



Dr. Bruce Sherizen of Oak Park shares a moment with his son, Yoni, 9, during the Freedom Seder. Traditionally, children's questions about the Exodus from Egypt are a central part of a Seder. During the Freedom Seder, questions about the plight of Jews in the Soviet Union were encouraged.

## Golf outing to benefit LIT scholarship drive

Farmington-based Masonry Institute of Michigan will host its 11th annual benefit golf outing Friday, June 10.

It sponsors eight scholarships for students enrolled in the school of architecture at Lawrence Institute of Technology in Southfield.

This construction industry event annually attracts architects, engineers, general contractors, mason contractors, suppliers and LIT alumni. It will be held at Tyrone Hills Golf and Country Club at the Center Road Exit off U.S. 23 in Fenton.

Tickets are \$90 for golfers (includes golf cart, greens fees, golf contests and a chance to win a car for a hole-in-one shot from a designated tee).

Tickets are \$60 for non-golfers. Non-golfers can participate in a bocci ball competition, or relax over cards and conversation.

For everyone, prices also include an open bar all day, buffet luncheon, door prizes, program souvenirs and a contribution to the scholarship fund which qualifies for a Michigan tax credit and, for most, a federal tax deduction.

For reservations, call Donna Crozier at the Masonry Institute of Michigan offices, 478-6455.

The Masonry Institute of Michigan is a non-profit organization dedicated to quality masonry construction in Michigan through educational, technical service and promotional efforts.

# Russian Jews focus of model Seder

By Elise Frohman  
Staff writer

Sofia Aron, a typist in the town of Grozny in the Caucasus region of the Soviet Union, and her mother, Cecilia Gotsman, a speech therapist, would like to emigrate to Israel to join Sofia's father, Mattis Aron. The family has been separated for nearly 12 years. The mother and daughter have applied for exit permits four times since 1982.

They were refused. The reason given — insufficient kinship.

A place was set for Sofia at a model Seder held at the Jewish Community Center Sunday night. Each table at the Freedom Seder included an empty chair marked with the name of a refusenik, a Jewish Soviet citizen who has been refused the right to emigrate to Israel or any other country.

"The story of our release (from Egypt) is what the Seder is about," said Elaine Sturman of Bloomfield Township, chairwoman of the Freedom Seder. "Seder commemorates the leaving. It is a time to think about people who are not allowed to leave."

A traditional Seder is built around the reading of the Haggadah, the story of the Children of Israel's escape from slavery in Egypt. The Freedom Seder used a modified Haggadah containing the original text supplemented with sections on the plight of Soviet Jews.

"This season symbolizes people's need for freedom," said Jeanne Weiner of Farmington Hills, chair-

woman of the Soviet Jewry Committee of the Jewish Community Council.

"THE EXODUS is not complete. These people are not able to cross their borders. There is a physical, emotional and psychological war going on (against Jews) in the Soviet Union."

"When we ask why, the answers are simple and complex. They have to do with anti-Semitism, the use of Jews as scapegoats and the hatred that is directed at them."

Weiner's organization advocates on behalf of Soviet Jewry and works to convince the Soviet government to allow Jews to leave. It also works to educate the public about the plight of Soviet Jews.

Weiner said she believes pressure applied by the American public will have an effect on the Soviet government.

"They (the Soviets) have signed international agreements for human rights," she said. They have acknowledged the right of individuals to leave and return to their country. "But they don't live up to those agreements. If they don't live up to agreements on basic human rights, how can we believe they will live up to other agreements?"

There are nearly 400,000 Jews in the Soviet Union who want to leave, Weiner said. There are about 2.5 million Jews in the Soviet Union.

THE FREEDOM Seder addressed the refuseniks as individuals. Each section of the service was dedicated to a particular person who has been denied permission to leave. Capsule biographies were recited and Joel Gershenson of Birmingham, past president and founder of the Soviet Jewry Committee of the Jewish Community Council, told the story of a trip he made to the Soviet Union, where he met with a number of refuseniks.

One man, the leader of the Soviet refusenik community, told him that he practiced his religion even though he feared reprisals from the KGB.

"The KGB can come and get me at any time," he told me," Gershenson said. "And they did. He served five years in exile."

More than 30 people read portions of the Seder service. The program

was a cooperative effort on the part of Orthodox, Conservative and Reform groups throughout the area. Many Russian Jews who have settled in the metro-Detroit area after emigration attended the service.

"In the '70s, there was a flood of immigration," Sturman said. "In just a few years they let out 70,000 Jewish people. The Detroit Jewish community was mobilized to help them settle here."

"But since then, it has dwindled, until it's just a trickle again." In recent years, only about 800 Jews have been allowed to leave the Soviet Union each year.

Sturman said her involvement with the Soviet Jewry Committee led to her work in organizing the Freedom Seder.

"There is a lot of apathy," said said. "I never want my children to ask me, 'What did you do?'"

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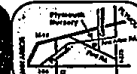
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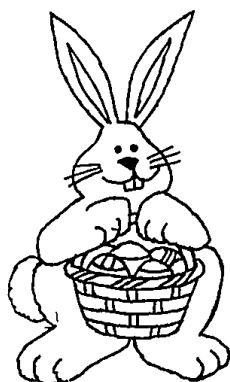
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