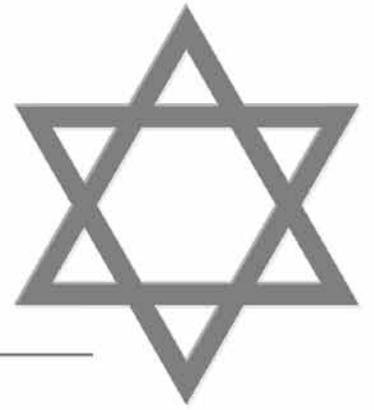




HILLEL

# The Star



WASHINGTON AND LEE HILLEL NEWSLETTER

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TAMMUZ 5772

## LATKE-HAMENTASHEN DEBATE/PURIM CELEBRATION

*By Ben Brams '15 and Max Chapnick '13*

On the evening of March 8th, students and faculty gathered in the Hillel House to debate a question as old as time itself—a question that has plagued Jewish thinkers and philosophers for hundreds of years. It's a question of superiority; a question for all the gelt. Which traditional Jewish food holds the upper hand? Is it the delicious latke or the delectable hamentashen? The purpose of the debate was to uncover the truth, and I'm happy to report, we did just that.

The debate was moderated by First-Year Ben Brams and Senior and Hillel Co-President Josh Posner, who gave a lively introduction of the debate's prestigious history both nationally and at W&L.

After the inaugural latke flip, Professor Tim Diette gave the first presentation for the latke team: his smooth presentation on his extensive happiness-utility research soundly proved that the coefficient of happiness for the latke was significantly higher than that of the hamentashen.

Following Professor Diette and his mathematical formulas and study-driven evidence was Professor of Politics Lucas Morel, who found a body of facts implying



## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Have you ever tried putting a puzzle together? 500 pieces? 2000 pieces? 6000 pieces?

As a child I started with a 15 piece puzzle and as I advanced and matured, the number pieces in my puzzles grew as well. Every time I got to the last piece of a puzzle, I thought of how long it took and how accomplished and satisfied I felt. I then started to wonder what I would do with my time, whether or not to start a new puzzle, and what to do with the puzzle I already had--Do I put it back in the box? Frame it? Leave it on the table for a while?

I had the pleasure of working with students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community members to put together this year's puzzle. Each person in the Washington and Lee Hillel community helped piece together a beautiful picture—an incredible year full of religious, cultural, educational, social, and community services activities. Without each of us,

the puzzle would be incomplete and we would not be able to bask in the glory of our masterpiece.

This year's puzzle, just as in years past, will always remain together – for us to remember what we have accomplished, remind us of what we are continuing to build and to guide us in our next puzzle. Each year the number of pieces in our puzzle increases. With each consecutive year, we are developing new programs and initiatives and we are continuing to increase the number of Jewish students on campus.

Each of us carries with us a piece of a larger puzzle and I am looking forward to helping to guide, motivate and put together next year's pieces.

Have a great summer and if you would like to discuss *your* puzzle piece, please contact me any time.

L'Shalom

*Brett Schwartz, Hillel Director*

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*Continued from page 1*

that America's founders were proponents of the Hamantash. He informed listeners that forefathers such as Washington, Franklin, and Lincoln understood the necessity for the fruit-flavored pastry, which almost single-handedly paved the way for the country in which we live today. He related the famous tri-cornered hat to the Hamantash and even went so far as to insinuate Lincoln's denial of the latke. Both lectures received hearty laughter and at the halfway point, it was much too close to call.

Next, choral director Professor Shane Lynch presented a compelling argument that George Lucas and composer John William strongly favored the latke in their classic series Star Wars. Professor Lynch suggested that Spielberg deliberately



modeled the evil Death Star after the hamentashen. He then spotlighted a forgotten hymn that extolled the virtue of the latke while simultaneously bashing the hamentashen. Professor Lynch also had the premier choral group at W&L, the W&L Chamber Singers, perform a Mendelssohn piece with alternate lyrics in praise of the latke.

Luckily, Dean Tammy Futrell was up to the task of defending the hamantash, warning about the dangers of latke consumption, saying, "Friends don't let friends eat latkes." Dean Futrell presented her work on the negative influence of latkes on students' lives outside the classroom and the positive effects of the hamantash.

In the end, it was very close—closer than any other year. After careful deliberation and multiple votes, the latke team was given the victory. Afterwards, everyone enjoyed latkes and hamentashen, and judging by the satisfied smiles as people were enjoying both foods, I think it's safe to say that everyone was a winner.

## JLSA – JEWISH LAW STUDENT ASSOCIATION UPDATE

*Ariel Brio, Law Class of 2012  
Outgoing JLSA President*

This past semester, the Jewish Law Students Association (JLSA) at W&L Law had the good fortune to welcome two nationally recognized speakers. Both speakers helped students understand the legal and strategic issues in Israel and the Middle East.

Eugene Kontorovich, Professor of Law at Northwestern University, spoke about the legal authorities governing the borders of Israel. His analysis, rooted purely in the law and not on policy, focused on the text of the authorities and their interpretation based on precedent. Professor Kontorovich's conclusions were that while legally a Palestinian state is not a question, the border issue is a different story. Professor Kontorovich argues that the territories governed by the Palestinian Authority are not within agreed upon borders but rather that Israel has as strong, if not stronger, of a legal case of ownership. This comes from law established by the League of Nations as inherited by the United Nations as well as customary international law. The talk

was co-sponsored by the International Law Society and by the Federalist Society Chapter of Washington and Lee.

Douglas J. Feith, former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy in the administration of George W. Bush, held a dialogue with law and undergraduate students on the legal and strategic issues of the War on Terror post-9/11. Undersecretary Feith's talk emanated from his book, *War & Decision*, in which he describes the decision-making processes involved in the



invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan during his time as Policy Chief at the Pentagon. Mr. Feith discussed how non-state actors challenge international law, as it was developed to deal with formal state-on-state warfare. He described how the Bush Administration saw pre-emptive warfare as balanced with several domestic and international forces in order to prevent

the President from declaring frivolous anticipatory strikes. Finally, he discussed the Obama Administration's policies in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran, as well as the Israeli-Palestinian issue. He fears that the current Administration is not taking seriously the fact that without American involvement, the region could be a hot-zone in the short-term. After his talk at the law school, Mr. Feith joined undergraduates for a more personal discussion of foreign policy at the Hillel House. This talk was co-sponsored with the Transnational Law Institute, Contact Committee, Politics Department, Hillel House, and the Federalist Society Chapter of Washington and Lee.

Both of these high-level speakers increased the discourse of the Middle East and Israel at the law school while increasing JLSA's profile. JLSA looks forward to continuing its role at the intersection of cultural, religious, and social Judaism while bringing thought-provoking events relevant to Jewish and Israeli issues to the law school.

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*Gifts made to the Annual Hillel Fund immediately contribute to the exceptional religious, cultural, educational, social, leadership development and community service programming at Hillel. The Hillel fund is what keeps Jewish student life viable at W&L. Our diverse quality programs and opportunities depends on the financial support of alumni, parents, community members and friends.*

*Thank you to all those who made contributions to Hillel!*

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## VIP DINNERS & THE NOVACK FUND

*By David Fishman '14,  
Speakers VP*

Washington and Lee Hillel is pleased to have had another successful semester, which included two VIP Dinners. We were fortunate enough to host Professor Tyler Dickovick of the Politics Department and Professor David Novack of the Sociology Department. The separate dinners were both held at the Sheridan Livery, where there was a strong turnout of 15-20 students eager to discuss various relevant topics with the professors.

Over a pleasant meal, there was candid discussion ranging from basic student life on campus to actively trying to become a greater part of the Rockbridge community as a Jewish student body.

One of the most memorable topics was about the promotion of a fund to benefit impoverished children living in Rockbridge County, who are often in dire need of every day basic necessities. This magnanimous endeavor, originated by the Novack family, with the assistance of Michelle Hughes, a local school teacher, is an attempt not only to embolden Hillel's commitment to actively partaking in everyday mitzvahs, but also to raise awareness in people who may never have met a Jew before and to connect Judaism with benevolent sentiments. The fund provides anonymous gifts, donated by W&L students, to local school children. We hope to expand this altruistic fund and to continue to provide insightful VIP Dinners for the Jewish student body next year.



## ALUMNI REUNION

*Sunny Altman '13, Alumni Relations Chair*

On May 11, Jewish alumni of Washington and Lee met for a reception honoring Dr. Jim Sagner. Dr. Sagner graduated from W&L with a BS in accounting and went on to earn an MBA from the University of Pennsylvania and a PhD from the American University. He currently is senior principal of Sagner/Marks and teaches both finance to MBA students at the University of Bridgeport and executive education at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. He has authored eight books and some 60 papers and articles, which have appeared in various publications.

Members of several different classes back at W&L for their reunions, as well as current students, were present at the reception, which was held in the multipurpose room of the Hillel House. Alumni were able to learn about W&L today from current students, and the students enjoyed listening to the alumni tell stories about W&L when they were students. That evening, alumni, faculty, students, and community members met for a student-led Shabbat service and dinner sponsored by Dr. Sagner.



## BIRTHRIGHT ISRAEL – THE 2011-2012 EXPERIENCE



This past winter Washington and Lee Hillel sent six students on Taglit Birthright Israel, a program where students are provided with a no-cost trip to Israel, joining thousands of other young Jewish adults from around the world for a unique life-changing experience.

The students who embarked on this journey were Jonathan Salm '13, Joshua Josephson '14, David Fishman '14, Melissa Horadam '13, Aaron Kliegman '14, and Mikel Wilner '13.

Prior to their departure the students met several times with Hillel Director Brett Schwartz to learn about the land they would be visiting. They learned about geography, culture, and politics, and they also had discussions on the basics of traveling in Israel. These sessions also allowed time for this group of six students to get to know each other and start bonding as a group before joining 35 other students from around the country. After the students got back into the country they came back together for a dinner with Brett Schwartz to share their experiences and to express their new perspectives.



*My experience on Birthright is not far different from that of most of the trip's participants. For most, if not all of us, it was an experience that truly exceeded our expectations.*

*We came from different backgrounds, different schools, and practiced Judaism in different ways. We attended Washington and Lee, Kent State, Purdue, and Princeton. Some of us were religious, others secular, some from a Reform background and others from a Conservative tradition. We kept vegan, vegetarian, kosher, and non-kosher. Despite our differences, we were all united in Israel under the Jewish faith. But above all, we made the decision to visit Israel as a part of Birthright.*

*Throughout the ten-day trip, we took in everything that Israel had to offer. In Jerusalem, we had Shabbat, visited the Western Wall, and had an emotional day at Yad Vashem. Tel Aviv gave us a taste of modern Israel. The landscape and natural beauty of the Golan Heights, Lake Galilee, and the Dead Sea rival that of anywhere else in the world. We were treated to Jeep rides, an overnight experience in the Negiv Desert, and a magical morning hike of Mount Masada.*

*Before I left the States, a large number of us saw Birthright simply as an opportunity to visit Israel. By the end of the trip, however, Birthright helped us realize how truly important and unique the Jewish people are. It was an amazing experience that I will surely treasure for the rest of my life.*

*-Jonathan Salm '13*



*Visiting Israel is a trip that everyone should make. Israel isn't just another country; it is the land of our people. Birthright opened my eyes to a whole new world that I didn't know existed. While on Birthright, we toured most of the country, spanning from the Golan Heights to the Negev Desert. We stopped in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv as well. The memories and the people we met will forever be instilled in our lives.*

*Coming back from a trip like Birthright is tough to do, but it makes you appreciate Judaism. I now have a better connection to my religion, countries, and myself. I am now a different person after visiting Israel. I will stand up for my fellow Jews when they are in need. Nobody can come in between me and Judaism. I will fight, with everything I have, to support Israel and the Birthright program. It changes lives one by one.*

*-Joshua Josephson '14*

## WASHINGTON AND LEE ADLIB SYMPOSIUM

*By Jonathan Salm '13*

This past March, Washington and Lee University invited alumni in the marketing and advertising world to be a part of the AdLib conference, featuring workshops, presentations and panels that connected advertising with the liberal arts. Among the visiting alumni were three Jewish alumni who not only participated in the conference, but were integral to AdLib's success.

John Zamoiski '74 delivered the keynote address to a group of marketing and advertising students during dinner at the Southern Inn and spoke on the second panel, "Media 2.0 and its Role in Advertising." Zamoiski founded Bottlerocket Marketing Group in New York City and currently serves as its Chairman and CEO.

Rich Weinstein '91 spoke on the second panel, "Welcome to the Ad World." Weinstein is a Senior Vice President and Group Account Director for the Martin Agency in Richmond. Brad Haugen '04 was a featured guest speaker and also participated on the second panel with Zamoiski.

Haugen is the CMO of Scoot Braun Projects, an entertainment company whose clients include Justin Bieber, Asher Roth, and Carly Rae Jepsen.

When these alumni returned to W&L, each were impressed with how far Jewish life has come since they graduated. For frequent patrons of the Hillel House, Zamoiski's name might sound familiar. The back porch is officially named the "Zamoiski-White Patio." It was named by Zamoiski and his roommate and best friend, Eric White '74, in memory of their fathers, both W&L alumni.

"I am absolutely thrilled that the Hillel house has become an integral part of campus life," Zamoiski said. "It really



## ISRAELI INDEPENDENCE DAY

*By Lauren Michnick '14, Social VP*

On Wednesday, May 25 Washington and Lee University's Hillel hosted a dinner at The Marketplace celebrating Israeli Independence Day. The dinner included traditional Israeli foods as well as festive Israeli decorations. Some dishes in this menu included matboucha, falafel, noodle kugel, brisket, chicken schnitzel, as well as a personal favorite of mine, coconut macaroons. Excellent music to enhance our festivities was provided by Ian Shaw and Brett Schwartz.

The purpose of the Israeli dinner was to share Israeli customs with the entire school, not just Hillel members. Vicky Cervantes, a student who joined me at

dinner who is not a member of Hillel said, "This dinner enabled me to have a much better understanding of Israeli culture, plus the food was great!"

It was enjoyable to see people's faces when they walked into the dining room to see it decorated and especially when people came in dancing because of the Israeli music. One of the best parts of the dinner besides the great food, music, and people was that it occurred during Accepted Students Weekend so students who are interested in W&L were exposed to some of the best aspects of Hillel.

I cannot wait until we celebrate again next year!



*Continued on page 8*

## LOOKING TOWARDS NEXT YEAR

*By Samantha Rosier '14, W&L Hillel President*

As the school year winds down, Hillel certainly has not. Over the last two months of classes, we hosted over a hundred people for a Passover Seder, celebrated Yom HaAtzmaut with the entire school, welcomed accepted students, and had a week full of events for Holocaust Remembrance Week, all in addition to our usual Shabbat dinners and services. Now we are beginning to plan out our next year.

We held elections for officer positions in April. We restructured our board to have one president and five vice presidents with chairs and committees under them. We will again have a First Year Students of Hillel board next year so that we can get new students involved and continue to grow. The executive board has already taken over for the month of May and planned the Israeli Independence Day dinner, Shabbats, and the alumni weekend events.

Recently we received a grant to allow the six members of the executive board to attend Hillel's International Conference in St. Louis for a weekend in August. The

board is really excited to share our ideas with other Hillel's and learn from them, along with getting leadership training in seminars and workshops. The grant also includes follow-up training on campus throughout the upcoming school year.

The beginning of the academic year is always busy for Hillel, especially with the High Holy Days. We have been assigned a student rabbi from Hebrew Union College who will assist our members in leading services and join the community for meals. We are also planning Orientation Week activities for the incoming first-years to get them involved and show them everything Hillel has to offer.

Our board is trying to emphasize that Hillel can be whatever a student wants it to be— simply for social events, for the religious aspects, or a place to hang out all the time. One of our goals is to offer a variety of different events so that students from all religious backgrounds, including non-Jews, can come and enjoy themselves. I'm very excited about working with our new board and can't wait for the upcoming year.

## LUNCH AND LEARNS

*By Brenden Strauss '15*

"A room full of Jews is sitting around a table eating bagels and talking about tattoos." Sounds like the start of a mediocre joke, but it's not; it's a "Lunch and Learn." Washington and Lee's Hillel House, under the direction of Brett Schwartz, started Lunch and Learn this year, which took place every other week. A typical Lunch and Learn begins with each attendee grabbing lunch from the E. Café located in the Hillel House. Once everyone has their lunch, the group heads up to the second floor conference room to discuss the main topic of the day. With each session come special

guests who either lead the discussion or contribute their invaluable opinions with the students.

From "Tattooed Jews" to "Is Any of That Stuff in the Bible True?" to "Madonna and Kabbalah" this year's Lunch and Learns have covered various topics that modern Jews can relate to. The most shocking part is the difference of opinions coming from the students. Each discussion was met with a multitude of views, and each view was acknowledged and respected, making Hillel's Lunch and Learn not only a place to eat and talk, but also a place to make new and interesting friends, all while learning about the Jewish heritage and the modern Jew.

## ADLIB SYMPOSIUM

*Continued from page 7*

is a place that promotes interaction, intellectual pursuit, and understanding among students of all faiths. I am excited to be a part of the building of the Hillel house, as is my 'partner in crime' Eric White."

Both Zamoiski and Weinstein were particularly impressed at how the Hillel house has helped Jewish life become more prominent on campus. At one point, there were two Jewish fraternities, Zeta Beta Tau and Phi Epsilon Pi. Phi Ep was absorbed into ZBT nationally in the early seventies and Zamoiski joined ZBT when he came to W&L. However, by the late eighties, ZBT had lost its connection with Jewish students.

Weinstein, who had not returned to W&L until the AdLib conference, was both surprised and pleased at the resurgence in Jewish life. "I graduated in 1991, and at that time I don't think there was a Jewish person in ZBT. There didn't seem to be much of a Jewish culture on campus," said Weinstein. Instead, Washington and Lee Jewish life existed mostly off campus. "AdLib was my first time back to campus in more than 15 years," he continued. "To now have a building (the Hillel house) that is literally the center of campus blew me a way. It is 180 degrees of a difference. Jewish life is now vibrant and fantastic. The Hillel house is a huge step in the right direction!"

The Hillel house served as one of the prime meeting locations for the AdLib conference, including seminars, speakers, and a luncheon. "I was delighted to find out that the luncheon for the conference I was keynoting was held at the Hillel house," Zamoiski said. "Hillel is not apart from the University, but instead a part of the University. The conference was designed to create a bridge between liberal arts and advertising and the Hillel house creates a bridge between students of all faiths. I think it was appropriate that part of the conference was held there."

## HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE WEEK

By Max Chapnick '13 and Alicia Bishop '13

Although flowers were blooming outside during the second full week of spring term, our Hillel house had a more somber feel as we observed Holocaust Remembrance week. The week kicked off with our annual Holocaust Vigil. Pairing traditional music and powerful poems with a candle-lighting ceremony, W&L Hillel created a program that was moving and thought-provoking for

all who attended. Students, professors, and community members participated, letting people from around Lexington remember, together, one of the most culturally significant and tragic events in our history. That weekend, 24 students boarded a mini-bus and drove to Washington D.C. to spend several hours at the Holocaust Museum.

*Having never visited the national Holocaust Memorial Museum before, I honestly had no idea what to expect. I had heard emotional stories of people being moved to tears by the experience but was in no way prepared for the effect it would have on me personally. As our bus arrived at the building I recall being struck by its stern, austere architectural design and the somber yet ominous effect it induced upon me.*

*Once inside, I learned the layout of the building as such: visitors start on the top floor, where they learn about the Nazi's ascent to power, and descend into the museum's lower floors, where exhibits depict horrific accounts of the concentration camps themselves. The museum's architect, James Ingo Freed, once stated that the visitor's descent into the museum's lower floors was designed to symbolize a veritable descent into hell. Having completed my tour, I can fully attest to the truth of this statement.*

*Several exhibits proved particularly chilling and lingered in my mind long after the completion of my tour. The room filled with countless shoes of victims, as well as the wall-length mural depicting the thousands of pounds of shorn hair found at Auschwitz alone, left me speechless, while the medical experiments slideshow was a cruel reminder of the Nazi's total disregard for human life. As we made our way to the Wannsee Conference exhibit, my roommate Jack Murphy and I were unable to fathom how national political leaders, some seventy odd years ago, could calmly discuss plans for the systemic annihilation of an entire race of people. The entire experience was chilling, to say the least.*

*As we neared the end of the museum, I began to reflect on my time there and was drawn, in my mind, to my past reading of Holocaust survivor and author Elie Wiesel's Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech and the lessons that I drew from it. Wiesel claimed, "Human suffering anywhere concerns men and women everywhere, and "that we must never forget the atrocities committed against the Jewish people to ensure that an event like the Holocaust never occurs again."*

-Cory Church '15



The week continued as students, faculty, and community members gathered in the multipurpose room to watch a documentary, *The Last Days* directed by Stephen Spielberg and a movie screening of *Sarah's Key*. These heart-wrenching movies were difficult to watch, but gave perspectives we have not seen before.

To conclude our remembrance week, Jay Ipson, Holocaust survivor, U.S. soldier, successful businessman, and long-time Virginia resident gave a powerful presentation at Hillel. Ipson questioned his audience, "Can anything like the Holocaust happen here in America?"

Ipson never answered his own question as he went on to describe both the political and his personal history during the years leading up to the outbreak of World War II. He spoke about how his family escaped a ghetto that had been turned into a concentration camp and how they managed to survive for months in a small dug-out hole in a poor farmer's field. Ipson noted that as a young boy his father taught him arithmetic by counting lice in the cramped space.

Today Ipson is the founder and owner of the Virginia Holocaust Museum in Roanoke, VA. It was a privilege for us to host Ipson, who not only presented the moving story of a boy who survived the Holocaust, but who is also a successful and charismatic man in his own right.

## PASSOVER 2012

*By Victoria Cervantes '14*



It was the last Friday before final exams, and I was at a Community Passover event in Evans Dining Hall. I, a non-Jewish student, was fortunate enough to sit at one of the many round tables covered with Seder plates, wine, and food. The Passover Seder held by W&L's small and mighty Hillel was, thankfully, open to the community and I was introduced to a completely new type of religious celebration.

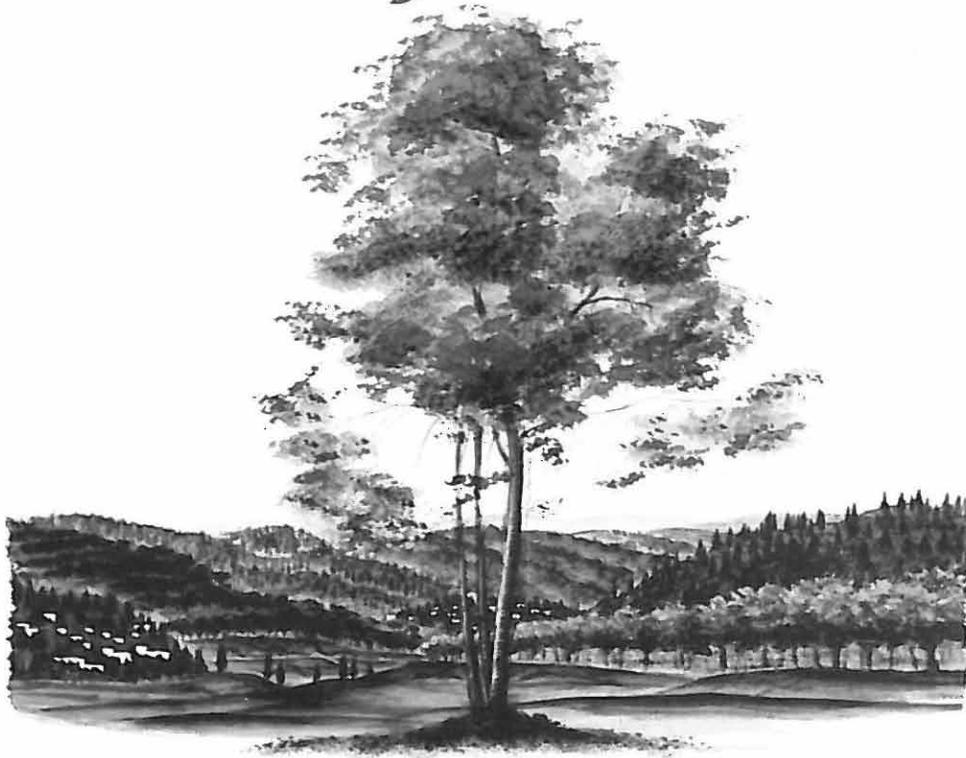
My first Passover celebration was an event that I will not soon forget. There was plenty of food, wine (four glasses each, if you wanted to do it right), singing, and community bonding. There was a strong sense of hospitality and companionship that night (but that wasn't too surprising since these are two benefits that I always recognize when attending Hillel-sponsored events) along with plenty of food on my plate (and in my stomach). The fact that I belong to the Protestant Christian faith has never caused any type of conflict or strife when I come to Hillel, and I think that there is a very inspiring atmosphere of tolerance on the Washington and Lee campus. I would have to say that although I enjoy coming to Hillel services, including Shabbat Shalom on Fridays, this Passover Seder was a very special event and one of my favorites.

Passover 2012 was a very exciting celebration, perhaps because it was the first service of this type that I have attended, but I find it hard to imagine that any Passover celebration is not at least moving or stirring. It is the celebration of a people's exodus from Egypt, a country in which they were oppressed by slavery and religious discrimination. During the service we ate the traditional items on the Seder plate, we recited the ten-plagues that descended upon the Egyptians, and we ate the unleavened bread just as the Israelites did when fleeing from Egypt. Attending Passover was just another confirmation to me that W&L's Hillel is a tightly-knit community that is part of a bigger world of ancient and sacred traditions that I have begun appreciate because of the welcoming arms of the groups' members.



*First-year students bonding while snow tubing at Wintergreen Resort.*

# Trees for Israel



כ' תבואו אל הארץ ונטעתם (ויקרא י"ט"ב)

*"When you shall come to the land you shall plant trees."— Leviticus 19:23*

A Tree Has Been Planted  
IN HONOR OF  
**The Graduating Class Of 2012**  
Planted By  
Washington & Lee Hillel



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