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**In the U.S.**

## Tennis Athletes Appointed to Represent the USA at the 18th "Chai" Maccabiah Games in Israel

Seventy nine of the top Jewish Tennis players have been appointed to represent

the USA at the 18th Maccabiah Games in Israel, July, 2009. This number includes three coaches. These men and women come from 22 states and they include a top-40 Nationally ranked Woman's athlete and a brother/sister Team. Athletes in all divisions were selected after tryouts in Florida and Pennsylvania. Logan Hansen, who was a top recruit at Stamford University in her freshman year and is currently ranked 38 nationally, will represent the Open USA Tennis Team. Sister and brother Stephanie (Indiana University) and Ryan Heller (U. of Mich. '97), of Northbrook, IL, will both represent the USA Team as members of the Open Team.



**In Israel**

## Dear Hashem

The Israel Postal Company made a special delivery on Tuesday. In a festive ceremony held at the Western Wall, thousands of letters to Hashem sent in from people from all over the world were placed between the ancient stones of the wall.

Director-General of the Postal Company Avi Hochman was in charge of the important delivery, along with the Western Wall's Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz, who prayed for the senders and asked that their prayers be answered.

The Postal Company said that during the year all letters that are addressed to Hashem are compiled in one package, and once a year a ceremony is held in which the letters are placed in the wall.

Before the letters are delivered, each envelope is opened and some of the letters are even read in order to save space, as some of the letters are actually addressed to the post's director-general asking him to get a message across to Hashem.

In 2008 a significant rise in the number of letters sent to Hashem was noted, which the Postal Company could not explain.

Twice a year, ahead of Rosh Hashanah and Passover, Western Wall employees clean out the wall from all the notes and letters and bury them in sealed bags on the Mount of Olives.



**In Asia**

## Israel looks to invest in Cambodia

Israeli businesses are looking towards opportunity for investment in Cambodia, particularly in the agricultural and high-tech sectors of the economy.

According to Tzahi Selzer, the economic and trade attache at the Israeli embassy in Bangkok, "There is huge interest in Cambodia [in Israel]."

Businesses are looking to the Israeli government to assist in the opening of new markets for them in Cambodia."

Investment in real estate, medical equipment, hydrotechnology, desalination plants and irrigation will also be explored.

Selzer further predicted, "There aren't many places that are as promising as the Cambodian market. Israel has been in Vietnam and India, and is looking for new markets."

Reportedly, the Israeli government is also considering opening a representative office in Phnom Penh.

## Amazing Hanukkah Feats

Ever since the days of the Maccabees, Jews around the world have been attempting incredible feats in honor of Hanukkah.

### *The Tallest Menorah*

According to Jewish Law, menorahs can be a maximum of 20 cubits high (each cubit equals about 18 inches), yet several organizations claim to have lit "The World's Largest Menorah." Who is the true winner? While no one has created an official, rabbinically approved standard for measuring menorah height, the ultimate goal of these record attempts may not be competition, but rather encouraging people to light their own menorahs.

In 1997 a menorah was built in Latrun, Israel. It was more than 60-feet tall, weighed 17 metric tons, and took up an area of 600-square meters. A rabbi was lifted in a crane each night of the holiday to light the candles. The menorah, which was made of metal pipes.

The American Friends of Lubavitch claim that their 30-foot aluminum menorah which is used every year in Washington, D.C. is the largest in the world. Prominent dignitaries, including the president, members of Congress, and Jewish communal leaders have attended the lighting of the National Menorah.

The Lubavitch Youth Organization claimed to have lit the world's largest Hanukkah menorah in New York City's Central Park in 1998. The 32-foot high gold-colored steel structure, designed by artist Yaakov Agam, was inspired by a drawing of the original menorah in the Holy Temple of Jerusalem. Specially designed glass chimneys protect the lights from the Central Park winds.

### *The Biggest Pile of Jelly Doughnuts*

On the first night of Hannukah in 1997, a 12-foot high pyramid made of 6,400 sufganiyot (fried jelly doughnuts) was erected near the Israeli town of Afula. The blob was dismantled later, and the sufganiyot were distributed to Israeli soldiers serving along the border with Lebanon. The attempt to get into The Guinness Book of World Records was sponsored by a food store chain. On December 15, 1998, the greatest number of simultaneously spinning dreidels was attempted at the Mayer Kaplan Jewish Community Center in Skokie, Illinois. At least 200 people were needed to set the record.

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## 60th anniversary of UN Human Rights Declaration celebrated

Diplomats and human rights campaigners have gathered in Paris to mark the 60th anniversary of the UN human rights declaration. Born out of the trauma of World War II, the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights shaped modern concepts of human dignity and served as a template for international rights conventions that followed. Ninety-year-old Holocaust survivor Stéphane Hessel read out its preamble before a gathering of European and United Nations officials, artists and rights groups in a solemn ceremony near the Eiffel Tower, where the convention was adopted on December 10, 1948.

"Still today, it is a text worth reading. It is perfectly relevant. All the more so because it has not been upheld - and it is asking us to fight for it," said Hessel, who helped draft the declaration. "We live in a world that tramples on human rights all the time."

Based on France's 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and the 1776 US Declaration of Independence, the 30-point non-binding text was adopted by 58 UN states, with the atrocities of World War II fresh in their minds. Article 1 of the text proclaims: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

Hessel said that the election of Barack Obama as US president was an indicator of the progress on the equality front. "Pessimists say things are getting worse and worse, that the world is a terrible place but there has never been so much progress in 60 years," he said. "We created a united Europe, we got rid of apartheid, we ended the Soviet Union and its gulags, we set up the International Criminal Tribunal to try rogue heads of state."

### jokes of the week

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What do you call a sheep with no legs?  
A cloud.

Doctor! I have a serious problem, I can never remember what i just said.  
When did you first notice this problem?  
What problem?

Sam: Would you punish me for some thing I didn't do?  
Teacher: No, of course not.  
Sam: Good, because I didn't do my homework.

I have a great diet. You are allowed to eat anything you want. But you must eat it with naked fat people.