

# WOMEN'S AMERICAN ORT

Carol Linch, a resident of Highland Park, Illinois, has been named chair of the 33rd National Biennial Convention of Women 5 American ORT. Co-chairing the convention, which will bring 1000 delegates to the Hyatt Regency Chicago from October 26-29, 1995, are Marcia Friedman of Columbus, Ohio, and Judy Menikoff of Houston, Texas.



Carol Linch

The 33rd Biennial National Convention will focus upon the adoption of a long-range strategic plan for Women's American ORT, designed to guide the organization into the 21st century, the inauguration of a streamlined governance structure, and the election of new national officers. Highlights will include an address by A.M. Rosenthal, former executive editor and now columnist of *The New York Times*; presentations by Dr. Ellen Isler, director general of the World ORT Union, and Israel Goralnik, director general of ORT Israel; sessions with ORT students from Israel, the United States and Latin America; and many networking, leadership development, and educational opportunities for the delegates who will be attending from throughout the country.

Women's American ORT, an organization of membership chapters across the United States, supports vocational and technical training for Jews around the world, particularly in the United States, Israel, South America, France, India, Morocco, and now throughout the former Soviet Union. It is the largest affiliate organization of the World ORT Union and a major source of financial support to its central budget.

More than 252,000 students presently are enrolled in ORT's 800 schools and projects which include comprehensive and vocational high schools, colleges, apprenticeship programs and teacher-training institutes. The ORT program encompasses some 60 countries and is the largest non-governmental network of vocational education and technical training centers in the world.

In addition to its central mission, Women's American ORT works actively in the United States to improve public education, to promote literacy, to combat anti-Semitism and to support women's rights.

For further information, please contact your local Women's American ORT office.



## B'NAI B'RITH WOMEN UNITING JEWISH WOMEN

### Jewish Women International Is New Name for B'nai B'rith Women

It's Official! *Jewish Women International* is the new name for B'nai B'rith Women. The organization rang in its 98th year in August with a new name and a strong vision.

"The approach of our hundredth anniversary is an ideal benchmark for innovations," said Jewish Women International president Susan Bruck of Charlotte. "And with the rapid changes taking place in the Jewish community and our society at large, it's important for organizations to recognize emerging trends and adjust their focus to meet those trends," said Bruck.

With these changes, Jewish Women International is staking out its position as an organization committed to meeting the needs of contemporary Jewish women. "During my travels to Prague, Israel and Russia in the last year, I realized that women the world over are concerned with the same types of issues," said Bruck. She cited Jewish continuity, domestic violence and personal and professional growth as issues of universal concern to Jewish women. Jewish Women International will address those concerns by continuing its innovative, member-driven programs which empower communities to make positive changes. "When communities all across the country face issues simultaneously, large-scale changes result," said Bruck. "We started programs ten years ago to address the prevalence of domestic violence in Jewish homes. At that time, it wasn't widely recognized as a Jewish issue. Today, many

major Jewish organizations have joined us and are now taking a stand against domestic abuse and women's groups in Israel and Europe are tangling with the issue.

Jewish continuity is another issue that reverberates around the globe. Citizens of the former Soviet Union are rediscovering their Jewish heritage while women in the U.S. seek to instill a love of Jewish traditions in their children. "There



Susan Bruck

was a time when communities were more intact. Everywhere Jewish children looked they saw parents, teachers and neighbors living and practicing Jewish values," said Bruck.

"Today, we live in diverse communities and must create a place for Jewish women to share their experiences and traditions, and learn from one another how to nurture a love of Judaism in their children and grandchildren," said Bruck.

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## Mom, I Want To Keep Kosher: When Your Child Wants To Become More Observant Than You

Two years ago, when Rina Goldberg, 18, returned from a Young Judaea teen-tour to Israel, she had a surprise for her parents: She had decided to become Orthodox.

Although Young Judaea, the Hadasah-sponsored Zionist youth movement, is not affiliated with any religious stream, after six-weeks in Israel, Rina was a different person. She refused to eat in non-kosher restaurants and she would no longer drive to synagogue with her parents on Sabbath. She opted to leave her parents conservative home in El Paso, Texas and move to Baltimore to complete high school at an Orthodox yeshiva.

But parents can be taken aback as the apparent stranger disguised as their child walks through the door, declaring a newfound desire to adhere strictly to Jewish law. A parent may feel a sudden sense of rejection as the child challenges their values. Or, a parent might be scared that they have lost their child to some unfamiliar entity. And, as parents and children negotiate religious boundaries and beliefs, fights often ensue.

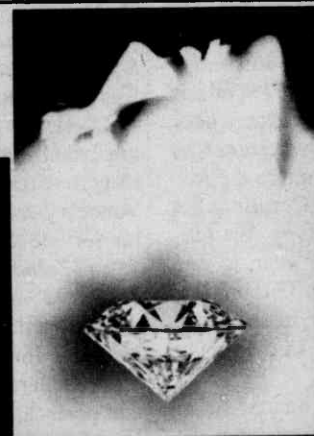
Despite the initial battles, experts say a child's decision to become observant does not have to impede a parent/child relationship, even when modifications must be made.

"First the parent must make sure they can accept that child unconditionally even if it means your child is becoming a more observant Jew," says Dr. Michael Mantell, an Orthodox Jew and a clinical psychologist who lives in San Diego. "Once this is done, the parent will hopefully approach the child as they would any guest in their home. If the chief rabbi of Israel was coming to visit, would they serve a pork dinner?"

The reality of the situation, Dr. Mantel says, is that a person's newfound religiosity should not scare a parent. After all, he says, it is not difficult to accommodate a religious person. All it takes is kosher food, dishes (which can be paper or plastic), a bencher, (a washing cup) and a placemat.

But, Dr. Mantel also says that while parents should accommodate the child, it is more important that the child respect the parents' beliefs.

"Why would a parent have problems with their kids becoming more religious?" Rachel's father, Bob, asked incredulously. "I'm not going to change my lifestyle because Rachel changed hers. But if that's what she wants to do than she can do it. The reason parents educate their kids is so they can make up their own minds."



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