

# In One Paris Neighborhood, Jews and Muslims Live as They Did in N. Africa: Together

By Ilan Moss

PARIS (JTA) — It's a few hours before Shabbat in the Belleville neighborhood of Paris, and a Lubavitch Chasid is helping an elderly Tunisian Jew put on tefillin in the doorway of a kosher butchery.

Across the street, bearded Muslim vendors are hawking sweets and pastries to crowds of North African immigrants for the nightly Ramadan break-fast meal, called the iftar.

Further down the boulevard lined with kosher restaurants, Ouali Boussad, an Algerian Berber, prepares coffee at the Lumiere de Belleville cafe.

"Jews, Arabs and Berbers live in Belleville like they did in North Africa," Boussad says. "They have the same culture."

Despite the tensions that have marked Muslim-Jewish ties in France in recent years, this neighborhood in northeastern Paris has managed to stay relatively free of them. The Arab-Israeli conflict still complicates relations



Kamel Amriou (right) and his Jewish partner, who preferred to have his name withheld, outside their printing business in the Belleville neighborhood of Paris. (Photo by Ilan Moss)

between the two communities, but residents describe Belleville as idyllic compared to the hostility between Jews and Muslims in the immigrant suburbs surrounding Paris.

"A whole generation here has worked, lived and grown up together," says Serge Cohen, who runs a kosher bakery off the boulevard.

"It's a different situation in the suburbs. Jews are separated from Muslims and they mistrust each other."

Locals in Belleville are fiercely proud of the climate of tolerance in their neighborhood.

"You journalists only want to write about anti-Semitism," shouts a butcher at Henrino's kosher butchery on the Boulevard de Belleville. "We all get along here."

Some 350,000 Jews live in the Paris metropolitan area. In Belleville, the North African heritage shared by most French Jews is overt, which may help explain why Jews and Muslims here get along. Most Jewish residents and workers here are of Tunisian descent, and the neighborhood is affectionately known as La Goulette on Seine — named after a coastal town on the Mediterranean.

"Tunisians are the most open-minded Jews, they are basically like us," says a Muslim customer at Soltane, a Belleville halal

see PARIS page 7 ►

October 9, 2009

Friday, 21 TISHREI 5770

Volume 13, Number 41

Shabbat Candle Lighting 6:11 p.m.

HOSHANA RABBAH

Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17,  
Numbers 29:35-30:1

Haftarah: Kings 8:54-9:1

## JEWISH TIMES

Publisher Shy Kramer

Editor Gerald Etter

Graphic Artist Laura Brenner

Bookkeeper/Office Mgr. Jerri Skretowski

Staff Writer Howard Berger

"Israel Viewpoint" Stephen Kramer

"A View of the Absurd" Jack Engelhard

"Dimensions" Joyce S. Anderson

"Chalkdust" Leo Lieberman

Staff Photographer Marilyn Kessler

Political Cartoonist Stu Goldman

Advertising Director Bonnie La Roche

Call (609) 407-0909 for display ads

©2009 JEWISH TIMES (all rights reserved)

The viewpoints and opinions herein are expressly those of the writers and do not necessarily represent those of the JEWISH TIMES, its staff or management.

The JEWISH TIMES reserves the right to edit letters and articles for spelling, grammar, news style, good taste, and available space. We are not responsible for nor do we sanction the kashrut of any product or establishment advertised in the JEWISH TIMES.

The JEWISH TIMES (ISSN# 1040-7642) is published weekly by Jewish Times Enterprises, Inc., a non-profit corporation, 21 West Delilah Rd, Pleasantville, NJ 08232.

Periodical postage paid at Voorhees, NJ 08043

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to JEWISH TIMES, 21 West Delilah Road, Pleasantville, NJ 08232

Subscriptions: \$29/year  
Out of state/Dual residence: \$41/year

For more information on subscriptions, editorial, or advertising, call

(609) 407-0909

FAX (609) 407-0999

E-mail [JewishTimes@aol.com](mailto:JewishTimes@aol.com)

[www.jewishtimes-sj.com](http://www.jewishtimes-sj.com)



1ST PLACE — 1997 RAPPOPORT AWARD  
for Excellence in Editorial & Commentary

CREATING VIDEO MEMORIES

# THIRD FLOOR VIDEO

Life Stories, Pregnancy Journals, Video Time Capsules and more!  
Toby Rosenthal 609-457-2972 • [www.thirdfloorvideo.com](http://www.thirdfloorvideo.com)

sticks AT

# SURROUNDINGS

FURNITURE AND DESIGN

125 KINGSTON SQUARE  
200 TILTON ROAD  
NORTHFIELD, NJ 08225  
609-407-5002  
[WWW.SURROUNDINGSFURNITURE.COM](http://WWW.SURROUNDINGSFURNITURE.COM)

## A World of Better Hearing... Dual and ConnectLine!

The Oticon Dual is fully compatible with ConnectLine™ — A range of plug and play Bluetooth™ accessories that can wirelessly connect to your cell phone, landline, television and just about any device with an audio output.

### 3-Day Special Event October 12, 13 & 14

450 Tilton Rd., Suite 212, Northfield, NJ

## Call: 609-641-1963

**FREE with appointment:**

- Hearing Test & Evaluation • Demonstration of Dual
- \$600\* off any pair of Oticon Dual or Epoq
- 12-months 0% interest free financing\* to qualified buyers. During this event only.

\*Offer expires 10/14/09. No other offers or discounts apply.  
Discount rates do not apply to prior sales.  
Cannot be combined with any other offer.

[www.njhear.com](http://www.njhear.com)

Alan A. Cook III, NJ HAD Lic. #1017

Elizabeth W. Cook, M.A., FAAA  
Chief Audiologist, NJ HASD Lic. #697