

Ayelet's World

Greetings from Diane!

Shalom,

This past year was a year of milestones and memories. Ayelet Tours celebrated it's 20 year anniversary, organized successful conferences in the United States, and in Israel, and also worked harder than ever to create memorable tours and experiences for congregations, families, and individuals from all across the country.

2006 was also a year in which Israel once again faced all too familiar challenges. Ayelet Tours worked hand-in-hand with numerous congregations, organizations and individuals to create special missions to Israel. These missions provided the opportunity for American Jewish communities to see and hear first-hand the affects that the current situation has on Israel's land and people, and to show their support for the Israeli community during troubled times.

As we reflect back on a year full of memorable events, we also project to the future, and are busy planning for the milestones that are fast approaching. Israel will be marking its 60th Anniversary a little over a year from now, and already our 2008 calendar is filling up with groups eager to participate in the celebration. In addition, we invite you to travel on a Jewish Heritage Tour to Eastern Europe, the Former Soviet Union or any other worldwide destination. There is Jewish history everywhere!

As with every year, we look forward to the opportunity to strengthen our connections with our old friends, and to making new connections with rabbis, cantors, organizations, families, and individuals looking for attentive and caring service in planning their travels. We look forward to creating new connections between Jewish communities worldwide, and to providing individuals with the opportunity to learn more about their own Jewish heritage. Most of all, we look forward to providing you, our friends and travelers, with the highest level of service from a professional organization - from the time you book your tour, until after you return home. Join us in making the kind of positive memories that stay with you for a lifetime – yes, the Memories Last Forever!

Diane Rubtchinsky
President



Seffie Epstein Announces: "The Numbers Keep Growing!"

Seffie Epstein, Executive Director of Ayelet Tours, is happy to report that 2006 saw record numbers of groups traveling to Israel and other international destinations. Over 1,000 traveled in 2006 from just Boston, New York, and New Jersey congregations - and the numbers keep growing! **At the present time, Ayelet will have over 175 groups traveling to Israel in 2007. These groups include Congregational Tours lead by rabbis and cantors, Hadassah Missions, Family Tours, and Bar/Bat Mitzvah Tours.**

One of our newest ventures is **L'dor V'dor** ("From Generation to Generation") a multi-generation family tour that is quickly growing in popularity, and the feedback we are receiving from participants is enthusiastic and heartwarming. Recent letters from the youngest members of one family group who traveled to Israel together in December of 2006, expressed it all:

"Dear Poppy:

... thank you so much, from the bottom of my heart, for the incredible and truly life-changing trip to the land of Israel. I honestly feel much more in-touch with my heritage and the Jewish people as a whole.... It's so difficult for me to pick what I found to be the coolest. I absolutely adored the Ayalon Institute (where we learned about the WWII bullet factory that was underground beneath a washing room). Not only was our tour guide so informative and helpful, but at that moment I felt so proud to be a Jew.

Poppy, I want to thank you again for this remarkable, once-in-a-lifetime experience that has honestly changed the way I look at the Jewish people. I will never forget it."

Marissa, age 14

"Hi, Poppy!... I just wanted to thank you for taking me on this memorable, wonderful trip to Israel. It was fun, entertaining, and I learned a lot. It was an emotional experience seeing all of the scenic views, and the sad museums. I loved the trip and Todah Rabbah (thank you so much) for taking me on this amazing trip!"

Julia, 11 years old

In the February 2007 issue of Hadassah Magazine, President June Walker spoke of the amazing journey that she and her family, including six grandchildren, took this past December.

"The grandkids loved the Hadassah projects - Hadassah College Jerusalem, Hadassah Medical Center and the Youth Aliyah villages," she wrote "...I enjoyed the way they applied their American vernacular - 'cool' and 'awesome' to describe our work, and I even overheard one of them saying she was proud of how many lives 'Grandma and her friends had touched'... I don't think they'll ever forget it."



Rabbi Scott Shpeen of Congregation Beth Emeth, Albany, NY.
The 2007 tour included 72 participants and multi-generation families

Ayelet Tours looks forward to providing many more grandparents, parents, children and grandchildren with unique and moving Israel experiences. Contact us!

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

Please visit us at:

www.ayelet.com

You can also email us at ayelet@ayelet.com

Or call us at 1-800-237-1517



PEOPLE ON THE "INSIDE"

Jeff Rubtchinsky Joins East Coast Office

After two and a half years in San Diego, CA, Jeffrey Rubtchinsky has relocated to the East Coast, joining the rest of the Ayelet family in the Albany, NY office.

Jeff and his new wife Julie (formerly the NFTY Youth Advisor at Congregation Beth Israel in La Jolla) have moved to Saratoga Springs. Though it is taking the couple time to re-acclimate to winter weather and less avocados, Jeff and Julie are excited about their new home, new community, being closer to family, and Jeff's new position as Vice President of Ayelet Tours. Call Jeff at 1-800-237-1517 ext, 316 to start planning your next tour to Israel.



Caralie Cole Celebrates Twenty Years of Loyalty and Triumphs... Still Going Strong!

At this year's holiday party, Caralie Cole, Ayelet Tours Operations Manager, was honored for her dedication and hard work. We asked Caralie about her "tour de force" at Ayelet Tours, and got an insider's perspective on working in the travel industry for the past 20 years.

How did you get your start at Ayelet Tours?

At the time I applied for a position at Ayelet, I had been managing and teaching at a large martial arts school, but I was always taking time off to travel. I had spent years traveling back and forth to Europe, and just couldn't see enough of the world. I decided I needed to find a job in the travel industry, which would allow me to put the knowledge I had acquired as a traveler to good use.

Were you always interested in travel?

Yes, ever since I was very young. When I was just six or seven years old, I remember seeing *The Ten Commandments* on television, and thinking to myself "I am going there when I grow up!" I had traveled as a child, but didn't travel overseas until later in life.

What do you like most about working with Ayelet Tours?

The most rewarding aspect is the travel and opportunity to visit new destinations and experience so many different cultures. Because I myself enjoy travel, I really work hard to plan programs that will bring the same sense of enjoyment to my clients. Hearing the "thank you"s as each group returns provides a strong motivation. I love my job! I also truly love working with Hadassah. When Israel is in the midst of a difficult situation, rather than canceling their travel, Hadassah plans missions rallying its members in support of the country. It is such an admirable organization and the individuals are amazing.

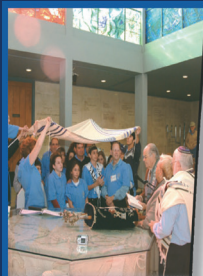
Any "insider" secrets you can share with travelers regarding packing/planning?

I would suggest packing just a few essential items in neutral colors, like black, brown, or beige, and coordinate your wardrobe around this. It is also a plus to then help the local economy by purchasing as much as you can carry in your collapse-able carry-on bag!

Ayelet is so grateful to Caralie for her ongoing commitment to both the company and our clients!



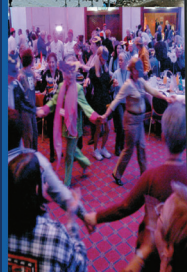
TRAVEL WITH HADASSAH!



Experience Israel with Hadassah!

2008 marks Israel's 60th Anniversary. Come help her celebrate with Hadassah!

Hadassah National Missions are Proudly Operated By Ayelet Tours and IGT!



Tour • Enjoy • Learn • Celebrate • Feel the Ruach

Our tours offer exclusive use of Hadassah Hospital's Chagall Window's synagogue for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience!

RENAISSANCE MISSIONS

- Renaissance XXXIII - Yom Ha'atmaut Mission - Apr. 18-26, 2007 - \$2,799
- Renaissance XXXIV - Poland & Israel - May 27-June 7, 2007 - \$3,670
- Renaissance XXXV - Family Mission - June 20-July 1, 2007 - \$3,439
- SAVE THE DATE! • SAVE THE DATE! • SAVE THE DATE! • SAVE THE DATE!
- Renaissance XXXVI - Israel - October 21-29, 2007
- Renaissance XXXVII - Hanukah in Israel! - December 2-10, 2007
- Renaissance XXXVIII - Family Mission - December 20-31, 2007
- Renaissance XXXIX - Israel - February 17-25, 2008
- Renaissance XL - Come Celebrate Purim! - March 16-24, 2008
- Renaissance XLI - Yom Ha'atmaut in Israel! - May 4-12, 2008
- Renaissance XLII - Poland & Israel - May 31-June 6, 2008
- Renaissance XLIII - Family Mission - June 22-July 4, 2008

HADASSAH SPECIALTY MISSIONS

- Professionals Mission - Apr. 26-May 4, 2007 - \$3,499
- Nurses Council Mission - May 8-16, 2007 - \$2,699
- Nassau Mission to Israel - October 7-17, 2007



Hadassah National Missions to Israel

Ayelet Tours is proud to be the official tour operator for all Hadassah National Missions to Israel.

Hadassah Missions have been designed to provide you with an impressive overview of Israel. They combine a love of Israel with a love of Hadassah, and include exciting adventures and celebrations, making for an incredibly stimulating and exhilarating visit.

Some of the special highlights of these missions include:

- * Visit and see what is new with Hadassah Projects throughout Israel
- * Hear about the most current events in the country with an "Israel Update" briefing
- * Ceremony at the new Yad Vashem memorial
- * Revel in the accomplishments of the modern State of Israel while you explore the country
- * Celebrate Shabbat in the most special place on earth...Jerusalem
- * And much, much, more!

True Love Found on Hadassah Mission ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Participating in a Hadassah Mission truly can be a life-changing experience! Debbie Sudak of Washington D.C. recently joined a Hadassah Mission to Poland and Israel, and met her "beshert" aboard the tour bus. Lior Levy was the security guard for the group, and he and Ms. Sudak made an immediate connection. The two will be married at Moshav Ora, situated near Hadassah Hospital. Ayelet wishes the couple and their families Mazal Tov!



CCAR 2007 in Atlanta, RRA in Arizona

On Sunday, March 11, 2007 the 118th Annual Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) Convention will be held in Atlanta, GA. The convention will begin with an opening banquet which will include featured speaker Senator Russ Feingold, who will talk about "Reform Judaism, Progressive Values, and Public Policy". The evening will also include a concert given by the Providence Missionary Baptist Choir.

The conference will offer many opportunities for rabbis to connect with each other, and will provide the attendees with lectures, study sessions, and shared services. Day tours will bring spouses and guests to exciting venues throughout Atlanta, including the CNN Center, the Georgia Aquarium, the King Center and the High Museum.

On the exact same day, Sunday, March 11th, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association (RRA) will meet in Phoenix/Scottsdale, Arizona. The RRA represents the rabbinic voice within the Reconstructionist movement, and the convention will feature keynote speaker Rabbi Ira Stone of the Philadelphia Mussar Institute. Other highlights include workshops covering everything from ethics to poetry, and day tours to the Desert Botanical Gardens.

Ayelet Tours is proud to coordinate registration, housing, transportation and on-site logistics for both conventions.



JRF Holds Biennial in City of Brotherly Love

Ayelet Tours was delighted to coordinate the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation Biennial (their 41st convention) which was held November 8 - 12, 2006 at the Hyatt Regency Philadelphia in the Penn's Landing district. Hundreds of Reconstructionists from diverse communities throughout the world gathered to learn, pray, and celebrate the growth and evolution of their movement.

The convention included sixty different workshops covering a multitude of subjects, including leadership, outreach, spirituality, and education. The participants listened as rabbis and leaders from their worldwide community spoke on the progress of the Reconstructionist movement and important issues being faced by Reconstructionists both on an individual and group level.

Spiritually inspiring services were held on Friday evening and Saturday morning, highlighting the diversity of practices embraced by the movement. Delicious meals were enjoyed throughout the program, including Shabbat dinner and lunch with speakers. A post-Shabbat kumzits brought all together for an evening of music, song and dance.

Ayelet looks forward to planning the JRF's next convention, which will be held in November of 2008.



CA Goes Hollywood!

The Cantor's Assembly (CA) will be taking Hollywood by storm in May 2007! The international organization for professional Hazzanim will be holding their 2007 Conference at the Universal City Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles, CA. Ayelet is coordinating this year's convention, which will celebrate the handing over of the presidential gavel from Hazzan Steven Stoehr to Hazzan Joseph Gole. Fabulous concerts, excursions, workshops and more will commemorate this change of leadership.



Singing Through Israel... ACC/GTM

Ayelet Tours proudly coordinated the American Conference of Cantors (ACC) and Guild of Temple Musicians (GTM) June 2006 Mission to Israel.

With 140 registrants in attendance, the experience was full of song and harmony. The week began on Sunday night, June 25th, 2006 with an amazing performance by students at the Leo Baeck High School in Haifa.

Each day included services held in beautiful settings, from the Southern Wall in Jerusalem's Old City, to the gardens of the Leo Baeck Institute, to the architecturally superb grounds of Beit Daniel and the Hebrew Union College. With different cantors and musicians leading each prayer service, and a congregation full of



In Jerusalem, members of the ACC and GTM gather together for song and prayer.

beautifully trained voices, the group captured the attention of communities throughout Israel.

The Mission also included outreach opportunities at Yozma in Modi-in, Yad Sarah, the Meir Panim Soup Kitchen, and the Shaarei Tsedek Hospital. Ayelet also arranged for a Member of the Knesset, Rabbi Michael Melchior, to speak to the group about important issues in Israeli society, and the growing presence of the Progressive movement in the country.

Spouse tours took participants to the Dead Sea, Masada, and to the emotional new exhibitions at Yad Vashem and Mt. Herzl.

Ayelet was delighted to coordinate the Mission for the ACC/GTM, and looks forward to planning the ACC's next conference, which will be taking place at the Hudson Valley Resort and Spa

NOT TO BE MISSED! The Zamir Choral Festival will also take place at the Hudson Valley Resort in Kerhonkson, NY, Sunday, July 8 through Thursday, July 12, 2007. This festival offers great opportunities for Jewish music lovers to gather for singing, celebration and time with friends.

We are proud to be the official tour operator and coordinator for the **April 2008** conference in Jerusalem of the **Jewish Funders Network**, an international organization dedicated to advancing the quality and growth of philanthropy rooted in Jewish values.



THE TRAVELING UNIVERSITY: PROFESSOR STEPHEN M. BERK

Dear Friends:

It is my pleasure to inform you that the Traveling University, in conjunction with Ayelet Tours, is embarking on a new series of tours in 2007 - 2008.

Our first tour, July 1 - 12, 2007, is a return to Eastern Europe. We will visit Warsaw, Krakow, Budapest and Prague. This is the trip that so many people think of first when the "Traveling University" is mentioned. This is a unique and outstanding experience that once again demonstrates that to understand our future, we must return to our past.

The second tour, August 13 - 23, 2007, is a Jewish history tour of the Ukraine. The Ukraine is home to one of the world's largest Jewish populations, and has endured a history full of political and social challenges. Over half the Jewish population living in the Ukraine was murdered during the Holocaust, and those who survived faced severe oppression under Soviet rule. Our tour will take us to the cities of Lvov, Kiev, and Odessa, where we will see many sites of Jewish interest including magnificent synagogues and places of great historic importance. We will have the opportunity to meet and interact with local Jewish community members, and to learn first-hand what it is like to live as a Jew in modern day Ukraine.

Our 2007 season finishes with our November 5 - 15, 2007 tour to Eastern Europe.

From March 17 - 30, 2008, the Traveling University will bring us to Spain and Portugal. The historic homeland and epic center of great Jewish philosophers and writers such as Maimonides, Ramban, and Judah ha Levi, these countries have played an invaluable role in the development of Jewish culture world-wide. We will explore the lives of prominent Spanish Jews in history, as well as the persecution and expulsion of the later centuries which has influenced Jewish life in the region ever since. Our tour will take us through the cities of Lisbon, Barcelona, Granada, Seville and Madrid.

From July 6 - 17, 2008, our second tour of the year will travel again to Eastern Europe, for another opportunity to explore the past, present and future of Jewish culture in the region.

From July 17 - 24, 2008, we will travel to the cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow in Russia. In St. Petersburg we will tour the city's magnificent architecture and surroundings. We will visit the opulent Petrodvorets and infamous Hermitage, as well as area synagogues, palaces and cathedrals. Our Jewish Heritage Tour will highlight synagogues throughout Moscow, and will give us a chance to enjoy Shabbat and see what modern day Jewish life is like in Russia.

We finish 2008 again in Eastern Europe, November 3 - 13, 2008.

History is what the Traveling University is all about. I will be giving lectures on almost a daily basis. But there is more to our excursion than learning. There is the camaraderie that manifests itself in all of our trips that lead to enduring friendships. There is the heightened sense of Jewish conscience and pride that is felt by all who experience the Jewish past through travel and learning. I consider it a privilege to participate in these programs and I invite you to join me.

Sincerely,



Prof. Stephen M. Berk

Dr. Stephen M. Berk is a Professor of History at Union College in Schenectady, New York. He has been named the Henry and Sally Schaeffer Chair of Holocaust and Jewish Studies at Union College. Dr. Berk is considered a superb lecturer and teacher. He is the author of *Year of Crisis, Year of Hope: Russian Jewry and the Pogroms of 1881-1882*. Dr. Berk is also the author of many articles on Eastern Europe, Russian Jewish History, anti-Semitism and American policy in the Middle East. He has lectured in numerous cities for UJA and Israel Bonds as well as at many colleges and universities throughout the United States. Dr. Berk has led numerous trips to Russia, Spain, Europe, Israel and Eastern Europe. It is a privilege to have him with us!



Upcoming Jewish Heritage Tours with Dr. Berk

EASTERN EUROPE

July 1 - 12, 2007

THE UKRAINE

August 13 - 23, 2007

EASTERN EUROPE

November 5 - 15, 2007

SPAIN & PORTUGAL

March 17-30, 2008

RUSSIA

July 17 - 24, 2008

EASTERN EUROPE

November 3 - 13, 2008

MAKE YOUR CELEBRATION EVEN MORE MEMORABLE! **JOIN AYELET'S POPULAR BAR/BAT MITZVAH TOUR**



Visit www.ayelet.com for details

2007 - 2008 Bar / Bar Mitzvah Tour Dates:

June 13 - 25, 2007 (Extension Ends June 28, 2007)

July 4 - 15, 2007 (Extension Ends July 19, 2007)

August 22 - September 2, 2007 (Extension Ends September 6, 2007)

December 24, 2007 - January 1, 2008 (shorter tour - special itinerary and prices)

February 13 - 24, 2008 (no group extensions available - private touring available!)

FREE TOUR (air and land) to Israel
for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child*

**with a minimum of 2 full paying adults*
(Air from NYC)

