Joni Hubred, editor
(248) 477-5450
Fax: (248) 477-9722
jhubred@oe.homecomm.net

Observer Life

Chat Room

Joni Hubred

Exhibit offers glimpse of antiquity

"Don't just look at these photos. Imagine yourself in them ..."

Imagine yourself standing on desert sands centuries ago. Shade your eyes against blinding rays of sunlight. Feel rough, handwoven cloth and grit against your skin.

This is the land of ancient secrets, the place where a young Bedouin shepherd tossed a rock into a cave and uncovered documents pieced together and pored over by historians for the past 55 years.

Drawn by the distinctive sound of breaking pottery, the boys climbed into a cache of antiquity, parts of which are now on display thousands of miles from their home at the Hebrew Institute in Israel.

The Public Museum of Grand Rapids Van Andel Institute has spent $1.3 million to house a traveling display of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Once taped under glass, fragments are now carefully preserved in climate-controlled cases, on acid-free cardboard. In the mid-20th century, no one knew how cellophane would affect the skins upon which they were written.

Turns out the chemical reaction creates a kind of gelatinous affect.

That the 900 documents created from 100,000 pieces exist at all in today's world is nothing short of miraculous; as evidence, throngs of visitors have already seen the exhibit, which closes June 1.

By that time, museum officials expect 200,000 people to have seen the 12 pieces of the Scrolls, along with more than 80 artifacts, from leather sandals and metal coins to pottery ink wells, which may have been used by Essene scribes to copy text from the Torah, Apocryphal writings and their sect's code of conduct.

The Essenes were an interesting bunch of folks. Convinced the Pharisees and Sadducees were defiling the Jewish temples, they moved into the desert to live ordered lives of worship, prayer and contemplation. Evidence found in the Scrolls indicates Essenes were expected to follow strict rules, the violation of which meant expulsion or other severe punishment.

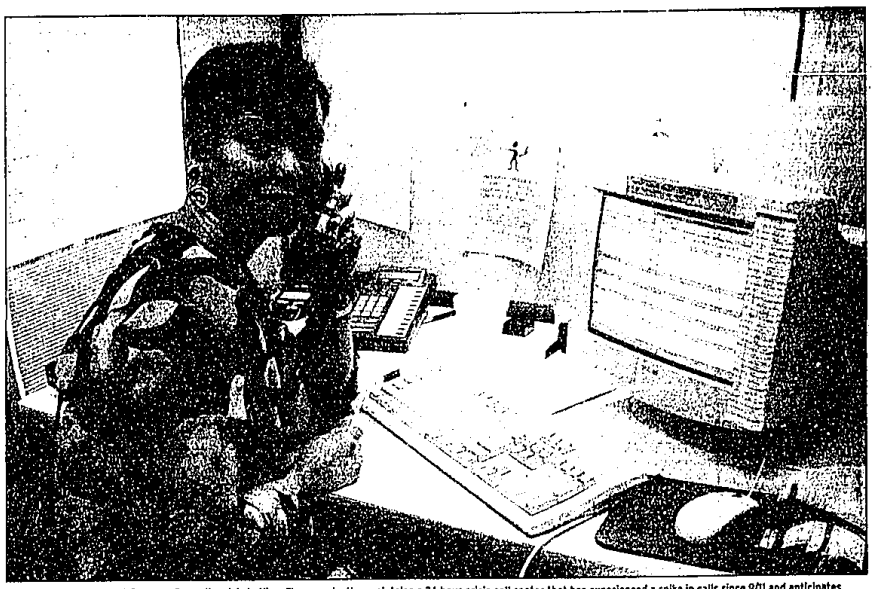
The Essenes considered themselves the Sons of Light and believed they would eventually go to war with the Sons of Darkness. God would send them two Messiahs to aid their cause.

Fascinating stories cuscribed on the scrolls and translated by Hebrew scholars fill the exhibit hall. Visitors who pay $14 for a timed ticket pick up headphones and a device that tunes in scholarly narration, one version for adults and another more suitable for children.

But far more lies in what you don't see than what you do. Photos provide a glimpse into the Herculean task of piecing together what historians call "the world's largest jigsaw puzzle." Answers to questions seem to only beget more questions.

Why didn't the Essenes mention Jesus, when the texts were written during his lifetime? Why were they so convinced their legalistic ways were the true representation of Jewish faith? Why were these writings hidden for so long? And why have they come to light at this time in history?

PLEASE SEE HUBRED, C5



Patti works the phones at Common Ground's crisis hotline. The organization maintains a 24-hour crisis call center that has experienced a spike in calls since 9/11 and anticipates more if war starts in Iraq. Crisis workers typically do not give their last names under Common Ground policy.

Busy crisis line is a sign of the times

BY SAM TRICOMO
STAFF WRITER

A slow economy, the threat of terrorist attacks and the war with Iraq are stresses that may explain a spike in calls to a local crisis line.

"What you see with people who suffer chronic mental illness or people with ongoing problems in their life is that major events can have a profoundly negative effect on them," said Common Ground crisis call center director Emily Norton.

Prior to the Sept. 11 attacks, the crisis line's phones rang at an annual pace of about 18,000 calls. Last year, the crisis line logged 29,000 calls.

Of those, a total of 661 came from Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Norton can't wrangle all of those calls into one that typifies the kinds of emergencies faced by callers.

"You could get a call from someone thinking they are responsible for the attacks on the World Trade Center or you could get one from someone depressed over the idea of a loved one going off to war," she said. "When that phone rings, you just don't know what it's going to be."

On the other end of the crisis phone during any typical week is Common Ground volunteer and Birmingham resident Abbey.

Abbey cannot give her last name under Common Ground policy for crisis line workers, but she said increased tensions over Iraq are bringing in an increase in calls.

"And it's not just more calls. The intensity of those calls is stronger," she said.

Abbey came to Common Ground just before the Sept. 11 attacks.

What seems like a lifetime ago, Abbey was a certified public accountant who found herself using some of the intervention services offered by Common Ground in its family services section.

That experience made her leave the business world and begin training as a crisis counselor.

"I was really scared at first. When you first start, you get this terrible fear that you are going to get a suicide caller," she said.

And while extreme crisis calls from people contemplating suicide are a constant part of a crisis call center worker's job, Norton said the 29,000 calls generally fall into three problem categories: relationship, substance abuse and financial.

"Prior to Sept. 11, relationship problems were our most common, followed by substance abuse and then financial issues," Norton said. "Since then, relationships still rank first but financial issues have taken the place of substance abuse calls."

Other pressures are at play, noted Norton.

In affluent communities, it would seem that financial concerns would not make the list's top three.

"But we're seeing things like people having to make decisions about how they pay their bills because they lost their jobs or got sick. Now they have to pay the hospital bills and in a lot of cases people are losing homes," Norton said.

And while hordes of homeless people are not a common sight in Farmington/Farmington Hills, last year, nine local youths found themselves using Common Ground's various shelter services.

In some cases, youths found themselves there because of an abusive situation at home, in other cases they simply had no where to go.

"In good times we see a lot less kids using our services but when things start going bad those numbers rise," said Steve Overstreet, director of shelter services for Common Ground.

Overstreet said this is an example of how stresses of a sagging economy and threat of war can heighten problems at home.

"Beyond our shelter programs, we also offer a lot of counseling services for families experiencing crisis," he said.

Nearly 100 people – 74 in Farmington Hills and 22 in Farmington – were served through Common Ground's psychiatric services. The numbers were almost identical for victim assistance, with 74 clients coming from Farmington Hills and 21 from Farmington.

stricomo@oe.homecomm.net | (248) 901-2586

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

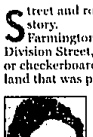
Common Ground Sanctuary seeks volunteers ages 18 and up to train as crisis counselors on its telephone crisis line.

Training begins April 26 and will take place from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and from 7-10 p.m. during the week.

Volunteers will be trained to assist callers in crisis situations including domestic violence, suicide, mental health and substance abuse.

Call (248) 456-8137, Ext. 151, to volunteer. Common Ground Sanctuary's 24-hour crisis line answered more than 26,000 telephone calls last year.

Streets named in honor of area's pioneers



Ruth Moehlman

Street and road names often tell a story. Farmington Road was originally Division Street, dividing two sections or checkerboard-type divisions of all land that was part of the early Northwest Territory.

The Northwest Ordinance was drafted by Thomas Jefferson long before he was third President of the United States. Jefferson was a diplomat and a scientist and, as a youth, a surveyor. This is probably why the Northwest Territory had the first really scientific survey of land in history.

The ordinance provided the basis for the legal description of all our property in Oakland County today.

Division Street in early Farmington Township was between sections 26 and 27.

There, Arthur Power, the first settler, eventually established the village that became Farmington.

The pioneers didn't like the name Powerswille or Quaker Town, but preferred the name Farmington from their former home in New York.

The section line between sections 26 and 27 became Farmington Road.

Other roads going north and south and east and west were called section line roads.

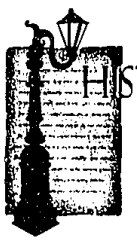
Located on the surveyed property lines between two of the township's 36 sections, the section line roads were often no more than two wagon ruts.

Among the north-south section line roads are roads named for Farmington pioneer families: Drake, Halsted and Power.

When electricity became available after the turn of the century, it is said the farmers who paid for the electric lines got to name the roads.

The last section line road in Farmington Hills, the former Farmington township, is Haggerty Road, between Farmington and Novi. It goes a long way in north and south directions between other townships, south into Wayne County and north into West Bloomfield Township.

Even though Haggerty is not a Farmington family name, John Haggerty had a Farmington connection. He was part of the political circle of Gov. Fred Warner, the only Michigan governor from Farmington.



Haggerty was a Wayne County road commissioner during the time Fred Warner was in office. Warner established the first Highway Department in 1906.

The state and local highway departments worked together setting up the road and highways throughout the state.

John S. Haggerty was a businessman who was devoted to public service and politics. His father was a brick manufacturer and John S. inherited the company.

Somewhere in Michigan are antique bricks with the initials J.S.H. incised into them from the turn of the century Haggerty Brick Company.

Even though John Haggerty made bricks, he was a champion of concrete rather than brick for roads. The earliest paved streets were brick streets.

Haggerty served on the Wayne County Road Commission and other political offices.

He expanded his business interests to include a bank.

The stock market crash of 1929 caused Haggerty to go bankrupt. In the 1930s, John Haggerty moved from his Detroit home to his farm in Canton.

He retired from politics and became a farmer. He died in 1950 at the age of 84, having never married.

Ruth Moehlman is a local historian and chairs the Farmington Hills Historic District Commission.