followed by Seudat Shishit, Arvit and havdala



Farewell Party

Sadly 7 families are leaving us. Also three of our members childrenturn to page 2



The Sarfati's Aliyah Dream

The movie, "Schindler's List" re-counted to us how the lives of 1,200 German Jews were spared from the Holocaustturn to page 3



Dear Rabbi

Can you have a virtual reality minyan or can a Golem be counted for a minyan.....turn to page 4



Manila Alumni

Each month we will try and feature Manila Alumni. Families that have spent years of their lives with us and were part of our community, we want to keep as part of our community forever. We need your help, please send us contact information for any alumni you are in contact with.....turn to page 4

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FAREWELL PARTY



Djema! Family

Lahm Family



Palomo Family

Newman Family



Katey Malca

Gedacht Family

Erez Family

Cohen Family

Nisso Zeitoune



Sadly 7 families are leaving us. Also three of our members children are leaving to study abroad. On June 7 we had the communities farewell party. Well over 100 people attended. Thanks to Betsy and Simon Malca, a sad event they turned into a happy and joyous occasion. Betsy, along with others in the community, organized balloon games for the children. They were so happy and it was so entertaining. Then she pitted the men against the women in a ping pong ball blowing contest. The men fought gamely and managed to finish second.

We are sorry not to have family portraits. We are missing Danel Dayan who is leaving also to study in California.

We wish them all well and they will always be in our hearts and prayers and thank them for all they have contributed to our community.

THE SARFATI'S ALIYAH DREAM



The movie, "Schindler's List" recounted to us how the lives of 1,200 German Jews were spared from the Holocaust. But, few are aware of "Quezon's List" which also saved the same number of Jews, if not more. At the height of the Jewish exodus, American policy barred some 900 refugees from disembarking in Miami, forcing their ship to return to Germany where Nazi concentration camps sealed their fate. But on our shores, an estimated 1,300 European Jews were permitted refuge in our country, despite the fact that Philippine Foreign Affairs was then controlled by the U.S. State Department. This was made possible with the efforts of then President Manuel L. Quezon III, High Commissioner Paul McNutt and the Frieder Brothers.



The Frieder Brothers, who resettled in the Philippines in 1918, established the Jewish Refugee Committee of Manila (JRC) which played a crucial role in the Manila rescue of Jews in 1939. Granted authority by Quezon and McNutt, European Jewish refugees obtained visas upon instruction by the U.S. State Department based on recommendations from the JRC of Manila. Quezon also donated land he owned to the Jewish refugees. Among these Jewish refugees granted entry to the Philippines was Rafael Sarfati.

Having fled Nazi tyranny, Rafael started his life over in Manila and married Spanish-Filipina Elvira Calvento. Rafael is the grandfather of Albert Sarfati whose parents are Alberto Calvento Sarfati Sr., a reformed Jew living in San Antonio Texas, and Filipino-Chinese Adoracion Yap Aguilar.

Not too long ago, Albert stumbled upon Israel's Law of Return which states that any person of Jewish heritage up to the third generation has the birthright to return to his or her homeland as an Israeli citizen. In rediscovering Judaism as an important part of his roots, Albert eventually made his *aliyah*, a Hebrew term for "ascent" which by definition is "used in both religious tradition and secular Zionism to refer to Jewish immigration to Israel". The first *aliyah* transpired from 1881 to 1903 composed of up to 40,000 largely Eastern European Jews. Their emigration from Eastern Europe was sparked by economic, political, and physical persecution in the region. In more recent decades, *aliyah* comprised a massive influx of Jews from the Soviet Union due to ideological reasons.

Then there is Albert who chose to fulfill his *aliyah* in 2007, not out of any form of oppression, but out of pride in his heritage and renewed faith. In the same year Albert's daughter, Poalabelle, also headed for Israel to study Hebrew and Judaism as part of her own conversion and to ensure the continuance of the Sarfatis' unique Jewish heritage. Albert's wife, Carina, also made *aliyah* late 2007 followed by his brother Ferdie and sister Belinda early 2008.

Albert says of his story, "I hope that my personal journey of faith and rediscovery of my heritage will inspire Filipinos of Jewish descent to live out the legacies of Judaism and learn more about their birthright to be one with the Jewish communities of Israel. It is our *mitzvah* (blessing) to return to our homeland." Availing of the dual citizenship privilege given by both the Philippines and Israel, Albert remains just as proudly Filipino as he is proudly Israeli.

Dear Rabbi,

I wanted to know whether a virtual reality minyan would be acceptable according to Judaism, because there are small communities all over the world for whom it is hard to get a minyan every day. Thanks



Dear Michael,
I know you're not going to believe this but a very similar question was asked by a famous Halachic authority about 250 years ago! Rabbi Tzvi Ashkenazi (The Chacham Tzvi) in one of his responsa writes about whether a Golem may be counted as part of a minyan. (A Golem is a man-made creature. The kabbalistic work Sefer Yetzirah is said to contain the secret method for making

such a being. It looks and acts like a person but does not have a human soul. The Talmud refers to famous scholars who were said to have made them. The Chacham Tzvi in his responsa says that his grandfather was known to have made one.)

At first blush you may not connect a Golem with the nine other participants in a virtual reality minyan. However, they really are quite similar. Essentially they are both man-made creatures that act and look like people but are missing a human soul. Rabbi Ashkenazi proves indirectly from one of the famous references to a Golem in the Talmud, that a Golem may not be counted as part of a minyan.

Professor Alvin Radkowsky writes in an article in B'or Hatorah that such a Halachic discussion in fact touches upon the nerve of one of the most troubling questions to face modern man. In an age of incredible technological advancement when nothing seems beyond our reach, what is man's place in this world? (I think it was Woody Allen who once lamented that his father was laid off from his job and replaced by a computer chip that did everything better than he did...shortly afterward his mother bought one of the chips for herself.) The Golem is such a creation. It can be stronger, more efficient, and have more endurance, but there is one area that technology will never enter and that is the world of devotion. A computer-generated image cannot be counted into a minyan.

Come join our minyan every Monday and Thursday mornings at 7:15. Then join the men's club for a breakfast feast featuring bagels, Pita a shmear, different types of eggs which can be cooked to order, oatmeal, and much much more. And the kibbitzing and jokes.....oy veh!!

MANILA ALUMNI

In this space every month we will highlight Manila Alumni, where they are, how they are doing and what they are doing. Please update us with who you are intouch with and any other information. They have spent years in our community and we want them still to be part of our community even from afar.

RINA AND SHAUL GOLAN AND FAMILY



Rina and Shaul



Gabby's Wedding



Liran and Daniel

The Golan's live in Holon, Israel. All 3 children live in New York. Gabby is married and they have a grandson Daniel. Liran just got married a few months ago. Noar juts graduated college. Rina and Shaul commute between Israel and New York. They asked to wish all of our good friends in Manila all the best and happiness.

CHAVA AND ASHER GOFFER

I am working about 2 month now at the BNEI AKIVA YESHIVA high school in Netanya City. My position is the administrator. I take care of the daily activities from the logistics point of view. We attended the long waited inauguration of the "OPEN DOORS" monument at RISHON LE ZION CITY. we attended the Independence Day celebration of the Philippines at the DAN HOTEL in Tel Aviv. We are planning to travel to the Philippines and B"H we will have a grand KIDDUSH at the social hall in our Synagogue on Shabbat July 18. We will invite all our friends! The members of the JAoP. We are members of the JAoP for more then 25 years!

SIMONE AND ALBERT MOSES (the Hollanders)

Love to hear from our friends in Manila, do miss that place a lot. Athens is a great city but for Jewish life it is a very sad town. Here there is only one in the community who is active. I am sitting behind my desk in our little house at the base of the Acropolis. While I am typing, I can hear live Greek music from our neighbor. Albert and I discovered more beautiful parts of the town and we are enjoying the cultural part as well. We really like this place and feel very privileged that Albert's job took us to this country until the end of this year. I will be back in Montreal in July and Albert in August.