

# Granddaughter, Mother, Grandmother Share Bat Mitzvah

By Andres Muchin  
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There may not have been a dry eye in the house of worship when Frieda Tobin passed the Torah to her daughter Dale Oller, who passed it to her daughter Sarah.

On the Tu B'Shevat weekend, they comprised the first b'not mitzvah of three generations of one family that anyone in the Conservative movement can recall. "It was very emotional for our entire family," said Dale of the service at Congregation Neveh Shalom in Southwest Portland, Ore.

Frieda remarked that worshippers told her afterward that they were especially moved by the sharing of the Torah. Said one, "We were just bawling when we saw that."

The trio led 400 worshippers in Friday night and Saturday morning services, under the tutelage of Rabbi Joshua Stampfer and Cantor Linda Shivers. Following the holiday's New Year for Trees theme, the three women emphasized the roots of family. Sarah, 13, who didn't have to plead at all when as a kid she asked her mother and grandmother to share her bat mitzvah, stressed family togetherness in her speech. "I talked about one family," she said. "We do things together."

And as the b'not mitzvah not coincidentally synchronized with the haftarah of the judge Deborah, Sarah also stressed feminism. She said she discussed "how women play a major role in my life and others'." The theme was further carried through at the 40 guest tables, each of which was identified by an important Jewish woman. Signs about them were placed in the center of the tables in pots of tiny cypress trees, which in turn were surrounded by 15 kinds of nuts and fruits for the Tu B'Shevat holiday.

The decoration was the work of Dale, 38, as

were the invitations and the custom-made illustrated prayer books at each service. But Dale wasn't the only one of the three who worked hard.

Frieda, 65, had attended Hebrew school as a youngster, and while always being involved in synagogue life had to more or less start from scratch when she began her bat mitzvah studies two years ago. But this self-described reserved woman had a greater worry. "I have no voice to start with," she said. "I still can't believe I did it."

Dale, a dental hygienist who has applied to medical school, also had studied Hebrew as a child, but like her friends had opted against a bat mitzvah. She, too, had to brush up.

Sarah, on the other hand, was a Hebrew Day School student through fourth grade and continues in religious school and Kadimah, her synagogue's youth group. She found the Hebrew preparation well within her means. She even chanted one of the longest haftarah portions.

None of the women received a fountain pen for her efforts. In fact, mother and grandmother had asked either for no gift or for contributions in their names. It seems many charities benefitted.

Each of the b'not mitzvah recalled a different most special moment. For Frieda, it was while she and Dale were reading from the Torah and Sarah came to stand between them. Sarah took her grandmother's hand and said, "Don't worry Grandma, you're going to do just fine."

Dale recalled watching her husband Earl from the pulpit.

Sarah's moment came when Earl joined the women on the bimah after her speech, which she had rehearsed in front of her father many times.

But she added a line at the b'not mitzvah remarking that the service may have been about feminism, but that one special man also "played a major role."

Sarah's brother Joshua, 11, also participated.

More work awaits the b'not mitzvah trio. Sarah, like her mother, would like to become a physician. Frieda is preparing for the family Seder next Monday night. "There'll be 35 of us this year," she said proudly. And she'll be able to participate in the service better than ever.

A local team of physicians will conduct a workshop on child and adolescent sports injuries for adults who supervise children's athletic programs April 25 and May 2.

Sponsored by UNLV's Division of Continuing Education, the workshop is being coordinated by Dr. Kathy Mahon, a local pediatric ophthalmologist.

"School coaches and physical education teachers, playground supervisors, Pop Warner and Little League coaches can all benefit from the workshops," Mahon said.

Participants can register for the workshop on a credit basis (HSC 499X). For more information call the UNLV Division of Continuing Education at 739-3394.

## UAHC Urges Shultz To Demand The Release Of UN Files On War Criminals

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The Commission on Social Action of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) sent a telegram to Secretary of State George Shultz urging him to demand the

release of information on Nazi war criminals from the United Nations.

The Reform Judaism group authorized the telegram at a "Consultation on Conscience"

which opened here Sunday night to mark the 25th anniversary of the UAHC's Religious Action Center here.

The telegram, signed by Harris Gilbert, chairman of the commission, asked Shultz to urge UN Secretary

General Javier Perez de Cuellar to allow public access to the UN files on Nazi war criminals. De Cuellar rejected last month a similar request from Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's Ambassador to the UN.

"The War Crimes Commission, in giving these files to the UN, never intended that the records be hidden from the UN," the telegram to Shultz said. "The UN action in keeping them under lock and key has no standing in law and no moral justification. "We respectfully urge you to demand that the files be made available to all scholars, researchers, students and others with legitimate reasons to have access to this information."

Gilbert also stressed that "burying the record of the past dooms us to repeat it. Locking away the files from public view protects only those who have something to hide. Let the facts be made public, let the truth be told."

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