



The Star



WASHINGTON AND LEE HILLEL NEWSLETTER
Elrod University Commons, Lexington, VA 24450-0303
Internet: <http://hillel.wlu.edu>/E-mail: robinsj@wlu.edu
(540) 458-8443 Fax: (540) 458-8498

FALL 2003

RECRUITMENT OF JEWISH STUDENTS TO W&L

By Laura Samuels '05

Over the past few years, Washington and Lee has seen a positive resurgence of Jewish identity on campus. And the future looks even brighter. Last year's enrollment of Jewish students increased by 300 percent.

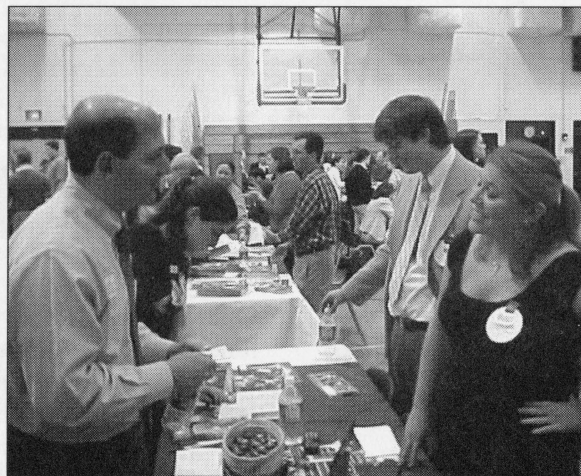
After years of dwindling Jewish student enrollment at the university, Hillel leaders took matters into their own hands. With more and more Jewish students graduating and few others taking their place, attracting and maintaining Jewish students was and, still is, a must. Thus, actions were immediately taken to assure that Judaism did not vanish from campus. Hillel's pursuit of enriching Jewish presence at W&L coincides with the University's commitment to diversity. Eager to see Hillel succeed, the administration offered its utmost support.

Increasing the enrollment of Jewish students requires dedication and collaborative efforts on the part of the University, alumni, and current faculty and students. Hillel director Joan Robins quickly rose to the challenge and enacted active recruitment strategies designed to attract prospective Jewish students who were dissuaded from attending W&L because of so few Jewish students or were otherwise never encouraged to consider the University.

The success of last year's significant increase in Jewish freshmen was achieved, in part, because Robins involved current students. Enthusiastic and willing to help, Hillel members participated in a series of phone-a-thons. This involved nights of eating pizza and calling prospective Jewish undergraduates to answer questions about Jewish

life at W&L, to encourage visits to the campus, and even just to chat. These phone-a-thons conveyed to these high school students the message that the university considered them, as Jewish scholars, vital to enriching W&L life.

Additionally, for the past two years, Robins and Hillel students have joined admissions representatives at college fairs targeted for Jewish students. In October, Hillel visited the Jewish Community of Greater Washington, which held one



Laura Samuels '04 and Brian Baker from Admissions talk to Jewish families at the Rockville JCC during an October Jewish College Fair. Several hundred families attended.

of the largest college fairs in the area. Out of the 50 colleges represented, including many competitive universities, W&L was one of the few to be directly mentioned in the orientation the students attended before the fair. Parents and students at the fair who knew of W&L were thrilled to see the college represented and to have their questions answered, and a number of families who were not familiar with the university seemed very interested to learn more. All present were greatly encouraged by the fact that W&L is expressing great interest in increasing Jewish student enrollment.

University administration, Jewish alumni, and current faculty and students are equally thrilled at Hillel's achievements. President Burish recently expressed his commitment to Hillel: "W&L's Hillel program has done a superb job both in introducing the University to prospective Jewish students and in enriching the quality of student life for Jewish students. I am happy to give Hillel my strongest support." Enabled by the University's encouragement and alumni assistance, Hillel expects even greater success in the near future.

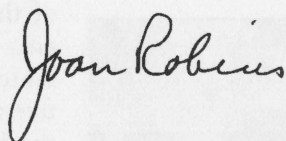
DIRECTOR'S CORNER

by Joan Robbins

One of the greatest pleasures of my job (so far) was getting to attend the wedding of Stephen Philipson '01 and Laura Adelman '01 in October. It was an honor to be invited, to bake the challah, and to say Hamotzi with their families and friends. The wedding was a rich and wonderful event. The chuppah looked especially beautiful in Lee Chapel. It was a pleasure to be with Stephen and Laura, who met while at W&L.

When people ask me what I do professionally I sometimes tell them that I spend much of my time with other people's children as they are becoming adults. I get to watch them learn and grow, laugh and cry, build meaningful and supportive communities, make mistakes, dream, and create institutions which will be the legacy of those who come after them.

I'm here at W&L Hillel because it is a place for Jewish dreams. When it is at its best it both comforts and stretches the remarkable young men and women who attend our events. The long list of names of donors in this newsletter is not only to acknowledge gifts but to recognize people who share in this dream. It is our way of saying thank you for your investment in our collective tomorrow.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Seth Martin '04

I am delighted to report that the status of W&L Hillel is great. We are growing and thriving. This year's freshman class included 17 Jewish students, up 283% from last year. We want to continue this momentum. To do so, we are holding a phone-a-thon to recruit Jewish students to W&L, we are attending college fairs, and we are including Jewish prospectives in Hillel events when they visit campus.

Many upperclassmen and freshmen are enthusiastically involved in Hillel. Over the last few years, Hillel has built a program of events that will likely become lasting traditions. Recent traditions that we started include building a Sukkah on campus and inviting the President of the University to our first Shabbat service of the year. While First Friday at Five Shabbat services and Very Interesting Professor Luncheons have become Hillel's signature events, Hillel is so much more. Our programs include a wide array of social, religious, community service, cultural, educational, and Israel-related activities. All of our events are open to everyone, primarily because we promote sharing and interaction between the diverse groups on campus. Here at W&L Hillel, things are going well and we are excited for another fantastic year.

VERY INTERESTING PROFESSORS

By Todd Martin '06



"Very Interesting Professors" dinner, featuring Chemistry Professor Matt Tuchler, held Sept 25th at The Southern Inn.

Once a month, Hillel sponsors a *Very Interesting Professors* lunch or dinner. At these events, a Jewish professor is invited to join the members of Hillel at Lexington's finest restaurants. During the meal, professors share their interesting Jewish experiences. VIP meals are open to the entire campus and Hillel would love to see some new faces.

This year's first VIP was Dr. Tuchler of the Chemistry Department. On September 25, Dr. Tuchler joined Hillel at the Southern Inn and shared stories about his experiences in an Orthodox neighborhood a few years ago. On October 28 at the Sheridan Livery Inn, Harvey Markowitz of the Religion Department talked about his time on an American Indian reservation in South Dakota, including conducting a Passover seder there. The November 19 VIP featured a visiting speaker, Art Sandler. Art is a Board member of the Israel advocacy group AIPAC. The discussion centered around current affairs and legislative issues confronting US-Israel relations.

DONORS 2003-2004

Mr. Marc J. Ackerman '91
 Mr. Harry Jay Altman '72
 Mr. Arnold M. Applefeld '56
 Mrs. Sylvia Armentraut
 Mrs. Annette Barrash
 Mr. and Mrs. Randall Bart
 Mr. and Mrs. Carl P. Bausch
 Mr. John M. Blume '54, '56L in honor of Paul Weinstein's
 70th birthday and retirement from the bench.
 Prof. Laura Brodie
 Dr. Edward A. Brown '62
 Prof. David and Beverly Bruck
 Mr. Percy Cohen '28
 Mr. Craig H. Collier '76
 Mr. and Mrs. Alan Corwin '62
 Dr. Malcolm Cothran and Joan Robins
 Mr. and Mrs. Ardavan Dargahi
 Mr. Daniel M. Einstein '83 in honor of Mrs. Betty Taylor
 and Dr. Joe Goldsten
 Dr. Mimi Elrod
 Dr. and Mrs. Alan Fink
 Mr. James W. Fishel '39
 Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Fleming
 Mr. and Mrs. Stephen H. Friedlander '59
 Mr. and Mrs. James Freund '62
 Prof. Art Goldsmith and Jan Kaufman
 The Hon. Hugh S. Glickstein '53, '55L
 Prof. and Mrs. Joseph Goldsten
 Mr. and Mrs. Andrew B. Greenman '56
 Mr. Louis Greentree '42
 Prof. Mark and Sally Grunewald
 Prof. Louise Halper
 Mr. Donald S. Hillman '62
 Dr. Sidney Isenberg '42
 Mr. Howard S. Jacobs '58
 Mr. Murray R. Jacobson '66
 Dr. Rachel Zloczover Jones '94 and Dr. Robert B. Jones
 Mr. and Mrs. Howard Kahn
 Mr. David A. Kantor '73
 Mr. and Mrs. David Kesselman
 Prof. John Lambeth and Lisa Solod
 Dr. and Mrs. William Landes
 Mr. Scot E. Lebensburger '72
 Ms. Barbara Lehman
 Dr. and Mrs. Max Levine
 Prof. Simon Levy
 Mr. Burton L. Litwin '51
 Mr. Earl J. Magdovitz '65
 Prof. Harvey Markowitz
 Mr. and Mrs. J. Stephen Marks, III '59
 Dr. and Mrs. Jack Martin
 Mr. Arnold P. Masinter '62
 The Hon. Alvin Yale Milberg '54L
 Ms. Cornelia Miller
 Prof. and Mrs. David Novack
 Mr. and Mrs. Neil November '48
 Mr. Jonathan H. Pakula '82
 Mr. James N. Paradies '51
 Drs. Dawn and Tom Peck
 Dr. and Mrs. Kevin Przybyla

Mr. and Mrs. Kerry Reynolds '62
 Roanoke Jewish Community Council
 Mr. Mort Robins
 Mr. Gregory D. Russell '88
 Mr. Harvey B. Savitt '68L
 Mr. Marc A. Schewel '69
 Mr. Max Shapira '65
 Mr. and Mrs. Richard Sharlin '61
 Dr. Arthur B. Sher '65
 Mr. Sam Silverstein '49L
 Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Sklar '70
 Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Smith
 Mr. Jared D. '95 and Francie '95 Spahn
 Mr. and Mrs. Barry J. Stein
 Mr. and Mrs. Paul S. Sugar '70
 VMI
 The Hon. Sol Wachtler '51
 The Hon. and Mrs. Paul H. Weinstein '55
 Mr. Peter A. Weissman '96
 Prof. Eric and Sarah Wilson
 Mr. and Mrs. John M. Zamoisky '74

ADVISORY BOARD

Joan Robins, Director
 Law Prof. Mark Grunewald, Chair

Alan Corwin '62
 Maryann Fleming
 Prof. Marcia France
 Prof. Sascha Goluboff
 Law Prof. Louise Halper
 Bill Jacobs, MD '71
 Prof. Barry Kolman
 Jan Kaufman, Director of Health Education
 Prof. Richard Marks
 Seth Martin '04
 Arnold Masinter '62
 Prof. David Novack
 Michael Okin, MD '76
 Robin Okin '03
 Tom Peck, MD
 Jordan Wolff '03



Sara Levine, mother of Rachael Levine '07, and Barbara Lehman, mother of Kara Lehman '05 enjoy the Parents' Weekend Bagel Brunch held at the Commons on Sunday, Nov 2nd

COMMUNITY SERVICE

By Jon Philipson '06

Hillel's members actively seek ways to give back to their communities. This year, our members have participated in Sorority and Fraternity Philanthropic activities, Shephard Poverty's Program's Project Outreach Pre-Orientation, and at Natural Bridge Juvenile Correctional Facility. Besides these many wonderful causes, Hillel, as an organization, continues to develop its new mentoring program at Washington & Lee under an alliance called Project Hope. Project Hope's alliance incorporates members of Hillel, Minority Student Alliance, NAACP, Muslim Student League, SAIL, and the Turkish Student League.

The major goal of Project Hope is to provide mentors to adolescents emotionally, physically, and intellectually. Hillel International has supported our cause through a generous grant to develop this program. We have struggled, at times, through the complication involved in developing a new program, but our commitment to the goals of Project Hope and Hillel has not wavered. We are hoping to begin volunteering with a Talent Search at Rockbridge County High School this Winter Term.

Talent Search provides middle school students who have the potential to attend college but lack guidance, the chance to learn how to be successful in high school and in the daunting process of college preparation. Many of these adolescents lack a positive role model and feel ignored by the majority of society.

As Project Hope expands, we hope to include mentors beyond these six organizations. Besides providing a necessary aid to these adolescents, the minority organizations at W&L will form a stronger bond and, above all, be performing mitzvot.

HILLEL OFFICERS: "THE JEW CREW"

President: Seth Martin '04
Exec VP: Matt Fink '04
Secretary: Kara Lehman '05

VP Chair, Shabbat: Leah Greenberg '05
VP Chair, Holidays: Louisa Feve '06
VP Chair, Speakers: Todd Martin '06
VP Chair, Social: Matt Bart '06
VP Chair, Community Service: Jon Philipson '06
VP Chair, New Students: Geoff Rogow '04

HIGH HOLIDAYS AT W&L

by Jeff Stein '05

The High Holidays have once again come and gone and with the help of Hillel, many Jewish students and faculty observed Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Hillel provided transportation to the reform Temple House of Israel in Staunton for evening and morning services on both holidays, allowing everyone multiple opportunities to fit services into a busy college schedule. While a far cry from the overflowing synagogues most students are no doubt accustomed to from home, the small temple did produce a more intimate feel to the Holidays, and the services, led by Rabbis Sue Elwell and Joe Blair, were beautiful. In addition, as an alternative this year, Hillel also provided a van to the conservative Congregation Beth Israel in Roanoke for Kol Nidre and Yom Kippur morning services. As a whole, overall participation for the holidays was at a high this year.

The High Holidays culminated with what has become one of Hillel's largest and most popular annual events, the concluding service and break-the-fast at the end of Yom Kippur. Held on campus in the University Center, the ceremonies attracted a record 75 people, comprising students from Washington and Lee and VMI, as well as many local residents of Lexington. Led by Professor Richard Marks, the concluding service brought a proper closure to the holidays, with the traditional prayers and blessings. While any food tastes good after a 24 hour fast, the Hillel's meal was excellent. Along with the traditional kugels and casseroles, many other tasty dishes and spreads left everyone feeling more than satisfied. An assortment of delicious desserts capped off the meal and ensured no one would leave hungry.

Finally, for the second year, W&L Hillel participated in The Corners of our Fields, a High Holy Days appeal that seeks funds for Mazon and food for local charities. Our community collected non-perishable food and \$100 for the South River families who were devastated by Hurricane Isabelle.

With the traditions of tzedakah and tikkun olam, record participation, enjoyable services, and a wonderful meal, the break-the-fast, along with the rest of the High Holidays, was a great success.



Yom Kippur at W&L. The Concluding Service was held at Fairfax Lounge, followed by Break-the-Fast in Evans Hall. Seventy Five people attended.

ELIE WIESEL KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT VMI CONVOCATION

by John Rosenthal

(John is a geologist, married to Michelle Rosenthal, a 3rd year law student)

W&L Hillel and other members of the local Jewish community were honored to have VIP seating at this occasion. We thank Col Rob McDonald for the invitation.

Elie Wiesel visited the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) in Lexington, Virginia, on Thursday, September 4, as the keynote speaker of the annual Academic Convocation, where he challenged the Cadet Corps to utilize its education by leading society in the struggle against terrorism, fanaticism and prejudice. The Annual Academic Convocation is held at the beginning of each academic year to celebrate VMI and rededicate the Institute, its faculty, and the Corps to the ideals of inquiry and scholarship.

Wiesel was the 1986 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, and has authored more than forty books. He is the recipient of over 100 honorary degrees in recognition of his writings and work on behalf of human rights and peace throughout the world. A Romanian-born Holocaust survivor, Wiesel was deported as a teenager to the Auschwitz and Buchenwald death camps, where much of his family perished. In the post-war years, Wiesel drew on his personal experiences as he assumed an international profile as a champion of humanity and eloquent defender of the oppressed. A devoted supporter of Israel, Wiesel has also defended the cause of Soviet Jews, Nicaragua's Miskito Indians, Argentina's "disappeared," Cambodian refugees, the Kurds, South African apartheid victims, famine victims in Africa and, most recently, victims and prisoners in the former Yugoslavia. In 1986, Wiesel and his wife, Marion, established the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity, whose mission is to advance the cause of human rights and peace throughout the world by creating a new forum for the discussion of urgent ethical issues.

"We are deeply honored that Mr. Wiesel accepted our invitation to join us for this event," said Brigadier General Charles F. Brower IV, Deputy Superintendent for Academics and Dean of Faculty at VMI. "Particularly given the current state of world affairs, I can think of no one more able or more appropriate to speak to us about the real value of our work as an educational institution—who can inspire us to think about education as the bedrock of responsible citizenship."

Wiesel currently holds the Andrew W. Mellon Professorship in the Humanities at Boston University. During his time at VMI, he also met with cadet members of the Institute Honors Program. The Cadets read Wiesel's three most famous novels, *Night*, *Dawn*, and *The Accident*, in preparation for his visit.

Wiesel told the VMI Cadets that he has devoted much effort in his lifetime to discover how mankind learns to

hate. "I wanted to know how does one produce hate," he said. "Do you take A plus B and then you have hate? And once it is there, how do you dissolve it? I don't know that answer," he continued, "except through education."

He opened his remarks by thanking the American military that had helped to liberate the camps in 1945. "I have a great deal of gratitude toward the American military," he said. "Americans came to my rescue. How can I thank you?" The audience laughed and applauded when Wiesel told the story of a visit to the United States Military Academy where a parade was given in his honor some years ago. "The General turned to me and said, 'Mr. Wiesel, the parade is yours.' I had no idea what I was supposed to do with a parade!"

Wiesel described himself as a teacher. He expressed gratitude to his teachers—Plato, Moses, Dostoevski—and then acknowledged the Cadets by adding, "Now in giving to you, I am able to receive. I give you my past so that you can give me your future. We have a common enemy - fanaticism," Wiesel continued. He cautioned that the number of zealots appears to be on the increase since the turn of the century. "Fanaticism is the enemy of culture," he said. "Fanatics don't ask questions. They only have answers and no uncertainties. How can one learn without uncertainties?"

Drawing on his own experiences as a Jew in Nazi-controlled countries, Wiesel asserted that how a society treats its children defines its nature. "A society is defined by its attitude to minorities, the weak, sick, poor and neglected." The world, Wiesel observed, was happy to leave the 20th century behind with its memories of two world wars, civil wars, racism, and fascism. The 21st century "is your century, not mine," Wiesel told the Cadets. "I come to thank you for being who you are - a community of learning. Learn from your leaders and from each other."

"I believe life is not made of years but of moments," he concluded. And although there are moments of despair, he asserted, "I believe there is hope." Wiesel told the Corps, "You advocate hope. I am your partner in this quest."

Wiesel also told the Corps to make the most of their educational opportunities while at VMI. He explained that the Cadets are students but, while they may not realize it, they are teachers as well. "My teaching philosophy is to give and receive," he said. "Realize your teachers and I can give you our past but you can give us your future. Learn from each other in this community of learning."

INTERVIEW WITH DAVID WISE '32

As Interviewed by Prof. Simon Levy

Prof. Simon Levy, Acting Advisor of W&L Hillel, spoke recently with Mr. David Wise, class of 1932. Mr. Wise is the grandson of Isaac Mayer Wise, the founder of Reform Judaism in America, and the son of Jonah Bondi Wise, another famous American Rabbi. At the suggestion of Jeremy Wise, David Wise's son, Prof. Levy solicited questions from Hillel students about Jewish life at the W&L of 70 years ago, asking this distinguished alumnus to share his memories. Mr. Wise's answers are paraphrased from Prof. Levy's interview.

1) Did you experience anti-Semitism at W&L? In the Greek system? From professors?

I don't think I ever experienced anything like that. We were all gentlemen here. We tried to model our lives on Robert E. Lee's vision for the University.

2) What did you do during the High Holidays?

I used to go the home of a fraternity brother living in Roanoke. Going home to New York in those days was a big deal!

3) Was there a quota system for admitting Jews at W&L?

I never knew of any.

4) Was being Jewish a big part of your college experience?

I lived in a Jewish fraternity house, Phi Epsilon Pi. PEP later merged with Zeta Beta Tau, another Jewish fraternity.

5) How religious were (other) Jews on campus?

None were particularly religious. We all ate ham and eggs!

6) Did you have to go to chapel?

No, we weren't required to do anything like that.

7) How many Jewish students were there?

At least 80-100. About 40 in were in my fraternity (PEP), and the rest in ZBT.

8) Did you have other Jewish students to talk to?

Oh, sure -- we lived in a Jewish fraternity house! One of my closest friends was F. Scott Mosovich '34, a football player. I also used to play tennis with the son of Professor Hoyt, who taught biology. Another friend was Julius Halpern '31, who was a wrestler, from Roanoke.

9) Did you belong to any other organizations on campus?

I was in the Graham-Lee debating society.

10) Where did you find Jewish girls to date?

I didn't date much back then. The big social event was the Fancy Dress Ball, but I got my sisters to accompany me to that. One sister came one year, and the other the next. I was afraid of girls! And I didn't know any girls from the surrounding towns.

W&L Hillel thanks Mr. David Wise '32, and his son Jeremy, for providing us with this rare opportunity to learn about Jewish life here three generations ago.

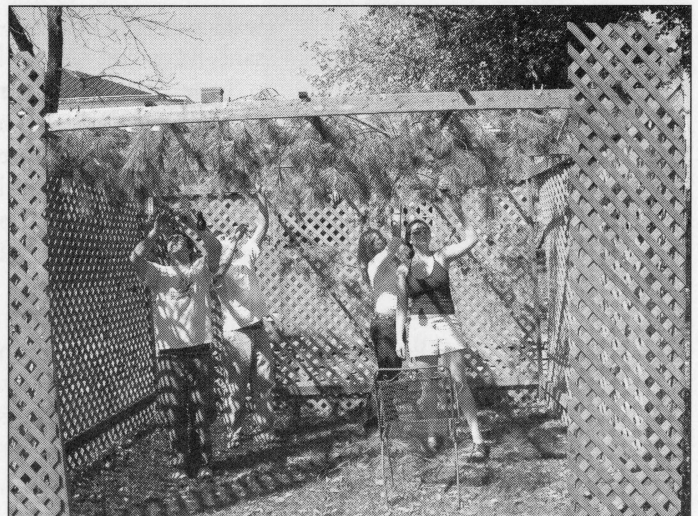
SUKKOT

by Rachael Levine '07 and Victoria Kesselman '07

On Sunday, October 12, Washington and Lee Hillel students and members of the Lexington Jewish community participated in Washington and Lee's second annual Sukkot celebration.

Translated as The Festival of Booths, Sukkot is celebrated from the 15-21 of the month of Tishri. During those seven days it is customary for Jews to build a sukkah, a temporary hut decorated with tree branches and fruits. This is built to signify the portable shelters the Israelites' were forced to live in after their Exodus from Egypt. This year's sukkah was built next to the Alumni House. Sukkot is also a reminder to Jews of their connection with the elements and our responsibility to protect the environment.

Following the traditions established last year a "Pizza in the Hut" party was held on Tuesday October 14th. All the participants had a great time and hope to get many more involved next year and keep the tradition going.



Students build and decorate the second annual Sukkah on campus.

FIRST FRIDAYS AT FIVE

By Leah Greenberg '05

First Fridays at Five, a tradition for Washington and Lee's Hillel, has been a smashing success this year. First Fridays is a monthly Shabbat service held in the Alumni House on Campus. Students from UVA come to lead and gather with W & L students and local Jewish families and professors.



Our Shabbat dinners are always delicious!

This year, as the number of Jewish students has increased so dramatically, our attendance has risen. Every First Fridays has had an exceptional turnout, especially among the freshman students. It is a great way to slow down at the end of a busy week and see many friends whom you do not see as often as you would like. We also

all love seeing professors and families (and eating the good food they bring us)!!

Some might see Lexington's lack of synagogue as a hindrance to Jewish



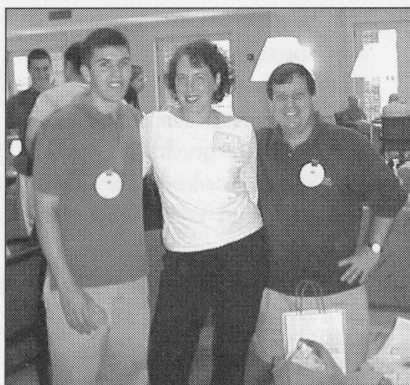
"First Fridays at Five" Shabbat services at the Alumni House are well attended each month.

life on campus. I see it as an asset. At no other service can one feel so comfortable and welcomed and truly feel that he is among friends. No other service truly brings people together as ours does. As I like to say in my emails reminding students about First Fridays, at our Shabbat services, we have good friends, good food, and a good time.

A BRUNCH TO REMEMBER

By Joel Katz '07

Last September, as the freshman class of 2007 was still getting settled in, Hillel sponsored a "Bagel Brunch" that definitely started the year off on the right track. The bagel brunch was held on Sunday, Sept 7th in the new Commons during Freshman Orientation Week. About ten to twelve Jewish freshmen and a few parents attended the brunch. Not only did new students have an opportunity to meet Hillel officers, Jewish faculty, and members of the

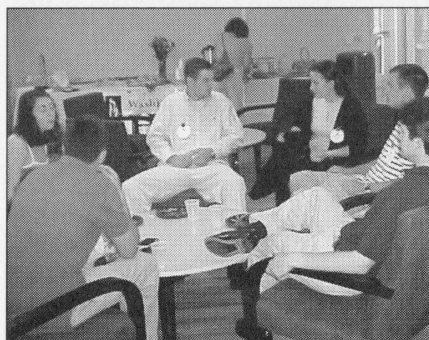


Seth Martin '04, Hillel President, Joan Robins, Hillel Director, and Dr. Jack Martin, Seth's dad at the Freshman Orientation bagel brunch.

local Jewish community, but they also had the opportunity to eat some of the best food that W&L had to offer (most notably, Joan's famous kugel). Along with the kugel, everyone was treated to an array of Jewish delicacies such as bagels, lox, and great mandelbrot! Even Dean Watkins, the Dean of Students, made it out to the

event. The Hillel Bagel Brunch definitely made a great first impression on all its new members.

Aside from the food, my favorite aspect of the brunch was that it gave me the opportunity to get involved with Hillel right away. Ms. Robbins and the Hillel officers make being a Jewish freshman really easy, and really fun! I feel as though I am a part of something special, and attending events such as the bagel brunches, "First Fridays



New freshman meet Hillel officers at the Freshman Orientation bagel brunch.

at Five," and the "Very Interesting Professors" lunches and dinners are just a few of the many reasons why Hillel has enriched my experience at W&L. If one thing is for sure, it's that I look forward to participating in Hillel during my four years at Washington and Lee, and I couldn't have picked a better way to start off my college experience than the bagel brunch!



The Star

Washington Hall
Lexington, VA 24450-0303

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Washington and
Lee University

Dear Jewish Alumni,

In meeting with Jewish high school seniors who are considering Washington and Lee, we've found that they are more likely to apply if they have made personal contacts. Building a network of current Jewish undergraduates and local alumni will help.

We're looking for alumni to help strengthen Jewish life at W&L, and attract Jewish students.

Thank you for being part of this exciting effort!

Name _____

Email _____

Address update _____

Phone number _____

Return to: Washington and Lee Hillel
116 N. Main Street
Lexington, VA 24450