

THE DENVER COMMUNITY KOLLEL KOLLEL UPDATE

Because Torah Is for Every Jew



December 2007 - Kislev/Teves 5768

Kollel to Launch New Website in Jan. '08

The Kollel is pleased to announce that it will launch a new website in January 2008 in an effort to keep program participants and supporters better informed of its many programs.

Highlights of the new site, at www.denverkollel.org, include:

- “Programs @ the Kollel” section, which features ever-changing programs of the month.
- Ask the Rabbi section where visitors can submit questions on halacha or Jewish thought.
- Online versions of recent Torah Weeklies, Kollel Updates and Newsletter.
- Background information on the Kollel, its members and ongoing programs.

“The Kollel offers a wealth of programming to Jewish men, women and children of all ages,” says Kollel Dean Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab. “We hope people will visit our new website on a regular basis to learn more about what we have offer.”

Visitors to the site can also view the Kollel video, which debuted at the 9th Anniversary Celebration last year. The Kollel is also in the process of creating an online audio library, which will include MP3 recordings of some of the



The new Denver Community Kollel website at www.denverkollel.org

Kollel’s popular classes, such as Torah for Tycoons.

“The online library will allow program participants to study Torah even if they can’t make it to a particular class,” adds Rabbi Schwab. “This is just one way we are using technology to make Torah study more accessible than ever.”

Unity, Richness and Beauty at Kollel/West Side Shabbaton

Though it’s been more than seven years since the Walles family of Southeast Denver began observing Shabbos, they jumped at the chance to attend the Dec. 1 Kollel/West Side Shabbaton.

“The West Side families make you feel welcome, cared for, inspired – and they envelope you in a tradition that has sustained the Jewish people for thousand of years,” says Jody Walles, who attended the Shabbaton with husband, Matt, and their four children.

Gabriele R. Kaulius, Director of Development, DAT, agreed. “The West Side is such a wonderful community, and everyone should take the time to experience the richness and beauty of Shabbos there,” she says.



Jody Walles and daughter Meira, 7, after Havdala at the Kollel Shabbaton on December 1.

At the Shabbaton, a joint project of the Kollel and Congregation Zera Abraham, 80 men, women and children were hosted by Kollel and West Side families for the Friday night and Shabbos day meals. They joined together for a Friday night *oneg* and a group *Shalosh Seudos*.

For Ellyn and Steve Hutt, members of the DAT Minyan and EDOS, the Shabbaton was an opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new ones.

“The *divrei Torah*, and the warmth of the hospitality extended to us by friends, and by a couple who we’d never met, [was particularly meaningful to me,]” says Steve.

“The mix of home hospitality and community gathering is great,” adds Ellyn.

For Miriam Belov, a member of Aish/Ahavas Yisroel, who attended the Shabbaton with her husband, Moshe, and 11-year-old son, Michoel, the group activities were particularly inspiring.

“We enjoyed the unique feeling

Continued on back

Torah Before Turkey at Thanksgiving 'Football' Class

When Daniel Askenazi, a member of Aish/Ahavas Yisroel, found out he would be roasting the family's Thanksgiving turkey, he realized the day was going to be hectic. He wanted to attend the DAT Minyan-Aish/Ahavas Yisroel football game and a Kollel Thanksgiving learning program.

"[I realized] that I probably couldn't go to *minyán*, learn, play football and put a turkey in the oven – all by 11 a.m.," he recalls. "Somehow, I got a sense from my *yetzer tov* that davening and studying were more important."

He wasn't the only one. Some 20 people put Torah before turkey on Thanksgiving morning, participating in "Is Tackle Football Kosher," a group study program that examined the Torah viewpoint on one of America's favorite pastimes.

The class, held at the DAT Minyan, was led by the Kollel's Rabbi



(l. to r.) Rabbi Michel Levitansky, Scott Friedman and Graeme Bean at 'Is Tackle Football Kosher?'

Michel Levitansky. He examined whether one is permitted to allow himself to be hit or injured by someone else.

Rabbi Levitansky pointed out that the players' intent is a crucial consideration. He explained that, according to Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, a friendly game of tackle football would likely be permissible since the players are not intending to injure one another. Professional-type football, however, in

which players intentionally hit each other to intimidate their opponents or even knock them out of the game, may not be permitted.

Craig Halper, a Judaics Instructor at Herzl/RMHA, says he attended the class because "I wanted to see how halacha looks at an activity which seems, on the surface, to have no connection to Jewish law."

What lesson stayed with him? "The idea of intent with regard to halacha, and how it can determine whether an action is permitted or prohibited," he says.

Dan Ashkenazi agreed. "The class taught me to value the power of intent in determining if actions are acceptable. In my particular scheduling dilemma, the intent of unity and learning overrode my natural intent to have fun.

"I [also] learned that I just might be growing up." ❧

Photo credit: Craig Halper

Does Father Always Know Best?

Father knows best. Or does he? And do you always have to listen?

Kollel Scholar Rabbi Dovid Gertz has been examining these and other questions related to the mitzva of *kibbud av v'em*, honoring one's parents, at his new "Recipe for Long Life" series.

The series, for women, is held Tuesday afternoons at the home of Kathy Kaufman in Southeast Denver.

Melanie Avner, a mother of two from Englewood, says she attends the class because "the subject matter is



(l. to r.) Rabbi Dovid Gertz, Cheryl Kutzer, Tracey Douglas and Chaya Meyer at 'Recipe for Long Life.'

critical" and the "material is so relevant and thought-provoking."

"Not only are we learning how to honor our parents, stepparents and in-laws, we are trying to understand how to teach our children to honor us," she says.

For Kathy Kaufman, a mother of four who founded the group with friend Ariella Milobsky, the class has changed the way she thinks about teaching this mitzva to her children.

"One of the lessons I learned is that we should be teaching respect to our children for their own benefit and not to benefit our own ego," she says.

"We, as parents, should always be asking ourselves, 'Am I asking my child to do this because I want it, or because it would benefit them to learn this to become a better person now and later in life?'" ❧

Kollel/West Side Shabbaton

Continued from front

of Jewish togetherness," she says. "It was truly an uplifting feeling of 'We are one.'"

Jody Walles agrees. "Whatever level any person or family was on in their Jewish journey, the hearts of the West Side families were open to share the spirituality and beauty of Shabbos. It was an uplifting and powerful experience to connect with this sense of unity and care."

The guest list is already forming for the next Shabbaton, slated for the summer of 2008.

"Unfortunately, due to space considerations, we had to turn down many families for this Shabbaton," says Kollel Outreach Director Rabbi Yechiel Erlanger. "We already have requests to put their names down for the next Shabbaton."

"Are you taking reservations yet?" asks Jody Walles. "Sign up the Walles!" ❧