

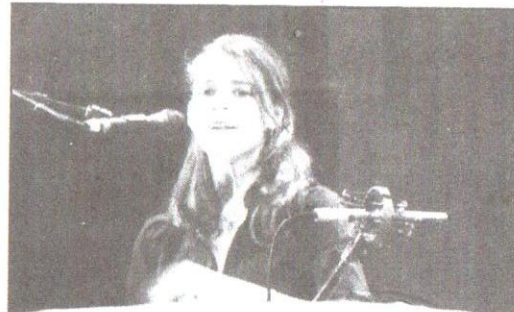
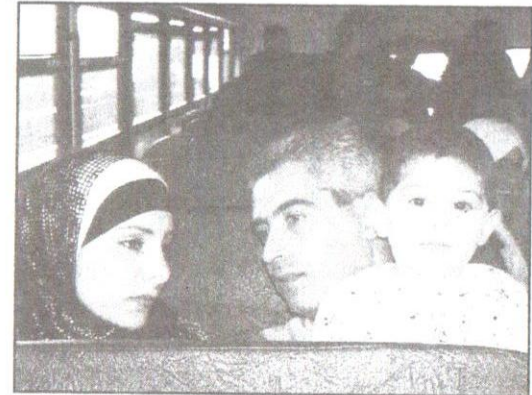
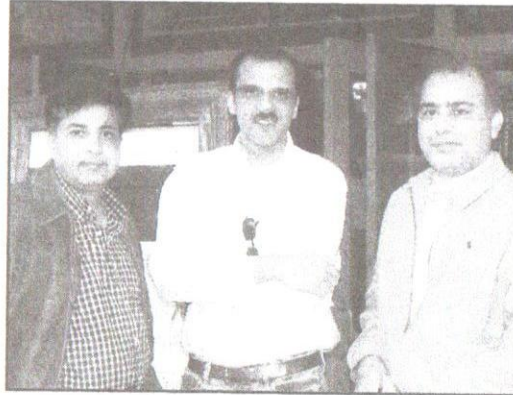
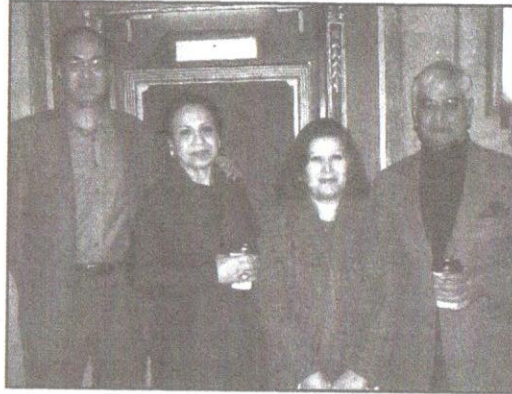
## Out & About

# AMLN and AAA Goes to Andalusia, Courtesy of the CJCMU

The Andalusian Music Festival, organized by the Center for Jewish-Christian-Muslim Understanding (an organization that was established shortly after 9/11 and whose office is located in Irvington, NY), capped off a 2-week cornucopia of Andalusian and Arabic culture held at various sites throughout Westchester and Rockland counties. According to Salem Mikdadi, "The 6 cultural events are intended to promote better awareness of the ethnic mosaic in Westchester and to facilitate a forum in which the community can celebrate its diverse cultures, in the spirit of al-Andalus, or old Andalusia. And what better way to bring people in our community together than music, which can be a very effective medium in relaying the goals and objective of our Center?"

Performing in the Festival were the Boston Camerata Soloists Joel Cohen and Anna Azema, accompanied by Karim Nagi Mohammed. Playing deceptively simple yet hauntingly beautiful Medieval Jewish-Christian-Muslim music, Joel educated the audience on what they were hearing, all the while encouraging the audience to sing along (which they did). They were followed by the Canadian mother – daughter duo, Judith Cohen and Tamar Cohen Adams, performing traditional Sephardic music from Andalusia. After the intermission, the audience was treated to the lilting, soothing traditional Arab-Andalusian music performed by the Sharq Arabic Music Ensemble who performed a 'Wasla' (suite of music) in the same musical scale. The Festival ended with Flamenco music performed by the Juanito Pascual Flamenco Quartet.

For more information about the Center, log on to: [www.cjcmu.org](http://www.cjcmu.org).



For the merry band of travelers who made their way to the Festival from Brooklyn, courtesy of The American Mideast Leadership Network (which provided the transportation and tickets) and its founder Rami Nuseir, along with the Arab American Association, the Festival wasn't just about the music. The adults who decided to either take their children to Tarrytown for the day or simply to act as chaperones did so because they believe that it is through sharing these experiences with the children that they can instill in our young reasons for being proud of their heritage and community. They also believe it is of the utmost importance that organizations such as these two collaborate on more functions, especially anything having to do with educating children.

All too often, we see the weekend as when we get done all those chores we don't have time for during the week. When we say that we're going to 'rest', it doesn't mean taking the kids out for the day, but it should. The time we usually spend with our children consists of getting them ready for school, having them do their chores and homework, etc. Far too few of us make it a regular habit to take our children not only on outings, but outings that can educate our children about their history and culture.

The bus ride up to Tarrytown was a boisterous one, as the adolescents in the back sang and played music and the adults in the front spoke of their concerns and ideas for unifying the community, strengthening the children's leadership skills, and coordinating all the resources and services provided by all the various Arab American organizations.

This time, Rami and the Arab American Association managed to get 20 young people (ranging in age from toddler to teen) to accompany us on this outing. Next time, they're going to try and double that number. You can help by keeping in touch with the Arab American Association about their upcoming events (718.745.3523) and by checking out The Key's Calendar as well.

Nothing happens overnight. Everything it is that we want for our families and community comes with patience, hard work, tenacity, and commitment. We can put on events and hire buses to attend those events; we can make information as available as possible; it is all meaningless if you don't show up and find out what all the fuss is about.

For more information about the American Mideast Leadership Network, contact them at: [info@amln.org](mailto:info@amln.org) or 347.423.4464.

