

IN MEMORIAM
JOY ZITA ROCHWARGER BALSAM
YOCHED V'YITZCHAK TUVYA



February 2, 1967-May 21, 2004
22 Shevat 5727-1 Sivan 5764

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To register or for a full spring schedule, stop by the desk in the lobby, call **646.505.5708** or surf jccmanhattan.org.

Connect to our JCC community. Visit the Member Services Department on the mezzanine or call **646.505.5700**.

First price listed is for members; second price is for nonmembers

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are held at **The JCC in Manhattan**
The Samuel Priest Rose Building
334 Amsterdam Ave @ 76th St

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OBITUARY

Joy Rochwarger-Balsam, 37; Jewish Educator

Staff Report

Joy Rochwarger-Balsam, a Jewish educator and activist who single-handedly founded and ran a program of seminars for Jews in Poland, was mourned by hundreds of family, friends and former students at funeral services in New York last Friday, and on Sunday evening in Bet Shemesh, Israel, where she was buried. She was 37, and died of cancer, having worked until a week before her death.

At an overflow service at the Fifth Avenue Synagogue Friday morning, relatives and rabbis recalled her breadth of knowledge, seemingly boundless energy, devotion to the Jewish people and family, and her deep faith and good spirits even in the face of a dire medical prognosis seven months ago.

Her husband, Jerry Balsam, spoke of their meeting in 2002 and whirlwind courtship. They were married in Jerusalem in March 2003, and lived in New York, where Ms. Rochwarger-Balsam was a program officer at the Avi Chai Foundation. Balsam said she brought him a lifetime of happiness in their brief time together, and that she assured him she would defeat her illness and become a mother.

Rabbi Yaakov Kermaier of the Fifth Avenue Synagogue said that when he would visit Ms. Rochwarger-Balsam in the hospital, her main concern was for her husband and family members.

Ms. Rochwarger-Balsam, a native of Queens, graduated from Barnard College, and soon combined her love for Israel and Torah education by moving to the Jewish state and teaching at Midreshet Moriah, a yeshiva for young women in Jerusalem. She became assistant to the dean and coordinator of the Bet Midrash program, developing a strong mentoring relationship

with many of her students during her eight years at the school. She stayed in touch with many of them, here and in Israel.

She spent many summers leading seminars and educational camps in Poland. In 2000, Ms. Rochwarger-Balsam founded Atara (Alternatives for Torah Renaissance Abroad). She would spend one Shabbat a month in Warsaw, bringing scholars in residence with her "to help teach people what it meant to be a Jew," explained her brother, Geoffrey, who went with her last year to dedicate a Torah to the community.

From her hospital bed five days before she died, when speech was becoming difficult for her, Ms. Rochwarger-Balsam gave her husband a list of people to call to make sure that arrangements would go smoothly for the scholar due in Poland the following Shabbat.

Yossi Prager, the executive director of Avi Chai in New York, told The Jewish Week he "thought of Joy in perpetual motion, a woman with exceptionally high standards and a passion for Jewish life, but with great humor and positive energy, always caring about other people."

"She never stopped fighting the little battles that would make a project 10 percent better," he noted. "That was an exceptional quality."

Lauren Merkin, a trustee of Avi Chai and close family friend, described Ms. Rochwarger-Balsam as "a very patient person who was a real doer. She was all about the community."

Among her projects at Avi Chai, she helped guide Babaga Newz, an educational magazine for children, and Write On For Israel, a Jewish Week program in advocacy journalism for Israel for local high school students.

In addition to her husband, Ms. Rochwarger-Balsam is survived by her parents and five siblings and their families. ■



Joy Rochwarger-Balsam: "Boundless energy."

It's A Guy Thing

Continued from page 10

of the Democratic turnout vote in the district.

"What [the district] has in common is that it's a community of almost exclusively private homes, two-family and single family homes," said Klein.

Kaufman said Velella was effective in pushing legislation of importance to the district and the city, as well as bringing home needed resources. "The main issue in the Bronx and Westchester is maintaining that continuity and not losing that funding and legislative access," he said. ■

Members of Hadassah will spend a day in Albany on June 2 to lobby for state legislation that supports stem-cell research. The trip is an initiative of the newly formed New Yorkers for the Advancement of Medical Research, a coalition that includes diverse organizations representing tens of thousands of New Yorkers who suffer from diseases whose treatment and cure could ultimately result from stem cell research. They include Parkinson's, Tourette's, lupus, juvenile

diabetes, cancer, and paralysis.

After President **George W. Bush** limited federal funding of stem cell research in 2001, state legislatures took up legislation to permit wider research. California and New Jersey recently passed such legislation and are being used as models for NYAMR.

Assembly Speaker Silver introduced and passed a pro-stem cell research bill last year, and introduced it again this year. The Senate has yet to take up such a bill. ■

The chairman of the New York State Republican Committee, **Alexander Treadwell**, recently returned from a fact-finding tour to Israel organized by the newly opened Republican Jewish Coalition chapter here.

Joined by national board members of the RJC, Treadwell met with Deputy Prime Minister **Ehud Olmert**, former Labor Prime Minister **Shimon Peres**, Tourism Minister **Benny Elon** and others. The group also toured Masada, the Palmahim air force base, the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial, the Old City of Jerusalem and Hadassah Hospital. At the latter stop, they were presented with

a grisly display of bomb fragments removed from victims of terror.

According to a statement, Treadwell, after touring Israel's anti-terrorism barrier, said "I fully support the security fence and I hope that one day soon [when there is peace] it will come down."

The delegation was led by RJC Regional Director **Greg Menken**, a former liaison to the Jewish community for Gov. **George Pataki**. ■

In Memoriam

Hollander, Fritz

Riverdale Jewish Center extends condolences to our member Per Hollander on the loss of his beloved father, Fritz Hollander, a hero of the Shoah and the patriarch of Swedish Jewry. May the entire family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Jonathan I. Rosenblatt, *Rabbi*

Harry M. Feder, *President*

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Ode To Joy (Letter to the Editor, The Jewish Week, June 11, 2004)

When I attended Midreshet Lindenbaum in Israel from 1991 to 1993, I knew Joy Rochwarger-Balsam and was in awe of her (Obituary, May 28). Not only was she learned, she studied privately with Nechama Leibowitz. And she always made time for tennis.

When I returned to the U.S., I lost touch with Joy until this past November. I was searching for a treatment to my stage IV malignant melanoma and was put in touch with Joy. She was so optimistic. I told her how sad I was when I found out about her and she said, "I don't want anyone feeling bad for me because that's negative energy and I need to surround myself with positive energy."

I took mussar (inspiration) from that statement even though our situations were different. She was newly married and I was a mother of three children, aged 5 and younger.

Joy died from malignant melanoma, a lethal skin cancer that has no cure and most of its treatments are still in clinical trials. As a melanoma survivor who still has a 60 percent risk of recurrence, I feel more people need to learn about this often preventable disease.

In memory of Joy, who gave so much to the Jewish community, please put sunscreen on your children. The sun may feel good, but it is dangerous and deadly. I beg every parent to take their child's skin seriously because you might be able to prevent that fastest growing cancer for people in their 20s.

Yael Joseph
Lawrence, N.Y.

THE NEW YORK TIMES **OBITUARIES** SATURDAY, MAY 22, 2004

BALSAM—Joy. We mourn the passing of our friend and colleague, Joy Balsam, a woman of extraordinary energy and spirit. Joy's passion for Jewish life, and her high standards of excellence, inspired us all. We will miss her. May her husband, Jerry Balsam, and the rest of her family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.
The Trustees and Staff of
Avi Chai

THE NEW YORK TIMES **OBITUARIES** SUNDAY, MAY 23, 2004

BALSAM—Joy Zita (Rochwarger). Fifth Avenue Synagogue records with profound sorrow the passing of our esteemed member and extends heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family.
Yaakov Y. Kermaler, Rabbi
Ira Leon Renner, Chairman
J. Ezra Merkin, President

BALSAM—Joy. We deeply mourn the death at a young age of Joy, beloved wife of Jerry—loyal friend of Re'uth Medical Center, Hamakom venachem otcha.
Re'uth
Ursula Merkin, Chairman
Rosa Strygler, President

Jerusalem Post ads placed by Avi Chai
and the Mandel Foundation

We mourn the untimely passing of our
dear friend and colleague

Joy (Rochwarger) Balsam ז"ל

and extend our heartfelt condolences
to her husband, Jerry, and her entire family

*May you be comforted among the
mourners of Zion and Jerusalem*

אבי צ'אי
AVI CHAI Trustees and Staff



The Mandel Leadership Institute

mourns the untimely and tragic passing of

JOY (Rochwarger) BALSAM ז"ל

who was both a Mandel Jerusalem Fellow
and a member of the New York staff of the Mandel Foundation.

We will forever remember

Joy's profound love of
Eretz Yisrael and her passionate devotion to Jewish education.

We extend our condolences to her husband, Jerry,
and to her parents and siblings.

**The Faculty, Staff and Fellows of the
Mandel Jerusalem Fellows,
Mandel Leadership Institute**



Midreshet Moriah mourns
the untimely and tragic passing of

JOY (Rochwarger) BALSAM ז"ל
YOCHAVED ZLATA bat YITZCHAK TUVYA

a beloved member of the Midreshet Moriah family.
Joy served as a teacher, mentor, friend,
and role model to students and teachers alike.

Her living example of
אני עבדך בן אמתך
will remain forever indelibly engraved in our heart
and in the hearts of the thousands
of her students in America, Europe, and Israel.
המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים
We extend our condolences to her husband, Jerry,
her parents and siblings.

Midreshet Moriah
Rabbi Meyer and Vicky Berglas
Administration, faculty, student body, and alumnae

ATID

**Academy for Torah
Initiatives and Directions**

With deep sorrow we mark the untimely and tragic passing of
JOY (Rochwarger) BALSAM ז"ל
whose many contributions to Jewish education throughout
the world included serving as a faculty member and mentor
at ATID. Our condolences to her family, including her sister
Michelle Berkowitz, a graduate of our ATID Fellows program.

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

Rabbi Chaim Brovender
President, ATID

Rabbi Jeffrey Saks
Director

With profound sorrow, we announce the untimely and tragic
passing of our beloved wife, daughter, sister, and aunt.

JOY (Rochwarger) BALSAM ז"ל

The funeral will take place at 6:30 p.m. this evening,
Sunday, May 23, 2004, at the Eretz Hachaim Cemetery,
Beit Shemesh, shortly after the arrival of EL AL Flight 008.

**Balsam, Rochwarger, Corn, Berkowitz,
and Blisko families**

Information, (054) 438-5476.