



# Searching for Something More

By **MICHAEL JACOBS**  
The Jewish Times

**B**rian Rosenzweig needed only a couple of years of post-college living to realize something was missing from his life in Jewish Atlanta.

Like many young adults, the 25-year-old marketing consultant found himself in a cycle of work, play, work, play; unlike most, he recognized what he needed.

"I want more religiosity in my life, more Judaism in my life," he said. "Living in secular society in America, it is impossible."

For Rosenzweig, the solution was to make aliyah. He arrived in Israel on Dec. 27 with 190 other North American immigrants on the final Nefesh B'Nefesh flight of 2007, a year in which the organization helped some 3,500 people from the United States, Canada and Britain move to Israel. Also on the flight was 19-year-old Atlantan David Botnick, who is settling in Efrat.

Rosenzweig said all of his friends in Atlanta, where he lived the past 3½ years,

are fairly secular Jews who will go out on Friday nights and shop on Saturdays. "I need more Judaism infused in my life without making so much of an effort," he said, explaining that strict observance is too challenging in the United States. "I don't have that kind of willpower. I would fail miserably."

That's not an indictment of Jewish Atlanta, where his parents, Susan Moray and Jay Rosenzweig, are longtime members of Ahavath Achim Synagogue and where his sister, Rena, 23, also lives. A native of Savannah, he has wandered among Orthodox congregations Ariel, Beth Jacob and Beth Tefillah in recent years and said the Jewish community here is great.

"I don't want people to think ... I'm running away from problems or the community," he said.

He said the decision to make aliyah wasn't solely about religion. "It's really sort

of something I reflected on and admired. I wanted to be a part of it," Rosenzweig said. "It's the chance to do something a little different."

The roots of his decision may date to his days at Indiana University, where he said the apathy among the many Jewish students shocked him into taking a more active Jewish role.

He became involved with Israel advocacy and participated as a freshman in a national leadership program in which the 40 or so others were all seniors. They visited Ukraine and Israel and learned more about Jewish philanthropy.

"It's been all uphill since," Rosenzweig said. He developed an interest in Israeli politics, worked with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee and United Jewish Communities, and got involved with the Anti-Defamation League.

He spent 10 months in Israel after college with Project Otzma, a service program.



**Brian Rosenzweig**



**Atlantan David Botnick, 19, finds a friendly face, great-aunt Shirley Katz, on his arrival on a Nefesh B'Nefesh aliyah flight to Israel on Dec. 27. Botnick is settling in Efrat.**

Back in Atlanta, he helped launch 3Spectra ([www.3spectra.com](http://www.3spectra.com)), a marketing and distribution consultancy that helps small and midsize Israeli high-tech companies break into the U.S. market.

Now Rosenzweig will be the Israeli operations manager for 3Spectra, while his partners in Washington run the American side of the business. He'll live in Tel Aviv after he goes through *ulpan* (intensive Hebrew classes) during a stay in Jerusalem.

Rosenzweig is not looking at aliyah as necessarily a permanent move. "It's a day-by-day challenge, an experience, an adventure," he said. "We'll see where we are in a couple of years." □