

HEARD ON D STREET



Heard on D Street (that's D for Diaspora) gives you bits and pieces of Jewish life around the world that we pick up on our radar: campaigns, politics, news, views, and links to resources. We're going to try to update the list frequently, so check back often. And if you think we've missed something, please pass it on! Email us at worldjewry@harshalom.org or call 301.299.7087 x 311.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

If you're planning a trip to Hungary or Bulgaria, stop by one (or both) of the extraordinary synagogues that celebrated their birthdays in 2009: The Dohany Street Synagogue in Budapest, the largest synagogue in Europe, turned 150 and the Great Synagogue in Sofia, Bulgaria, turned 100. Not going anywhere for a while? Pick up a copy of "The Great Synagogue of Budapest," by architectural historian Rudolf Klein. (Nice Hanukah present.)

BIRTHRIGHT FOR PEOPLE WITH ASPERGER'S

Koach is the United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism college outreach program that provides college-age students the opportunity to maintain and develop connections to Conservative Judaism. Koach is partnering with Taglit-Birthright Israel to offer a free trip to Israel for people with Asperberger's Syndrome. To be eligible for Taglit-Birthright Israel, participants must be Jewish, 18 to 26 years old, post high school (unless they have remained in high school to receive services) and never have been to Israel on a peer educational program. Got questions? Email Rabbi Elyse Winick at winick@aol.com.

YES, MIRIAM, THERE ARE JEWS IN CHINA

DNA results of recent tests on descendants of Kaifeng Jews suggest that the original Jews in China came up from Persia via the Silk Route (southern Turkey) to the city of Xian in central China. A stone tablet from the Kaifeng synagogue built in 1489 bears the following inscription:

"According to the commandment of their god, the Jews came from Tian-Sho (Chinese for both "India" and "every state to the west of China") with woven materials from the west in their hands, meant as a gift for the emperor." The last emperor, according to the tablet, said "welcome to our country; dwell here and keep the customs of your ancestors." Click [here](#) to read the entire story by Rami Tal online.

WHO KNEW?

In a 1993 paper, "The Last Jews of Cochin," Daniel J. Elazar says, "Olam can be translated 'world,' but is better translated 'universe' in the fullest sense that the universe includes both space and time. Indeed, olam as a word entered the English language at the time of the Protestant Reformation to mean just that combination of space and time. It is not obsolete but is still recorded in the Oxford English Dictionary as having that meaning."

COME HOME

In August 2009, speaking to about 800 people at the conference of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, the country's principal Jewish organization, President Jacob Zuma invited expatriates to come home.

Since the end of apartheid in 1994, many South African Jews have moved to the United States, Israel, Australia and other countries. Twenty years ago the Jewish community hit a high of 120,000; today that number is approximately 80,000.



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