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JUNE - JULY, 2014



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### Cover Story

*The Jewish father and son team of Michael and Steven White are at the helm of Michael White Realties Inc., a full service brokerage company specializing in the Industrial, Commercial & Office real estate markets on the Island of Montreal as well as Laval & North & South Shore Communities. Michael White Realties has been serving Montreal businesses for more than 36 years. See their ad on page 12.*

**ANITA SURMAN**  
Editor  
General News Section



*WOMEN OF THE WALL (WOW) ARE INVOLVED IN A STRUGGLE BETWEEN ENLIGHTENMENT AND A STUBBORN ATTACHMENT TO ANCIENT TRADITION.*

## Message for the Haredim - We Are All Jews First

Most Jews in the Diaspora react with a discernable mixture of dismay to the religious "wars" in Israel. Solidly entrenched in a tradition which resolutely separates state and religion they worry Israel is treading dangerously on paths which encourage legislative interference into matters of private conscience. Writing off Reform and Conservative Jews as "another religion" betrays an ignorance and arrogance which transcends reality.

It is true that the differences among the various Jewish orientations may be exaggerated. All Jews share a common reaction towards the abominations of the Holocaust. They reject the religious mythology of Christianity. Most Jews carry on their traditions of the vision of a Jewish "peoplehood" which has its specific role in the formation of the future of our civilization. Yet religious disputes in Israel threaten to remove Diaspora Jews from their unreserved pride in Israel's achievements and their passionate devotion to the Jewish homeland.

Security may be Israel's major concern. But its internal unity and its indissoluble link with Diaspora Jewry are not far behind in importance. It is imperative that we remain a single people despite our diversity. There is no room in Judaism for the shackles of religious

intolerance. We fear that the religious discord in Israel may be of greater significance than that of merely a "lover's quarrel". We accept the argument that the *haredim*, in their stubborn attachment to ancient tradition, are genuinely concerned with Jewish survival. And we believe that they must be treated with respect. But any attempts to marginalize Reform, Conservative or secular Jews, both Israelis and those in the Diaspora, must be fought.

Martin Luther in the sixteenth century did not destroy Christianity. He may well have saved it. The all too often arrogant assumption by the *haredim* that they, and they alone, are the custodians of the keys to Jewish survival is sheer presumption and will fail to create that "saving remnant" which ultra Orthodox Judaism proclaims itself to be. The core of Jewish survival is not a theocratic state in Israel or the implementation of an all religious curriculum in Israel, or Belgium or England. And yet, if *haredi* rigidity helps further the growing discussion about the legitimate parameters of change in Jewish observance, tradition and belief in the "new age", it may, in fact, serve a useful purpose. Indeed, with intermarriage and assimilation gnawing at the roots of Jewish survival, a broader discussion of what constitutes "authentic Judaism" seems urgently required.

# THE WORLD IN REVIEW

NEWS OF THE RECENT PAST IS REVIEWED

By NOAH FREEDMAN

## NY Cabbie Suspended - and Whines

Gabriel Diaz, a Dominican cab driver in New York, is a proud Nazi who denies that the Holocaust ever happened. "We've been told lies about Hitler", he says. Since becoming a cab driver in 2011 he has worn a Nazi armband while on duty. Finally, after receiving numerous complaints, the New York Taxi and Limousine Commission suspended him for thirty days for "acts against the best interest of the public".

But the suspension is not about to silence Diaz. The suspension, he argued, infringed on his right of free speech. "I'm going to wear it, not while driving a cab," he said, "because there's lots of crybabies out there in Manhattan, a lot of liberal crybabies, who cry every time they seen a symbol of hate." "If a Muslim can drive a cab wearing a turban, if a homosexual can walk around with a big rainbow flag, why can't a person like me wear a Nazi armband", Diaz asked reporters outside his home in Throgs Neck.

It's not just Jews who are targets of the Dominican, who actually attended a Catholic high school and studied the Holocaust. He has choice words for other groups as well. "If I have to apologize," he says, "then a homosexual has to apologize for being a homosexual, for being open and gay". And as for other minorities. Diaz wants them to live with their own kind. Multiculturalism "stuff" is not for him.

## Supreme Court Allows Prayers

The United States Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision along conservative and liberal lines, has reversed a lower court ruling which had outlawed prayers at town hall meetings. The original lawsuit had been brought by Susan Galloway, who is Jewish, and Linda Stephens, an atheist in Greece, a town in upstate New York. The

town board has opened meetings since 1999 with a prayer, almost always led by a Christian clergyman.

The plaintiffs argued that the prayers should be nonsectarian but the Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote in the majority decision that "to hold that invocations must be nonsectarian would force the legislatures that sponsor prayers and the courts that are asked to decide these cases to act as

supervisors and censors of religious speech." Any other decision, Kennedy added, "would involve government in religious matters to a far greater degree than is the case under the town's current practice of neither editing or approving prayers in advance nor criticizing their content after the fact."

Jewish organizations were anything but thrilled with the decision. The Anti-Defamation League said the ruling was "deeply disturbing". The ruling, the ADL maintained, "would pressure ordinary citizens seeking recourse from public officials to participate in religious observances not of their own faith."

Despite the ruling Judge Kennedy maintains that "a pattern of prayers that over time denigrate, proselytize or betray an impermissible government purpose" would violate the Constitution.

## New Jersey Rabbi Off to Prison

New Jersey Rabbi David Wax pleaded guilty to conspiring to commit kidnapping in order to force an Israeli man to grant his wife a get.

Rabbi Wax admitted he was paid \$100,000 to force Yisrael Briskman to grant the religious divorce. The money apparently came from Briskman's estranged wife.

Wax lured Briskman to his house in 2010 and had him beaten by a gang of thugs who threatened to bury him alive if he resisted.

Rabbi Wax is a  
(Please turn to page 13)



*THE ISRAEL PHILATELIC SERVICE, ISRAEL Postal Company issued a special My Own Stamp sheet to mark the visit of Pope Francis to Israel. The stamp sheet was issued on the day the Pope visited Jerusalem, May 26 2014. An additional stamp sheet was issued after the visit. The Israel Philatelic Service, Israel Postal Company has prepared the first stamp sheet in a limited and numbered edition. It contains 12 postage stamps and 12 images of important Christian Holy Sites in Israel. Each stamp sheet is numbered like a lithograph. The stamp sheet is showcased in an attractive folder with exclusive articles written by Henrique Cymerman, journalist, and personal friend of Pope Francis. One of the articles describes "Pope Francis 1 - the Revolutionary of the 21 Century."*



# CARTER AT IT AGAIN

AS USUAL - FORMER PRESIDENT HAS IT WRONG

By **MOSHE PHILLIPS AND BENYAMIN KORN**

*(Moshe Phillips is president of the Religious Zionists of America, Philadelphia Chapter; Benyamin Korn, the former executive editor of the Philadelphia Jewish Exponent, is chairman of the RZA-Philadelphia / <http://www.phillyreligiouszionists.org/>)*

As debate rages over a new documentary about the "honor killings" of women by Islamic extremists around the world, former president Jimmy Carter has weighed in -- and not on the side of oppressed women.

The film, "Honor Diaries," is being

nounced by Islamist activists such as the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) -- not because the documentary is inaccurate, but because its accurate portrayal of the Muslim persecution of women is so unflattering to the Islamic world.

*(Please turn to page 9)*



*FORMER TONIGHT SHOW HOST JAY LENO visited Israel recently to host ceremonies awarding former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg with the \$1million Genesis Prize. The inaugural Prize will honour an individual who has attained excellence and international renown in his or her field, and whose actions and achievements embody the character of the Jewish people through commitment to Jewish values, the Jewish community and/or the State of Israel. Bloomberg will be investing the award in the creation of a global competition named the Genesis Generation Challenge. Meanwhile, Leno, on his first visit to Israel, told reporters that he "loved Israel, that's why I'm here." Photo IGPO*

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# JEWISH CONNECTIONS

VAUDREUIL-SOULANGES HAS A RICH JEWISH TRADITION

By MIKE COHEN

The West Island Montreal communities of Vaudreuil-Soulanges continue to gain notice as cost efficient and a quality place to live. Located on Montreal's West Island, extending to the Ontario border, the Municipalité régionale de comté (MRC) de Vaudreuil-Soulanges has a population of nearly 140,000 people throughout its 23 municipalities.

**JEWISH HISTORY:** People might be surprised to learn about the area's fascinating Jewish history. Historian Elaine Steinberg has done extensive research on this subject. She recently shared her findings with the Jewish

Society of Montreal.

Forty years ago Steinberg moved her family across the Ile aux Torte Bridge and never looked back. Steinberg says she moved her family off-island to accommodate her lifestyle. "The Hudson area was well known for its horsey activities," she says. "I was a young mom with a stable of horses, a menagerie of dogs, a passion for gardens and was teaching half days at Jewish People's and Peretz Schools in Montreal."

For reasons unknown, Vaudreuil-Soulanges' Jewish history was left unattended, says Steinberg. "When I returned

to reclaim it, our history was in a strange state," she noted. "Sometimes other cultures had claimed it, or it was edited out; or it became a myth by virtue of unresolved facts."

Steinberg still lives in Vaudreuil West, on the doorstep of Hudson, where her children grew up. "Although Jewish homes are dotted throughout the region, I think the St. Lazare municipality is the new Jewish frontier," she says. "It has the highest density and a Chabad rabbi since 2010. Rabbi Nechum Labkowski."

**JEWISH DEVELOPERS:** Meanwhile, developments like Les Perles de la

Gare and Les Perles sur le Parc in Vaudreuil-Dorion are attracting a lot of interest. Project manager Ariel Yudelevich is a civil engineer from Israel who earned his degree at ORT in Tel Aviv. Partnering with Yudelevich, are experienced Jewish property developers Joe Levine and Amos Sochaczewski. Their Développement Diamant (<http://www.developpementdiamant.com>) already has two projects in place- Les Perles de la Gare and Les Perles Sur le Parc, with different phases both occupied and under construction.

(Please turn to page 14)

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# TRAVEL TALES

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE JEWISH TRAVELLER

By MIKE COHEN

**THE SOFITEL EXPERIENCE:** My family and I have indeed experienced heaven. That is because we spent four nights at the Sofitel New York ([www.sofitel.com](http://www.sofitel.com)) located at 45 West 44th Street, a very short walk from Times Square and Broadway theatres. For us, the location could not have been better.

This elegant 30-storey midtown Manhattan hotel is just a stone's throw from Fifth Avenue. There are 398 spacious rooms on 30 floors, including 52 suites and one presidential suite all featuring Sofitel's luxurious feathertop and duvet sleep system - SoBed. The executive suites encompass a bedroom with a separate seating/work

area, which can be closed off from each other for in-suite meetings. Most suites have southern exposure, offering a downtown view. Five terrace suites have outdoor terraces with commanding views of Manhattan. There is excellent cupboard space, bathrobes and slippers to use during your stay and an in-room safe with plenty of room to place your valuables.

Elegantly decorated with Paris-meets-New York motifs, all guestrooms have a spacious marble bathroom, three telephone lines, broadband Internet access and fully stocked mini-bars. Room service is available 24 hours along with international newspapers; nightly turn-down service with Evian water; and imported French bath products. There is a fully equipped fitness centre on the basement floor. All kosher meals are out sourced. The hotel is used for kosher functions.

**BEVERLY HILLS:** Synonymous with luxury, from world famous Rodeo Drive to five star restaurants and hotels, Beverly Hills ([www.lovebeverlyhills.com](http://www.lovebeverlyhills.com)) is one must stop on any visit to California. Following our excellent experience in New York City, we found accommodations at the Sofitel Los Angeles at Beverly Hills ([http://www.sofitel-](http://www.sofitel-los)

[angeles.com/en](http://www.sofitel-losangeles.com/en)) at 8555 Beverly Blvd. The hotel boasts a prime location, one mile from Beverly Hills

(Please turn to following page)

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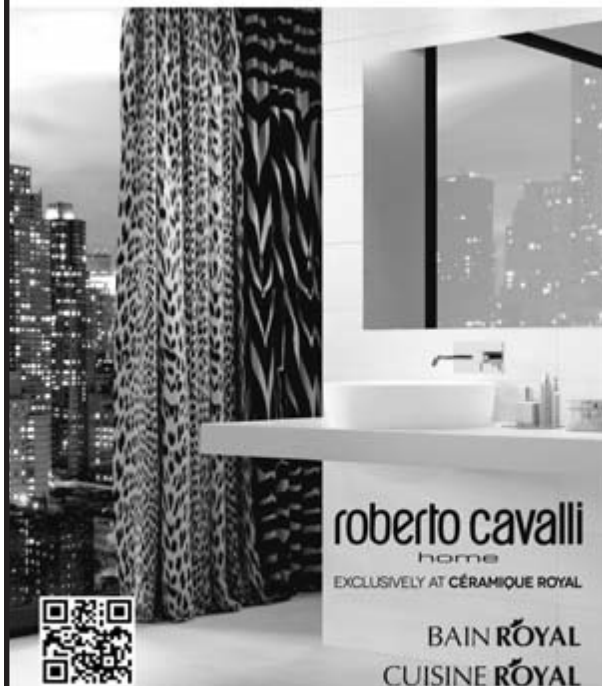


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## TRAVEL TALES

(Continued from preceding page)

and West Hollywood, at the epicenter of LA style. It is located across the street from the Beverly Shopping Center, just minutes from world-class shopping on Rodeo Drive (where native Israeli Maor Batito assisted us at the David Yurman designer jewelry store).

There are 295 rooms here on 10 floors, including 26 suites and two Presidential Suites. We loved the unique rainfall shower and the luxurious French toiletries in our Beverly Luxury King room. There is a lovely outdoor pool with lounge chairs on the second floor.

Many of LA's best restaurants are in Beverly Hills. On North Beverly

Drive, you will find St. Urbain Bagels and Nate 'N Al of Beverly Hills Delicatessen - two spots with deep Jewish roots. Native Montrealer Rudy Meleiezer opened the former and upon entering the bagel and sandwich stop you are greeted by a message which describes St. Urbain Street in Montreal and its Jewish history. The latter was established in 1945 and is one of the Los Angeles area's most noted Jewish delis.

For dining, people kept pointing me towards Mastro's, of which there are locations in California, Nevada, Arizona, Illinois and soon New York (Please turn to page 14)

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**CARTER AGAIN***(Continued from page 5)*

In the midst of the "honor killing" controver-

sy comes the release of Carter's new book decrying the abuse of women throughout the world. Well, not quite everywhere around the world: there is one place which, despite a recent 100% increase in the murders of innocent women, does not merit even a single mention in the ex-president's book -- the territories controlled by the Palestinian Authority.

At first glance, this omission might seem strange. Carter, after all, has devoted much of his post-presidential career to speaking out about what he claims is the mistreatment of the Palestinian Arabs by Israel. But for some reason, when it comes to the mistreatment of Palestinian

*(Please turn to following page)*

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## CARTER AGAIN

*(Continued from preceding page)*

women by fellow-Palestinians, Carter has nothing to say--even in a book that is ostensibly devoted to the problem of violence against women.

The Palestinian women in question, like the other women depicted in the "Honor Diaries" film, were the victims of what are known as "honor killings." These cases involve men murdering female relatives whom they suspect of violating Islamic fundamentalist morals. Some of the women are believed to have committed adultery, or premarital relations. Sometimes their crime is that they dress "provocatively" or were seen in the company of an unauthorized boyfriend. They are murdered in order to "preserve" the family's honor.

In 2012, thirteen such murders were reported in the West Bank territories controlled by Palestinian Authority. Last year, the number of victims more than doubled, to 27. according to the *Washington Post*. And

those are just the ones that we know about.

The *Post* notes that in addition to killings over suspected morality violations, sometimes the violence is a way to hide the fact that the women were raped or molested by their relatives. In other cases, the "honor killings" are actually related to inheritance disputes or simply "the desire to punish female independence."

The injustice does not end there. It extends to the way the Palestinian legal system deals with the murderers. The Palestinian Authority's official legal code actually includes laws "that guarantee light sentences for honor killings," the *Post* notes. And even when the killers are punished, "pardons and suspended sentences are common."

Jimmy Carter's new book, *A Call to Action: Women, Religion, Violence, and Power* has 18 chapters. The one about "honor killings" is the shortest--less than

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three pages long. At the end of the book, the former president presents a long list of steps that should be taken to protect women against discrimination and violence. There are 23 recommendations. "Condemn and outlaw honor killings" is number 23.

The problem is not just that Mr. Carter gives short shrift to such a serious and worsening crisis, although that is bad enough. But what little he does write about the issue is, frankly, appalling. He begins, not with a description of the prevalence of honor killings in Arab and Muslim countries but, rather, by announcing that the phenomenon of honor killings "has a jus-

Holy Scriptures of Jews and Christians." He then quotes a verse from Deuteronomy prescribing capital punishment for certain instances of adultery. He does not bother to explain that the verse in question, like other biblical references to capital punishment for various crimes, pertained to ancient times and are obviously not carried out in our day and age.

The ex-president then mentions an example of an honor killing in Saudi Arabia and another in Pakistan, and praises the leaders of Jordan for supposedly trying to combat the problem (but "strong community beliefs" still support the practice, he notes), before hurrying

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**CARTER AGAIN***(Continued from page 11)*

the net of culpability as wide as possible, emphasizing that such killings have been carried out by

Hindus and Sikhs, too.

But Palestinians? Whose number of honor killings has increased the most (percentage wise) and the fastest than any other in the world? Not a word.

Mr. Carter does, however, have quite a bit to say about the way Israeli Orthodox Jews treat women. He spends almost two pages --nearly as much space as devoted to the entire topic of honor killings--berating Israel's fervently Orthodox for supposedly considering women "inferior" (they do not) and for preferring to sit separately from women on buses.

Whatever one thinks of the bus seating controversy, it hardly belongs in a book that focuses on violence against women. Nobody has ever been killed or injured in a bus seating dispute in Israel. And Israeli law, unlike that of the Palestinian Authority, does not ensure light sentences for men who harm women.

One would prefer to give a former president the benefit of the doubt. One would like to assume that, deep down, Jimmy Carter really does feel genuine sympathy for the plight of Palestinian women under the Palestinian Authority. But his silence over Palestinian honor killings, combined with his constant and harsh denunciations of Israel, suggests that Mr. Carter only cares about Palestinians when he can use them as a whip with which to lash Israel. It's apparent that when Palestinians are the victims of other Palestinians, they just don't serve his purpose.

native of Lakewood, New Jersey. He and eight others



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were arrested in 2011 following a FBI sting. He is to be sentenced on August 19. He faces life in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

**WORLD IN REVIEW***(Continued from page 4)*

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## JEWISH CONNECTIONS

(Continued from page 6)

### KOSHER CUISINE:

The five star Château Vaudreuil Hotel ([www.chateauvaudreuil.ca](http://www.chateauvaudreuil.ca)) at 21700 Route Transcanadienne is extraordinary. It is not only a wonderful choice for tourists, but Montrealers should consider this place for an easy weekend getaway. Over the last few years, the Chateau Vaudreuil has become very popular for Jewish weddings. It has a kosher kitchen, partnerships with two prominent kosher caterers (Tradition/Romano Giorgi and Black Tie/Ernie) and hosts other Jewish functions and business meetings. The Villa d'Este Restaurant even goes the extra mile. Guests requiring kosher meals need only provide 24 hours notice. Breakfast will be brought to your room, with lunch and dinner served in the dining room. This option has

greatly increased the number of Jewish guests choosing the hotel, especially those coming by car from Ontario.

The Château Vaudreuil is presently marking its 25th anniversary.

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## TRAVEL TALES

(Continued from page 8)

City. We made a reservation at Mastro's Steakhouse ([www.mastrosrestaurants.com](http://www.mastrosrestaurants.com)) at 246 North Canon Drive in Beverly Hills, arriving at 8:30 p.m. on a week-day evening. The place was packed. Recognized as one of the top 10 steakhouses in the U.S., it is also known for its sumptuous seafood selections and one of the best desserts I have ever tasted in my life – the famous and irresistible warm butter cake. Mastro's was purchased last year by Landry's Inc. of Houston, which already owns the Mortons chain. Their Jewish chairman and chief executive is Mark Levy.

Mike Cohen's email address is [info@mikecohen.ca](mailto:info@mikecohen.ca). Follow his travels at [www.sandboxworld.com/travel](http://www.sandboxworld.com/travel) and on Twitter @mikecohencl.

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