

# Chai~Lights



**March 2017**

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**Keys Jewish Community Center**

P.O. Box 1332 • Tavernier, FL 33070 • 305-852-5235 • [keysjewishcenter.com](http://keysjewishcenter.com)

# March 2017

## 3 Adar - 4 Nisan

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 Steve Steinbock & Steve Hartz  <i>Steve Steinbock Lee &amp; Artie Krauer, etc.</i>	4
5 <b>Sister- hood Meeting 10 a.m.</b>	6	7	8	9  Fast of Esther	10  Joyce Peckman  <i>Elaine Solas</i>	11
12 Board Meeting 9:30 a.m., Megillah reading 11:30 a.m.	13	14	15  Caesar Beware	16	17 Medina Roy & Gloria Avner  <i>Gary Margolis &amp; Laurie Blum</i>	18 <b>Rabbi Agler Torah Service 10 a.m.</b>
19	20  First Day of Spring	21	22	23	24 Dana Grace  <i>Joel &amp; Toby Bofshever Gary Margolis &amp; Laurie Blum</i>	25
26	27	28	29	30	31 Beth Hayden  <i>Lee Schur Cheryl &amp; Jeff Margulies, Jane Friedman</i>	

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challights@keysjewishcenter.com

## President's Message Beth Hayden



*Shalom u'vracha,*

Allow me to begin by acknowledging my predecessor and his predecessors for the wonderful service they have provided to the KJCC. It is a daunting task to take on the KJCC presidency and a great responsibility. A former KJCC president remarked that if one wishes to become an anti-Semite, just become president of a Jewish organization. I can counter with, if you want to become an anti-Semite, live in Israel a few years. I did and survived to reach this ripe, old age without yet becoming an anti-Semite although I confess, there were temptations along the way.

We are fond of saying the KJCC is the only Jewish Center between the mainland and Key West; you are a stranger only once. The KJCC is a unique repository of Jewish knowledge, wisdom, customs, history and tradition that is irreplaceable. And yes, it is a social center and we eat – we eat very well. This wonderful, fragile KJCC attests to our history and customs, our stories and our traditions. We Jews are the institutional memory of our heritage. Each one of us carries a story and a history. We honor and preserve our Susice Holocaust Torah. Our family names attest to our passage and survival through history. The words on the

Statue of Liberty were written by a Jew, Emma Lazarus, whose forbears were expelled from Spain in 1492. All these stories and histories intertwine to form the wonderful web of Jewish history and tradition which is ours to remember and pass on.

The KJCC is priceless because it preserves and protects our traditions, our dreams, our joys and our sorrows; it embraces and educates our children, it educates us as adults, it reminds us of our history, our stories, our triumphs and losses. The KJCC belongs to all of us and is irreplaceable. It is our responsibility to ensure the survival and welfare of this very unique and wonderful Jewish Center here in the Florida Keys.

We are here, you and I, because we had ancestors and family strong enough to resist every reason to assimilate and leave Judaism. They are our heroes, our forebears, our strength. So let us say “L’dor v’dor” – from generation to generation – let us together preserve, nurture and pass on the rich Jewish resources harbored in the KJCC. May it prosper and continue for you, for me and for future generations. Thank you for your trust and confidence.

*B’todah, Beth*

# Nosh

## Second Place Win for "Birds in Nature"

It's rare for a photograph to win a major award in an art exhibit. Photography is often considered a stepchild within the world of the arts and painters. But one of our own has managed the feat with a beautiful, dramatic black-and-white photo of a perched pelican. The Joe Cella "Birds in Nature" Competition was judged this year by two stellar *plein air* oil painters, Kathleen Denis and Michelle Held. Both held our Louise Lindsay, whom most of you know as Jan, in high esteem. They awarded her the prestigious honor of 2nd place and a red ribbon. (Louise is Jan's middle name, Lindsay her birth name, and the names she uses for photography.) Congratulate her when you see her. Perhaps we can have it on loan for a temporary exhibit on our own KJCC walls soon.

## Rabbi Agler's Torah Learning Service

Saturday morning, March 18<sup>th</sup>, you will want to be at KJCC promptly at 10:00 a.m. to join us as our Resident Scholar leads the religious service/Torah learning/conversation. Anyone who attends will leave with a refreshed spirit, and new insights about our history and religion. A light Kiddush will be served afterwards.

### Oneg Sponsors for March 2017

March 3rd - Rosemary and Barat Barefoot, Steve Steinbock and Lee and Artie Krauer, all in honor of Steve Steinbock's birthday.

March 10th - Elaine Solas

March 17th - Laurie Blum and Gary Margolis in honor of Aunt Annie Bernstein.

March 24th - Toby and Joel Bofshever in honor of their anniversary. Gary Margolis and Laurie Blum in honor of mom Janet Blum's *yahrzeit*.

March 31st - Lee Schur's birthday; Cheryl and Jeff Margulies in honor of their 49th anniversary; Jane Friedman's birthday.

## Shabbat Across America Dinner

On Saturday, March 4th, at 5:30 p.m., we will join hundreds of congregations as we celebrate *Shabbat Across America* with a *seudah shlishit* chicken dinner at KJCC. The *seudah shlishit* is the third festive meal that adds special significance to Shabbat. Enlivened with joyous song, it ends with the *Shir Hama'alot* (grace after meals) and the Havdalah service. On our menu will be hot BBQ chicken (from Publix), warm knishes (from Costco), and donated salads and vegetable side dishes. There is no charge to our members, but a \$18 donation is requested from non-members.

For the past dozen years, we have joined with the National Jewish Outreach Program and shuls of all denominations across the continent to expand and deepen our Sabbath experience. Often we have a communal Friday night dinner, and sometimes just a havdalah service, but this will be our first *seudah shlishit*. The meal and short sweet *Havdalah* service saying goodbye to Shabbat will be followed at 7:00 p.m. by a return speaking engagement by Professor Tudor Parfitt, often called England's Indiana Jones, who is one of the world's pre-eminent scholars on hidden Jewish communities. There is no charge for either event, but you MUST RSVP for the dinner by March 2nd so we will know how much to prepare. Please contact Leslie Janowitz at (352)571-8966 or [villagejoy@centurylink.net](mailto:villagejoy@centurylink.net) to tell her how many are coming and what vegetable dish or salad you will bring.

## Yahrzeit Plaque

Ivy Blumenfeld

8/31/1929 — 1/2/2017

Loving wife, mother, grandmother  
She will be missed.

## March Birthdays

1st.....	Sasha Dutton
3rd.....	Louis Ulman
3rd.....	Stephen Steinbock
6th.....	Bea Graham
7th.....	Hannah Feig
7th.....	Toby Goldfinger
9th.....	Pearl Jacobs
10th.....	Kate Horowitz
10th.....	Thomas Davis Smith
11th.....	Bryan Schur
11th.....	Sandy Yankow
12th.....	Barbara Herson
12th.....	Heath Greenbaum
12th.....	Oceana Gross
13th.....	Carl Roy
13th.....	Ira Stein
14th.....	Jenna Lane
14th.....	Randi Grant
14th.....	Seth Horowitz
15th.....	Allan Boruszak
15th.....	Johanna Willner
16th.....	Gunther Karger
16th.....	Jeff Margulies
16th.....	Steven Nobil
17th.....	Andrew Grant
17th.....	Daniel Friedman
19th.....	Michelle Palacino
20th.....	Janet Palacino
20th.....	Susan Sachs
21st.....	Barbara A. Calev
21st.....	James Nobil, Jr.
21st.....	Joseph Palacino
23rd.....	Ken Atlas
25th.....	Joe Gould
25th.....	Stephanie Coeurjoly
25th.....	Sylvia Berman
26th.....	Anna Verity Greenbaum
27th.....	Michelle E. Denker
28th.....	Suzanne Sigel
30th.....	Roger Dieckhaus
30th.....	David VanArtsdalen
30th.....	Lee Schur
31st.....	Jane Friedman
31st.....	Sari Eliz. Goldstein

## March Anniversaries

	Years
1st	<b>Jerry &amp; Sheila Olsen.....58</b>
2nd	Joe Gould & Marla Berenson.....21
7th	<b>Joseph &amp; Susan Sachs.....52</b>
8th	Adam & Judy Starr.....38
16th	Frank & Gerri Emkey.....9
22nd	David & Patti Gross.....20
24th	Joel & Toby Bofshever.....49
30th	Jeff & Cheryl Margulies.....49

## Purim, Pizza and Megilat Esther

Bring your masks and wear your costumes to KJCC on Sunday morning, March 12, at 11:30 a.m. Once again we will have the annual opportunity to fulfill a big mitzvah by listening to (and participating in) the community reading of *Megilat Esther*. We will sing songs, read the Ganssa Megillah (the whole thing, beginning to end) round-robin style, stamp our feet at the mention of you-know-who, rattle our *groggers*, and take in the miracle of God's hidden handiwork. Then we will eat, drink, and make merry. Purim has so many levels of celebration. We will provide the pizza and libation material.

## Last Call for Scholarship Applications

If are a KJCC member in good standing and you have a child graduating High School this June who is applying for admission to an institute of higher learning, academic or technical, take a moment to read the eligibility requirements for a KJCC Scholarship. Applications may be downloaded from our website [www.keysjewishcenter.com](http://www.keysjewishcenter.com).

## BOOK PLATE

*in memory of*  
**Ellen Bloom**  
 Beloved wife of Marc Bloom

*By Muriel and George Swartz*



## Social Hall Chair Plate

*In Memory of*

**Ivy Blumenfeld**

*By Carol Roaman*

## KJCC's Annual Community Seder

It's time to start thinking about celebrating our journey to freedom in song, story and matzoh ball soup. Yes, KJCC Community Seder is just over a month away, and it will be both delicious and meaningful. Send your check (it will be your reservation) made out to KJCC Sisterhood or call in your credit card to reserve space for you and your family at the Islamorada Fishing Club on April 12. For further information, call or write Renee Salant, 206-730-8002 or [reneesam@mac.com](mailto:reneesam@mac.com).

The Seder will start shortly after 5:00 p.m. Some of you, we see only at this event, and we are delighted to reconnect. We love when you bring your children and grandchildren, visitors and guests. This year the charge once more will be the same for members and non-members. It will be three times "Chai" ("life," with Hebrew letters numerical value adding up to 18) or \$54.00 per person. Children under 13 are our guests and eat free. Let's dip our matzoh into *maror*, herbs into saltwater, make Hillel sandwiches and remember bitterness while we do not forget gratitude. With hopeful voices we will count our blessings and join in singing "Dayenu!"

## First Night Mishpocha Seder

For many years, most KJCC people had family homes to go to for the first night of Passover. Those without family, the strays as they were called, would usually be happily invited to someone else's home, where the "*pater familias*" would lead the service and, long or short, family traditions would determine length and character of the seder.

Two years ago, a new tradition, or *minchag hamakom*, was initiated. Thank Susan Ellner for it. It was her offer to spearhead it that got it started. It was a night when Purim began on a Shabbat evening and Sam didn't want anyone who had to say *Kaddish* or wanted to come to services to have to drive quickly home for their seder. So he decided to make the KJCC Social Hall available, to have it here in our own home-away-from-home and see if members liked it. It was so popular that we did it again last year and the Board has now voted to make it an annual event. It will once again be coordinated by Susan Ellner. All food and preparation for this event is by personal donation rather than charge. It's a family. Call 914-907-3993 or write Susan at [ellnercd@aol.com](mailto:ellnercd@aol.com) to discuss what you can bring to the table.

This event is low-key and *haimische* (Yiddish for homey). It will begin at 5:30 and will end when we've all safely crossed the river, when a youngster has found the *afikomen* and when that baby goat my father bought for two *zuzim* is out of breath. Those who have first seder commitments will of course go to them, but all the strays among us will have our own sweet place to go and tell our story once again.

## BOOK PLATE

*in memory of*

**Bea Avner**

Beloved mother of Gloria Avner

*By Muriel and George Swartz*



## Social Hall Chair Plate

*In Memory of*

**Martin Roaman**

*By Carol Roaman*

## **BOOK PLATE**

*in memory of*  
**Robert Coltman**

*By Barnett Coltman*

be incredible! Cost is a \$32 donation (\$18 *chai* plus \$14). There is limited seating, so RSVP as soon as possible to Erica Lieberman-Garrett at (305) 393-1162 or [hippiejap@hotmail.com](mailto:hippiejap@hotmail.com). Watch weekly announcements for details about clay creation.

### **Women's Seder – Save The Date!**

The fourteenth annual KJCC Women's Seder will be held on Sunday, April 2 at 5:00 p.m. Join us as we celebrate women's contributions to our history, and honor one of our own. The food will



## **Social Hall Chair Plate**

*In Memory of*

**Eileen Roaman**  
*By Carol Roaman*

## **Ongoing Projects and Mitzvah Programs of KJCC**

**SUNSHINE COMMITTEE:** If you know of any member who should receive a get well, congratulations or condolence card from the KJCC, call Gene Silverman, 305-664-3316.

**CEMETERY INFORMATION:** If you wish to plan for the very distant future, you can reserve space at the Kendall Mt. Nebo Cemetery in the KJCC section. Call Bernie Ginsberg, 305-304-1810.

**MEDITATION GARDEN:** Have you visited our beautiful garden? Call Steve Steinbock, 305-394-0143, to reserve a bench, brick or tree plaque for posterity.

**PICTURE POSTCARDS:** We have beautiful picture postcards in the KJCC Gift Shop bearing the Millard Wells representation of the KJCC which was commissioned by Sisterhood. They can be packaged to fit your needs and mailed to you or your gift recipient. The price is \$36 per hundred but we will sell lesser quantities. Contact Susan Gordon, 305-766-3585.

**ONEG SHABBAT SPONSOR:** To schedule your special date with Sisterhood, call Renee Salant at 206-730-8002 or email her at [reneesam@mac.com](mailto:reneesam@mac.com).

**KJCC TREE OF LIFE LEAVES and ROCKS, SANCTUARY SEAT PLATES, YAHRZEIT MEMORIAL PLAQUES:** Call Linda Pollack, 305-852-8575 to arrange your donation.

**KJCC BOOKPLATES for siddurim:** Call Linda Pollack, 305-852-8575 for information.

**CHAI-LIGHTS MITZVAH:** Place a greeting or notice in Chai-Lights. Call Linda Pollack, 305-852-8575, to make your donation.

**ADVERTISEMENT IN CHAI-LIGHTS or DIRECTORY:** Your business ad will appear in every issue of Chai-Lights. Call Linda Pollack, 305-852-8575, for annual rates.

**LIVE GREEN – RECYCLE:** We are recycling ink cartridges, laser toners, cell phones, laptops, iddevices, tablets and more. Call Steve Steinbock, 305-394-0143, or just bring your items to the KJCC.

Call the names listed above for assistance or send your request and check to the KJCC, P.O. Box 1332, Tavernier, FL 33070. Recipients of your gifts will be notified by card and listings will appear in Chai-Lights as well. Honorarium and memorial cards can also be requested. Donations can be earmarked to our various ongoing funds; e.g. Holocaust Education Fund, Meditation Garden, Rabbi & Cantor Fund, Scholarship Fund, Sara Cohen Memorial Tzedukah Fund, Sunshine Fund, or General Fund.







# Keys Jewish Community Center

**April 2, 2017**

## Homemade Seder Dinner w/Wine

**Donation: \$18 chai  
+ \$14.00 for 14 years =  
\$32.00**

**Limited seating - Please RSVP by  
March 29th  
Contact Erica Lieberman-Garrett  
hippiejap@hotmail.com  
(305) 393-1162**



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## Sisterhood

### Sam Weis and Renee Salant



**F**ebruary was another busy month in the Florida Keys. All of our Snow Birds are settled into shorts and flip-flops and rum punch. The easy rhythm of a sub-tropical life. A big part of the rhythm of our lives is Friday night services, and, of course, the oneg. February's onegs were really quite special, and Sisterhood is extremely grateful to this past month's hosts; Leslie and Sam Janowitz, Erica Lieberman-Garrett, Shelley & Ritch Bloom and Family, Beth Hayden, and Susan Ellner. It is a beautiful thing that we come together to share our special *simchas*, our achievements and even our sorrows. Our joys are increased and our burdens diminished when we help each other celebrate, or mourn. These are things that make our unique tiny community so very special.

Speaking of special, March means Purim! Break out your costumes and noisemakers. There are four requirements on Purim. The reading of the Megillah (the story of Esther), giving money to the poor, sharing gifts of food, and drinking intoxicating beverages. I suspect that the last one is simply instructing us to relax and revel in the knowledge that sometimes good wins and evil takes a dive. The KJCC Sisterhood spends a lot of time and energy on food, sustaining our community's physical body. But sometimes food crosses a line and bonds us to our history, our family story. Purim reminds us of the great strength and value of the larger "sisterhood," of familial connections, the close bond of Jewish women, locally and beyond the 18-mile Stretch. We evaluate our roles in the pursuit of justice, the importance of teaching our traditions and history to our children, and how those traditions require us to pursue justice in the world. Purim is one of those

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*Sometimes  
food crosses  
a line  
and bonds  
us to our  
history, our  
family story.*

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moments when food plays a very elemental role, as we symbolically consume our enemy through Hamentaschen. I hear you laughing, but here's the thing. We've read the Megillah, we know the story, but connecting all of our senses makes it real in ways that nothing else can. We bake Hamantaschen. We bake with our families, our children, our grandmothers, our cousins, our neighbors, our dear friends.

The aroma of that baking is almost psychedelic in that the sense of smell (as scientists tell us) is a powerful link to memory. I would wager that even just reading that sentence allows you to conjure the aroma in the kitchen when you were last baking Hamentaschen with your children. And more, you can picture people in the room, items on the countertop, the burn on your thumb when it found the hole in the potholder as you removed the hot baking sheet from the oven. Just what is Sam driving at, you may ask. The point is that when we have action tied to our story it be-

comes solidified, we are melding with history. You are standing at Queen Esther's back, giving her strength, and you are passing it forward, as well.

It is just a little thing to ponder as you enjoy the poppyseed, or prune, or apricot, or cherry, or guava-filled delights we call Hamentaschen. Depending upon where in the world you live, you are eating Haman's hat, or Haman's pocket, or (my fave) Haman's ear. We devour this remnant of our terrible enemy; we literally are taking it in. And it is sweet, it sticks with us, just like the story of Esther, and we are made hopeful and stronger for it.

Have a healthy and happy month. Work for justice. Shalom. ♦

**KJCC's Adult Education Program**  
Proudly Presents Its  
**First Annual KJCC Moms Memorial  
Winter Film Fest**

**Sponsored in full by Michael & Lorena Kaufman**

*In loving memory of their moms, Lucy Kaufman and Celeste Bravo Mendez*



Sat., Mar. 04, 2017	Tudor Parfitt lecture
Sat., Mar. 11, 2017	Dough
Sun., Mar. 19, 2017	The Other Son
Sun., Mar. 26, 2017	No Place on Earth

**More Coming in April**

**All films begin at 7:00 p.m.**  
**GUESTS ARE WELCOME – There is no charge**  
**REFRESHMENTS will be served afterwards**  
**For More Information, Contact Medina Roy: [hiitsmedee@gmail.com](mailto:hiitsmedee@gmail.com)**

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# World Jewish Report

## Medina Roy



### “The Evidence is Clear”

According to the Bible, soon after Joshua and the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they fought against five kings and their armies that had laid siege to the people of Gibeon, descendants of the Amorites (II Samuel 21:2). Joshua had promised to protect them and led an army defeating the five kings. He prayed to G-d to help the Israelites in their battle by stopping the sun (Joshua 10:12). Now, a multi-disciplinary team of Israeli scientists from Beersheva's *Ben-Gurion University* says it can prove that this battle coincided with a solar eclipse. Using NASA data, the scientists dated the eclipse and the battle to October 30, 1207 BCE. The researchers noted that there are other ancient stories where a deity stops the sun. But this biblical story is unique because it also mentions the role of the moon (which, in a solar eclipse, moves to perfectly cover the sun). The team found that there was only one total solar eclipse that took place in the region between the years 1500-1000 BCE, when the Israelites are believed to have entered the land. And because science is so exact, they know it happened precisely at 4:28 p.m. on October 30, 1207 BCE. The scientists were also able to pinpoint the exact location of the battle, tracing a 30 kilometer overnight trek that Joshua and his men made to reach Gibeon, north of Jerusalem, from their encampment in Gilgal, on the eastern edge of Jericho. The findings were published in the most recent edition of *Beit Mikra: Journal for the Study of the Bible and Its World*. ([www.virtualjerusalem.com](http://www.virtualjerusalem.com), 1-17-17)

### The 2017 Genesis Prize

Anish Kapoor, an influential and innovative artist and a champion of Syrian refugee rights, is the recipient of the 2017 *Genesis*

*Prize*, dubbed by *Time* magazine as the “Jewish Nobel Prize.” Son of a Baghdadi Jewish mother who immigrated to India from Iraq as a child and a Punjabi Indian father, Kapoor has been a longtime social activist, proponent of social justice and an outspoken advocate for displaced persons and refugees around the globe. A native of Bombay (now Mumbai), Kapoor's Jewish identity and commitment to Jewish values can be attributed to his *aliya* - along with a younger brother - to Israel when he was sixteen, living there from 1971 to 1973. He then moved to London to study art but often returned to Israel. Kapoor's works include “Cloud Gate” at Chicago's Millennium Park. (It can easily be viewed online for those who are interested.) He also created the Holocaust Memorial for the *Liberal Jewish Synagogue* in London and the *70 candles* for Holocaust Memorial Day in Britain in 2015, commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. The *Genesis Prize* recognizes individuals who “have attained excellence and international renown in their fields and whose actions and achievements express a commitment to Jewish values, the Jewish community and the State of Israel.”

It has become a tradition for *Genesis Prize* laureates to use the money (\$1 million along with matching funds) for causes they feel passionate about. Kapoor said he will use his award to help alleviate the Syrian refugee crisis and try to expand the Jewish community's global effort to support refugees. (Over 12.5 million Syrians have been displaced during the current conflict. Some 2.5 million of them are children.) He recently visited a group of Syrian refugees as part of UNICEF's art therapy program, which works to help children who have witnessed atrocities to



express themselves through art. “Jewish identity and history have witnessed recurring conditions of indifference, persecution and Holocaust,” Kapoor said. “As inheritors and carriers of Jewish values it is unseemly...for us to ignore the plight of people who are persecuted, who have lost everything...I appeal to people of good conscience in the global Jewish community, and those outside it who... cannot remain passive and silent, to join the call of the *Genesis Prize*, help save lives and give refugees an opportunity to return to normal life.” Kapoor joins Itzhak Perlman, former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and actor-director Michael Douglas as recipients of the prize. In 2013 Kapoor was honored with knighthood by Queen Elizabeth II. ([www.israelnationalnews.com](http://www.israelnationalnews.com), 2-5-17 and [www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com), 2-6-17)

### Another Winner

Adi Shamir, an Israeli computer scientist and professor at the *Weizmann Institute of Science*, was among three winners of the 2017 *Japan Prize*, an award honoring achievement in science and technology. He won the award for his contribution to information security in the field of cryptography. Shamir, 64, is the second Israeli to win the prize. Ephraim Katzir, a biophysicist and former Israeli president, won the prize in 1985, the inaugural year of the award. In 2002 Shamir, along with two other individuals, won the *Turing Award*, widely considered to be the world’s most prestigious computer science prize. (Named after the pioneering British computer genius.) The *Japan Prize Foundation* selected Shamir (and the two other winners) from 13,000 nominations. They will be honored in Tokyo in mid-April and will each receive approximately \$443,000. ([www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org), 2-2-17)

### “The Life Blood of the Jewish People”

*Sefaria*, a Jewish nonprofit start-up, has just released into the public domain a free interactive digital version of the *Babylonian Talmud* with parallel translations into English

and modern Hebrew. This digital version is linked to major commentaries, biblical citations, *Midrash*, *Kabbalah*, *Halachah* and a growing library of Jewish texts. Since it is part of the public domain, anyone can use it and re-use it as long as one doesn’t make money from it. The project was years in the making. Started in 2011 by author Joshua Foer and Google alum Brett Lockspeiser, the initial goal of *Sefaria* was to place the 24 books that make up the *Tanach* (the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings) online. The name *Sefaria* is a play on the Hebrew *sifria*, the word for “library.” Foer and Lockspeiser were childhood friends who reconnected after many years. They shared a frustration that the *Talmud* and other important Jewish texts were not available online. They collaborated and soon assembled almost 1,600 Jewish texts and commentaries that are all available online. After years of negotiations, *Sefaria* – with a grant from the *William Davidson Foundation* – bought the rights to Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz’s English translation of the *Talmud*, one of only three English translations in the world. (Steinsaltz, a rabbi from Israel, spent 45 years translating the *Talmud* from Ancient Aramaic into modern Hebrew and English. He began the project when he was only 27 years old, finishing in 2010.) At the time of this writing, *Sefaria* has published 22 tractates in English online (*Berachot* to *Bava Batra*). The modern Hebrew translations will appear online later this year. The remaining English tractates will follow as soon as they are finished. ([www.forward.com](http://www.forward.com), 2-8-17)

### 42,500 and Counting...

Back in 2000, the *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum* (USHMM), in Washington, D.C., began a project asking researchers to create a comprehensive, single-source record to accurately document the thousands of persecution sites established by the Nazis. The museum estimated that about 5,000 sites – which would include forced labor camps, ghettos, military brothels, POW camps and concentration camps – would be uncovered by the team. Just one year later, the number doubled

and a few years after that, the researchers had discovered 20,000 sites. Fast forward to today: the “Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933-1945” now lists more than 42,000 sites used by the Nazis to persecute, exploit and murder their victims. (When completed, the encyclopedia will consist of a series of seven books. The final book will be published in 2025.) For the researchers to include a site in the series there had to be multiple witness testimonies corroborated by official documents. A gap of more than 50 years exists between the time the last camp was liberated and when the project began, leading to the belief that many sites will never be recorded and that much will remain unknown because records were lost or destroyed during and after the war. Still, the number of persecution sites discovered was more than eight times that which experts at the USHMM, none of them cheerful optimists, had predicted. ([www.timesofisrael.com](http://www.timesofisrael.com), 1-25-17)

### Super Bowl 51's Jewish Connection

For the first time since 2012, last month's Super Bowl featured two teams with Jewish owners – Robert Kraft, owner of the *New England Patriots* and Arthur Blank, owner of the *Atlanta Falcons*. Kraft, 75, bought the Patriots in 1994. He is a major supporter of American football in Israel, including the *Kraft Family Stadium* in Jerusalem and the *Kraft Family Israel Football League*. The Kraft family has donated more than \$100 million to a variety of causes which include, among others, health care, education, the Jewish community and Christian organizations. Arthur Blank, founder of Home Depot, bought the Falcons 15 years ago. Blank, 74, is the chairman of the *Arthur Blank Family Foundation*. He is a signatory of *The Giving Pledge*, an idea started by Warren Buffett and Bill and Melinda Gates asking billionaires to commit to give away at least 50 percent of their wealth to charitable causes. *The Giving Pledge* is an effort to help address society's most pressing problems. (By the way, this was the Patriots' 7<sup>th</sup> time at the Super Bowl since 2000, making a record nine total ap-

pearances. It was the Falcons' second Super Bowl.) ([www.israelnationalnews.com](http://www.israelnationalnews.com), 1-24-17)

### In Memoriam

★ Rose Evansky, who is responsible for the world-wide use of the hand-held blow dryer, replacing those domed hood dryers used in women's hairdresser salons in the 1950s and 60s, has died. She was 94. Born Rose Lerner in Worms, Germany, Evansky's father was imprisoned at Dachau in 1938. Speaking only German and Yiddish, she escaped Nazi Germany by way of the *Kindertransport*. She introduced the revolutionary blow-dry style from her shop in Mayfair, London. ([www.thejewniverse.com](http://www.thejewniverse.com), 12-22-16)

### Did You Know...

★ It's pretty much common knowledge that during the Nazi occupation of Holland during World War II, legendary film actress Audrey Hepburn, a teenager at the time, actively helped the Resistance. The British-born actress moved to Holland because her Dutch mother, Baroness Ella van Heemstra, believed they would be safe in a country that had pledged to stay neutral. But the Nazis invaded anyway. Hepburn donated the money she earned from her recitals to the Resistance. She slipped through the streets as a courier, delivering documents and money between groups of resistance fighters. But what isn't common knowledge is that her parents – British and Dutch semi-royalty and members of the *British Union of Fascists* – were Nazi sympathizers. Her father, Joseph Ruston, was investigated in 1938 by the British House of Commons for receiving money from Germans tied to Nazi propaganda chief Joseph Goebbels to start a newspaper. He was later jailed as an enemy of the state for the remainder of the war. Hepburn's mother attended the famous pre-war Nuremberg rally, detailing her account for “The Blackshirt,” a Fascist paper: “We...have heard the call of Fascism and have followed the light on the upward road to victory.” Although Hepburn denounced her parents' ideology, she maintained contact with them until their deaths. ([www.thejewniverse.com](http://www.thejewniverse.com), 1-25-17) ♦

# Contributions to KJCC

We appreciate the thoughtfulness of those who support the Keys Jewish Community Center by remembering and honoring their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions. All donations made after the fifth of the month will appear in the following month's Chai-Lights. When you make a donation, please signify the fund it is to go to and the recognition of the name or names to be listed.

## **Chai Lights**

Moss, Elaine

## **General Fund**

Williams, Jim & Rita

Plutzer, Arthur

## **In Honor of**

Pauline Roller, Linda Pollack

## **In Memory of**

Leydig, Ann

Plutzer, Arthur

Pollack, Linda

Singer, Mary Lee

Wohl, Joan P.

Ivy Blumenfeld

Al Roller, Joel Pollack

Bea Avner, Ellen Bloom

Bea Avner, Ellen Bloom

Bea Avner, Ellen Bloom

## **Sisterhood General Fund**

Benami, Reuben

Harris, Harriet

Savar, Sheree

## **Sisterhood Onegs**

Ellner, Susan

Janowitz, Sam & Leslie

Kamely, Yarden

## **Social Hall Chair Plates**

Roaman, Carol Ivy Blumenfeld, Martin Roaman,  
Eileen Roaman

## **Yahrzeit Plaques**

Blumenfeld, Marvin

Ivy Blumenfeld

## **Yahrzeits**

Steinbock, Stephen

Tallent, Lillian

Taramona, Hermine

Wolfe, Larry & Dorothy

Karen Hayhurst

Morris I. Estrin

Norma Robinson

Morris Feinberg,

Samuel Wolfe

## **How Certain Contributions to KJCC Can Instantly Become Permanent, Living Memorials**

**Yahrzeit Plaques:** KJCC has six special, Israeli-made boards in the sanctuary for yahrzeit memorial plaques. Each plaque is accompanied by its own light, which is switched on for both yahrzeit dates and on Yom Kippur; names are also read aloud in memory from the bemah each yahrzeit and published annually in our Yizkor Book. The cost for eternal synagogue memory is \$400.

**Book Plates:** We are, after all, the People of the Book. For \$36 an inscription of your choice will be placed in one of our Siddurim or Tanakhs. An example: "In Loving Memory of my grandfather, who first taught me about the wonders that lie between these covers."

**Tree of Life Leaves:** We have three beautiful, six-foot Trees of Life — the world's most enduring spiritual metaphor — adorning the wall at the rear of the KJCC sanctuary. For \$75 an individual, golden leaf can be engraved with your message of memory or love. An example: "To our grandchildren: May they always be in the presence of the Eternal Light."

**Garden Bricks:** \$125 buys a single brick and \$200 a double brick in our magnificent Meditation Garden walkway, engraved with your personal message. An example: "You were the best, Aunt Goldie. Well, you and those amazing cheese blintzes." For \$300 we'll plant the native tree of your choice as the ultimate living tribute, with an outdoor plaque included in the price.



## Eye on the Arts

Joyce Peckman



**M**arch winds may be blowing up north, but here we get warm breezes and open-air concerts. Here are some cultural activities you may enjoy in the Upper and Middle Keys.

**Every Thursday from 9 p.m. until ??: Open mike and jam session with Dave Feder.** oo-tray Restaurant, 80939 Overseas Hwy in Islamorada, is casual, under cover, but open-air. You never know who will be playing. There is no cover charge, but the food and drinks are noteworthy. <http://keysice.com> Call 305-922-2027

**Friday & Saturday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. and Sunday, March 5<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.: Coral Shores H.S. Drama Club presents The Phantom of the Opera.** The dedicated students have been working on this for almost two years, and the result is almost professional. Support our talented kids. Tickets are \$10 at the door, \$5 in advance.

**Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup> - through March 26<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.: The Art Guild of the Purple Isles 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Judged Members Art Show,** held at the Florida Keys History & Discovery Center, on the grounds of the Islander Resort, MM 82.1, ocean-side, Islamorada. This is a unique and limited opportunity for the public to visit the exceptional Florida Keys History and Discovery Center free of charge. View the outstanding work of local artists (including some KJCC members). See offerings in oil, watercolor, pen, pencil & ink, acrylic, sculpture, collage and other media, many of which may be purchased. For further information & directions go to the website: [agpi.us](http://agpi.us)

**March 9<sup>th</sup> – April 6<sup>th</sup>: Cabaret at Marathon Theater.** Community theatre at its best. Thursday through Saturday nights at 8 p.m., plus a Sunday 3 p.m. matinee on March 26<sup>th</sup>. For information, call 305-743-0994 or buy tickets on the website [www.marathontheater.org](http://www.marathontheater.org).

**Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup>: Pierre Bensusan at the Murray Nelson Center, MM 102.5, Key Largo.** Pierre Bensusan has been called "one of the most unique and brilliant acoustic guitar veterans in the world music scene today." He's a favorite of our own Dave Feder. For further information, go to [Keysice.com](http://Keysice.com).

**Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup> from 2-5 p.m.: Open mike coffee house at the Key Largo Civic Club.** A mixed bag of locals and tourists appear to play anything from folk to bluegrass to classical. It is an easy, down-home way to spend the afternoon.

**Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 4-5 p.m.: Tropical Tunes with the Florida Keys Community Concert Band.** Bring a chair or blanket and snacks (and pets and friends) to this free concert at beautiful Founders' Park, MM 87. Try to count the number of KJCC members in the band. [Keyscommunityconcertband.org](http://Keyscommunityconcertband.org)

**Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, from 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.: Bay Jam 23:** This lively outdoor music festival, held at Founders' Park (MM87) benefits student art and music scholarships. Admission is \$15. There will plenty of vendors, with lots of food and drink to enjoy while you groove to the music. [Keysice.com](http://Keysice.com). ♦



**KJCC PRESENTS A VERY SPECIAL EVENT  
SHABBAT ACROSS AMERICA AND CANADA  
DINNER AND SPEAKER  
DR. TUDOR PARFITT  
SATURDAY, MARCH 4TH @ 5:30 PM**



JOIN US ALONG WITH HUNDREDS OF CONGREGATIONS AS WE CELEBRATE SHABBAT ACROSS AMERICA WITH A SEUDAH SHLISHIT CHICKEN DINNER AT KJCC. THE SEUDAH SHLISHIT IS THE THIRD FESTIVE MEAL THAT ADDS SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE TO SHABBAT. ENLIVENED WITH JOYOUS SONG, IT ENDS WITH A SHORT SWEET HAVDALAH SERVICE. ON OUR MENU WILL BE HOT BBQ CHICKEN , WARM KNISHES, AND DONATED SALADS AND VEGETABLE SIDE DISHES. THERE IS NO CHARGE TO OUR MEMBERS BUT AN \$18 DONATION IS REQUESTED FROM NON-MEMBERS.



THE MEAL AND SERVICE WILL BE FOLLOWED AT 7:00 P.M. BY DR. TUDOR PARFITT, SCHOLAR, ADVENTURER, AND ANTHROPOLOGIST, WHO WILL SPEAK ON THE EXCITEMENT CAUSED AMONG ENLIGHTENMENT SCHOLARS BY THE DISCOVERY OF A MYSTERIOUS BLACK JEWISH TRIBE IN WEST AFRICA.

**THE MYSTERY OF THE BLACK JEWS OF LOANGO**

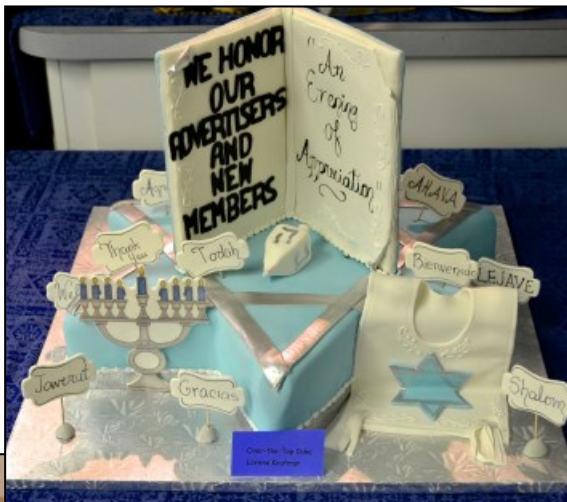
**TO RSVP AND TO COORDINATE FOOD PLEASE CONTACT**

**LESLIE JANOWITZ (352) 571-8966 / [VILLAGEJOY@CENTURYLINK.NET](mailto:VILLAGEJOY@CENTURYLINK.NET)**

**BY MARCH 2ND, 2017**

# The Annual KJCC Advertiser's Dinner

*In what has now become an anticipated annual ritual, all the advertisers who support KJCC through Chai-Lights and our Membership Directory were warmly invited to join us for dinner on January 20th. All of them, members as well as non-members, were acknowledged and thanked. (This was before dinner, of course, when it was still possible to get everyone's attention for a moment.) Unbeknownst to any of us, Lorena Kaufman had contracted a specialty baker to make a special cake for the evening, topped off by a perfect — and edible! — clone of Chai-Lights. (Take a close look at the photos on this page and the next,*



*to see how incredible the reproductions were. Gary Margolis and Susan Gordon then led services, attended by over 70 members and guests.*





*Advertisers' Dinner (cont.)*



**Michael, Lorena and Sean Kaufman stand beside her truly amazing cake. (It did get eaten, by the way, and with gusto.) Of course, since it was Erev Shabbat, the first order of business that evening was to light the candles and in unison declare our gratitude for the blessings of wine and bread. (Some of our non-member advertisers have been coming so long that they can now join in the prayers, too.)**



# KJCC Religious School News

by Morah Reba (Randy) Klein Gross

To celebrate 2017's *Tu B'shvat*, the kids and families of the KJCC Religious School led a beautiful seder filled with fruits, nuts and growing goodies from around the world.

The morning started with the kids decorating clay pots and planting purple basil, strawberries, mint or red peppers. These beautiful creations celebrate the first year of planting for these small edible/fruit-bearing plants.

During the seder, we read about the different fruits and nuts and how they relate to Israel. If a participant had not had that particular fruit so far this year, we said the *Shehechyanu*, appreciating the idea that we made it to this time and place in order to celebrate together.

The KJCC Religious School has been working on learning the prayers and songs used in the Friday night services and during Bar/Bat Mitzvahs. As a teacher, it is important to me that these kids feel connected to the music and songs. They take pride in their religion with the growing familiarity to the common prayers.

The families have also been assigned Jewish-themed movies to watch and report on. This week, one family watched "Above and Beyond," while another watched a movie about the murder



of the Israeli Olympic Weightlifting team.

Over the next few months, the Religious School will be attending Friday night services one evening per month. ♦



# **Keys Jewish Community Center Tikkun Olam Project**



**How many prescription and vitamin bottles do you discard almost on a daily basis? We have the opportunity to contribute to an ongoing project at Burton Memorial. They are collecting empty medicine bottles and sending them to Haiti. The hospitals and clinics there are in need of these bottles in order to provide prescriptions to their patients.**

**Simply bring your empty bottles to the KJCC and place in the collection box. Remove all personal information and medication information first.**



**Note that this is a request for bottles, not for medications.**



# Photo Gallery



The three photos at top were taken at Rabbi Richard Agler's monthly Saturday morning service on January 21st. As always, the service was warm and the discussion revealing.



At the end of a busy and significant week-end, we gathered on the following evening, Sunday the 22nd, to watch "The Disputation," a recreation of the 13th century Jewish/Christian debate in Spain featuring none other than Nachmanides. The film had been recommended by Rabbi Agler, who led a discussion afterwards about it and the timeless issues it raises.

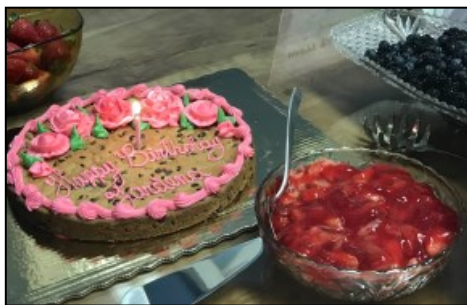




The photo at top was taken at the Tuesday, January 25th string quartet concert sponsored by the Florida Keys Concert Association. The young Israeli violinist was happy to pose alongside our Pauline Roller.

The other photos on this page were taken at the Friday oneg on January 27th. The two co-sponsors that night were Art Itkin and Yardena Kamely, both celebrating birthdays. In addition to the strawberry shortcake, there were two (yes, two) of the gingerbread cakes shown below left. None of the cakes survived the oneg. And, yes, the sharp-eyed among you will notice that Yardena and Art are differently clad in the photo at bottom. They realized that there

hadn't been a photo of just the two of them that night, so we resolved that a few days later. (Hey. The famous voice-over ending in "Casablanca" was added in months later. Aren't you glad it was?)







**Some out-and-about sightings of the active KJCC community this high season. The three photos at top were taken during the annual seasonal party on January 28th thrown by David and Toby Goldfinger at their bayside Keys home. It seems they know absolutely everyone who comes to the Keys from Cleveland each winter.**



**That same day, January 28th, was the actual birthday for Art and Yarden. So they celebrated again, inviting a whole group of KJCC friends to join them at Num Thai for dinner.**





**Gloria is always offering encouragement and support for new service leaders to step forward. The February 3rd service was a tour-de-force debut for Dana Grace, center in the photo at left.**



**The oneg that same evening was co-sponsored by Erica Lieberman-Garrett and Leslie Janowitz in joint celebration of their birthdays, shown in the three photos at right.**



**The photo at left was taken during post-movie coffee after the Saturday, February 4th showing of "The Band's Visit," that week's entry in the First Annual KJCC Memorial Moms Winter Film Fest sponsored by Michael and Lorena Kaufman in loving memory of their mothers.**

**The full complement of new Sisterhood Officers gathered at their February 5th meeting: Left to Right: Renee Salant, co-pres.; Sam Weis, co-pres.; Susan Gordon, co-vice pres.; Michele Riley, Corresponding Sec'y; Laura Wolf, Treasurer; Geri Felder Smith, Recording Sec'y; Erica Lieberman-Garrett, co-vice pres.)**







The three photos at left were taken after the February 7th concert in Islamorada of the Florida Keys Concert Association.



Seen with the brilliant young trio are Mary Lee Singer, a long-time FLKCA volunteer, at top left, and Joyce Peckman, this year's FLKCA president, at top left, and Joyce Peckman, this year's FLKCA president, bottom left. For some reason the musicians all want to be near and be recorded for posterity with

KJCC's Pauline Roller. All concerts take place at the Island Community Church, which in its early years was a movie theater.



A few months ago we offered you a photo of Elizabeth Giddens, a close friend of KJCC member Roy Pollock's, in front of an African orphanage she was on an international tour to raise funds for. The project included a sponsored climb of fabled Mt.

Kilimanjaro, the highest point in Africa on the border between Kenya and Tanzania. Well, here's the photo of Elizabeth, at right, celebrating the completion of her quest. (Imagine how cold it must have been almost 20,000 feet above sea level.)





**MONDAY, APRIL 10, 2017**

**6:00 PM**

**AT THE  
KEYS JEWISH  
COMMUNITY CENTER  
FIRST NIGHT  
MISHPOCHA SEDER -  
A HAIMISHE EVENT**

Contact Susan Ellner  
ellnercd@aol.com - (914) 907-3993 to  
reserve your spot and coordinate your  
covered dish.

No charge for this event.

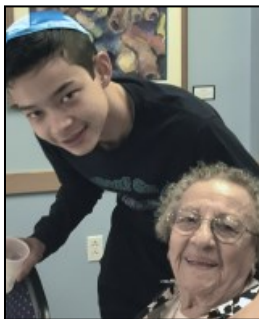


**Friday, February 10th was a very special night at KJCC. Steve Hartz led services, ably assisted by visiting**

**niece Sydney Fields. As he does when his busy schedule allows, Rick Wolfe provided tympanic accompaniment. The oneg was then sponsored by the entire Bloom family, in memory of Ellen. Old friend Stuart Schlossman led off with warm remembrances of Ellen, at left. Please see the next page for additional photos of the evening.**







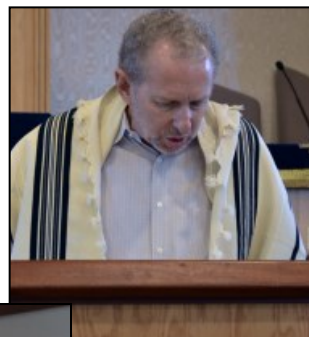
**More views of the February 10th oneg. In the center photo are (l-r) Ritch Bloom (Marc's brother), Shelley Bloom, Marc and Molly. Rachael's daughter Maddie is in the photo below.**



**In the large photo at bottom, some of the friends and family who gathered**

**that evening in support of Marc, Rachael and Molly and in loving memory of Ellen.**





**Saturday, February 11th** saw that month's Torah Learning service by Rabbi Richard Agler. What did we talk about? Only Moses and Pharaoh and where the Bible says Mt. Sinai is and how the kvetching to Moses in the desert sounds an awful lot like Borsht Belt comedy shtick.



# KJCC Annual Community Passover Second Seder



**Tuesday, April 11, 2017**

**6:30 pm**

**Islamorada Fishing Club**

For information and reservations contact

Renee Salant

reneesam@mac.com (206) 730-8002

Mail your check to KJCC Sisterhood at PO Box 116,  
Tavernier, FL 33070.

Your check is your reservation. Reserve early as we will  
be opening this to the public after April 1.

Vegetarian options are available - please request when  
making your reservation.

## PASSOVER

***Donations: Adults \$54; Children 12 and under are our guests.***



# *Refugees 101: A Reprise*

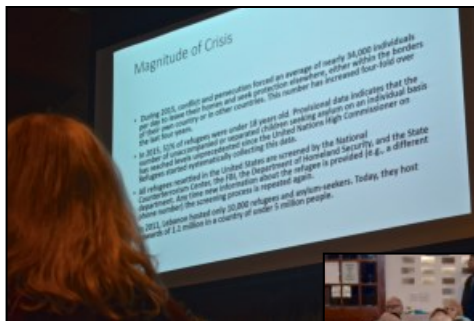
*Sometimes a KJCC event placed somewhat randomly on our calendar arrives with such synchronous timing, it is hard to believe it wasn't pre-ordained. How else to explain Linda Kaplan's program, "Refugees 101 with a Religious Perspective," coming within 48 hours of executive orders issued on January 27th suspending U.S. entry to refugees from seven mostly Muslim countries for 180 days, and indefinitely banning refugees from Syria. As Linda Kaplan began her program, sharing the history of HIAS, the earliest Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, chaos and consternation were boiling over in legal circles and families were being affected across the globe. People who had been given permission to enter the U.S. when they boarded their planes, or cruise ships, found themselves facing removal (deportation) upon landing. Even legal residents who had no home other than the U.S. found themselves facing a ban on entry. We are grateful to Linda, an attorney with over 30 years of experience practicing immigration law, for helping us not only to see the big picture, but also to separate fact from fiction. Here are some of the salient facts from her presentation, along with Rabbi Agler's perspective. (Linda's whole PowerPoint is viewable at [www.lindakaplan.com/resource-links](http://www.lindakaplan.com/resource-links))*



**T**here are more than 65 million internally displaced people, asylum seekers and refugees worldwide. Of these, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees identified 19.5 million refugees as of June 2015. Of that number, less than one percent are resettled each year. Fifty-one percent of the refugees are children. There are three possible solutions: repatriation (when and if homeland circumstances change enough to make it safe), local integration if

refugees can safely rebuild their lives in the country to which they fled, or, for the most vulnerable of the refugees, permanent resettlement in a third country. The immensity of the numbers make our resettlement figures seem paltry. During the last year, the U.S. resettled 85,000 refugees. President Obama (the U.S. president is in charge of setting the limits) had set the ceiling at 110,000 for 2017. The number was reduced to 50,000 by President Trump.

The presentation clarifying "Myths and Facts about Refugee Resettlement" – the full document can be found on the HIAS website – came as new and fascinating material to many in the audience. "We have no idea who these Syrian refugees are," and "Refugees who come to the U.S. from Syria can't be screened for security," were the most common misperceptions. The facts are that refugees are subjected to far more scrutiny than any other group entering the U.S. Biometric data such as fingerprints and IRIS scans and biographic data (place of birth, information about family members, schools attended and work history) are collected and reviewed numerous times and the verification process includes multiple security screenings and detailed in-person interviews. The U.S. vetting process can take 18-24 months or more. Each refugee is vetted by the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, the State Department, and the National Counter-Terrorism Center. It is important to note the differences between the orderly, thorough U.S. process and the current situation in Europe where refugees have not been vetted at all prior to their arrival.



The opposition of some in the U.S. to refugee resettlement was shown to be in sharp contrast to the cities and towns who see not just the moral argument for welcoming refugees but an economic one. Cities that see a declining, graying population are welcoming



the mostly younger refugees to revitalize and boost their economic activity. Cities seeing the economic



benefit of refugee resettlement include Rutland, Vermont, and cities in the Rust Belt, like Pittsburgh and Dayton, Ohio, to name a few. Cities welcoming



refugees have also noted a decline in the crime rates reflecting what has been known for some time – immigrants have lower crime rates than that of native-born Americans.

The evening concluded with a presentation by Rabbi Richard Agler, KJCC Resident Scholar, on the Jewish perspective of welcoming the stranger: "The Torah and prophets were especially concerned about the treatment of the powerless: the poor, the widow the orphan, the stranger. 'Stranger' is the Bible's word for immigrant. Thirty-six times, more than any other commandment, the Torah reminds us to be compassionate, to welcome the stranger. 'For you know the heart of the stranger, having been strangers in the land of Egypt.' We bless too, the Jewish-American poetess Emma Lazarus who wrote in this spir-

it: 'Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the tempest-tossed, to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.' What is the religious perspective? Always and ultimately, it is the moral imperative. Forty major Jewish organizations have passed resolutions encouraging American Jews to follow the Torah's commandment and welcome the stranger today. If we can be faithful to our religious roots, to who we are, we will continue to give and receive blessing."

As of the writing of this article, a Federal District Judge appointed by President Bush issued a temporary ban on enforcement of these executive orders, which has now been upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals. Vetted refugees from all nations can now continue to enter the country. Future action is uncertain. Rabbi Agler quoted Elie Wiesel, our modern prophet, "There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest."

*One of the most moving moments of the evening came when Rabbi Agler asked for a show of hands, first of people who were immigrants themselves, then of those*

*whose parents were immigrants, followed by grand-parents, and finally those whose great-grandparents had come here as immigrants. A look around the sanctuary revealed a sea of hands in the air: The image provided a fitting punctuation point to this informative evening. The talking part of the presentation*



*over, participants adjourned to the social hall for a delicious array of foods originally brought here by ancestors who braved the great waters, persecution, poverty, and discrimination to add to the diversity of culture in these United States. Many thanks to the people who cooked and especially to Linda's team who worked so hard, along with Linda and Rabbi Agler, to make this an unforgettable evening, one that probably had the highest attendance ever of people from the community. Big thanks (todah rabah) to Mindy Agler, Laurie Blum, Art Itkin, Georgia Landau, Dave Mont and Gary Margolis, Rabbi Agler and Linda Kaplan. ♦*



**There was quite a vigorous after-gathering in the Ruth Richardson Social Hall after the presentation by Linda Kaplan and Rabbi Agler. Issues-based conversation (of all types) were emanating from every corner of both the Social Hall and the class-**

**room. (This is one of the main reasons, other than the Jews/food thing, why we always have coffee and conversation after every event.) Linda poses above with daughter Sara and extended family from Miami at the end of a long day.**



# KJCC Gift Shop



**Tallit, Kipot, Kiddush Cups, Candlesticks  
Mezuzzot, Jewelry and More!**



**For further information contact:  
Susan Gordon (305) 766-3585**

# UNEXPECTED KLEZMER: OUR DOCTOR/MEMBER/TRUMPETER PLAYS ST. PETERSBURG (YES, THAT ONE, IN RUSSIA.)

by Dr. Steve Smith

**I**n the ever-expanding land of KJCC members with multiple talents, there are always hidden nuggets with no predictable path to discovery except for happenstance. Dr. Steve Smith called Pauline one Saturday in January and asked her to come to the park behind Murray Nelson Government Center for the Keys Community Band Concert. Linda Pollack volunteered to drive her. Steve would be in the band, playing trumpet. Trumpet? Who knew? A few questions later, after the concert, and here, in Dr. Steve's words, is the story that unfolded...

**I** started playing trumpet at age 8. I played for 16 years, until my third year of medical school. During college and onward I played in college bands, orchestras, big bands, a community band, and pit orchestras for musical theater. Being on call for clinical rotations, though, would not allow me to continue to plan engagements. That's when the 42-year hiatus began.

In January 2016, I started playing again: trumpet, cornet, flugelhorn, flumpet, and bass trumpet. I also started collecting these instruments. My oldest horn is an 1883 Wurlitzer cornet. This past summer I played in three community bands in Massachusetts,

one in Yarmouth/Dennis, one in Falmouth, and one in Duxbury. This Fall I joined the Keys Community Band in Key Largo.

In December I saw a post on a trumpet discussion site where a member of the Vienna Klezmer Orchestra (Vienna, Austria), was looking for a trumpet player to join them in

July for a series of concerts at the European Jewish Music and Choir Festival 2017, in St. Petersburg, Russia. I e-mailed him and volunteered to join. I thought it would be a very neat experience to go back to a country that my grandparents left due to religious persecution and play the music that represents their religious culture to an audience in that country. I received a piece of music

from the person who is the principal trumpet player via e-mail. We played the music together over Skype. Both he and the conductor then accepted me into the orchestra, and I received an invitation to play at the festival. I will be flying to Vienna on July 1<sup>st</sup> and the day after my arrival I will play in the dress rehearsal. We then leave for St. Petersburg the following day. We will perform four concerts and a Grand Gala Concert on Saturday night because we will be the largest group there.

The Orchestra has 60 pieces and will be joined by a choir. Most of the members are



Austrians from the Vienna area; others are foreigners, including Americans, Israelis and some who live in Vienna. The arranger's name is Roman Grinzberg. Sasha Danilov is the conductor and Principal Trumpet is Elmar Eggerer. According to Elmar, about 50 percent of the orchestra is non-Jewish. Elmar himself

is Catholic and married to a well-known Austrian Jewish opera singer, Regina Schorg.

About 45 members of the orchestra will make the trip in addition to choir members.

There is a YouTube video of high-

lights from the orchestra as well as the official invitation to play at the festival. Elmar concludes his letter of invitation with an anecdote from the group's last rehearsal: "Weather is really wintry and cold at the moment, with lots of snow. Roman - the man behind it all - came to rehearsal wearing a horrible knitted woolly hat just covering the top of the skull. Daniel, the tuba player, asked him what THAT was, and got the reply, 'That's my winter *kippa*.'" ◇



**At left, Steve Smith is joined by fellow band (and KJCC) member Rick Wolfe (who also plays in multiple community bands). Familiar visitors to this concert are captured with Steve and Rick at left: Linda Pollack, Gloria Avner and Pauline Roller. At top, Rick shows Pauline (and the camera) his official band shirt.**



*The stars seem to have aligned for Steve. Somehow he even managed to book a reservation to St. Petersburg on the same flight as the rest of the orchestra. We can't wait to hear stories of Dr. Smith and the Klezmer group in Russia. Steve will surely have a follow-up adventure or two with photos and a sound track to share with us in the September issue of Chai-Lights. We're already looking forward to it. Bon Voyage.*





# PURIM



*Once again we come to the one Jewish holiday whose sacred text, one of the last included in the Hebrew Bible, does not once mention the name of God. When sober and serious rabbis say to get drunk. When mockery and japery and fun are standard fare. But, as always with Jewish rituals, there is seriousness of purpose beneath the surface.*

## **PURIM UNMASKED: BEHIND AND BENEATH THE STORY OF PURIM**

*by Gloria Avner*

**T**ake out the costumes, the crowns, the beards and the bottles. It's Purim time. We all know the surface of the story. Let's look beneath the mask for more. It is after all a Jewish Holiday and the only one that will be honored, as the Talmud tells us, in the world to come.

There is something about masks that excite imagination. World cultures have used them spiritually and educationally since the time of ancient Greece. From Native America to deepest Africa to the far reaches of Asia, people have used masks to tell their stories. We tell these stories to ourselves, tales of divinity and heroes, tricksters and fools. Masks make us not ourselves. And yet, in the process of concealing, sometimes something hidden is revealed.

That certainly happens at Purim. Our children dress up. They take on the characters of Esther and Haman, Mordechai, and King Ahashuerosh. They get to feel what it is like to be admired or despised, to wield absolute power or to dispense wisdom. I have seen children cry when booed. Identification is powerful.

The themes of hiding and exposure permeate not just the story but the very title

"Megillat Esther." Each word has two meanings. "Megillah," besides referring to a document rolled up as a scroll, means "to expose." "Esther," in addition to being a woman's name, means "concealment." The whole document's meaning then is "revelation of that which is hidden."

Take the basic story. The plot is filled with co-incidences, mistaken identity, and happenstance, each of which leads to the unimaginable end.

To recap: Seventy years have passed since the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem. The Jews are in exile in Persia, under the hand of King Ahashverosh, the ruler of the Middle East. The king throws a large banquet for all his subjects (actually, in honor of the captivity of the Jews). He summons his beautiful wife, Queen Vashti, to appear before him (some say to dance naked). When she rudely refuses, he has her killed. After that, Esther (we must take note of her name, so similar to that of Astarte, the local goddess of fertility, but we'll explore that another day), a Jewish exile, is taken to the palace as the King's new wife. If the degradation of a Jewish girl abducted to the palace of a wicked despot is not enough, her uncle and protector, Mordechai, one of the leaders of that generation (some interpretations say he may have been her husband rather than her uncle), abandons his place among the sages to sit day and night in front of the King's gate in his concern over her.

The King's vizier, the wicked Haman, is promoted. A personal vendetta against Mordechai



develops (Mordechai refuses to bow down to a mere mortal), and Haman decides to visit his anger upon the entire Jewish people. A death sentence is issued against all the Jews in the King's provinc-

es, the date is set by the casting of lots (*purim*), and Haman builds a special gallows upon which to hang Mordechai. Things go from bad to worse.

However, on one fateful night, the King awakes from his sleep and learns that Mordechai had once saved his life. He grants him royal honors. Haman is killed. The decree is rescinded. The Jews defeat their enemies.

Everything in this story is a paradox. Each event that seems bad for the Jews proves to be for their good. The royal banquet in celebration of Israel's exile vacates the queenly throne and provides the means for Esther to enter the King's palace. The fact that Esther is abducted allows her to bring about Haman's demise. The fact that Mordechai sits idly by the palace gate allows him to overhear a conspiracy and save the King's life. Haman's rise to power is the very thing that produces his conflict with the Jews and brings about his downfall. In the height of ironic twists, worthy of the finest melodrama or quality soap opera, Haman is hung on the very gallows he built for Mordechai, and all Haman's wealth is given to Esther. The day appointed for the annihilation of the Jews becomes the day of their greatest victory over their enemies – the day on which we celebrate Purim.

As we read the *ganssa megillah* (word by word, the entire scroll), we see that everything that seemed to obscure God's presence, everything we could call ill-fate, the worst of human intentions, actually provides the means by which God manipulates history to bring about the redemption of the Jews. Everything begins to change on "that night the King awoke from his sleep" (Esther 6:1). "The King," says the Talmud, actually refers to God, the King of kings. On that night, God awoke from the sleep of concealment, and began to reveal His presence in the world

below.

Many scholars have remarked on the total absence of God's name from this *Megillah*, unique among all the books in the Bible. God makes no showy miracles here: there is no parting of the seas, no manna on the ground, no oil that burns beyond expected limits. Unlike all previous persecutions, exile from Persia is not even an option in this story. At other times in history those in power did *not* want to kill us. It was much more profitable to leave us be or to convert us. It was only in the times of Purim and Nazi Germany that *Amalek* held sway with hatred so total that only annihilation of the race would do.

Those who focus on hidden meanings say that the hand of God is evident everywhere in this *Megillah*, even though the name is not. For every crisis encountered, God already had a solution in place. Purim teaches us how to relate to God in a time when seas don't split, when bushes don't burn, when plagues don't befall our enemies, when the workings of God are concealed beneath the surface appearance of things. In Purim, we celebrate a miraculous reversal of fortune. From assured mass destruction, the tables are turned and in the space of 24 hours the Jews in Iraq (then Persia) are suddenly routing every anti-Semite in the world's most vast and powerful empire. Ever since that day, Jews celebrate its message: no matter how bleak, how dark and how hopeless a situation can appear, the Almighty has guaranteed our survival and an answer has already been prepared for every difficulty.

Our mode of celebration is one of the most uncharacteristic in the annals of Jewish tradition: the sober, intellectual People of the Book turn to the bottle and are commanded to get drunk! Perhaps we are supposed to attain a state of mind other than the normal, a consciousness more attuned to the illogic of the day. And in our intoxicated state of joy, we clothe ourselves in colorful masks and costumes, deliver gifts of money to the poor, listen intently to the reading, give treats to our neighbors and celebrate in community with a joyous feast.

The costumes and masks are vivid reminders that, as in the Purim story, things are not



always what they seem. Below the visible surface, a mysterious, hidden plan is unfolding every moment, silently steering world history and our selves. If we are alert, aware, and appreciative of all that comes to us, we can play our parts well. None of us ever knows how the story will end. *Chag Sameach.* ♦

## THE RITUALS OF PURIM

by Joyce Peckman

**P**urim is not a Biblical holiday, and yet the sages declared that when the Messiah comes, all holidays will be superfluous except for Purim. What makes Purim so unique?

All the other holidays find their roots in the miracles of the Exodus from Egypt. The Purim redemption, in contrast, took place through non-miraculous, naturally unfolding events of personal and political maneuverings. It is easier to see the presence of the Divine through the supernatural than in the occurrences of history and actions of people. This may be the reason for wearing masks on Purim. God hid Himself in the mundane, so we hide ourselves in costumes and masks. Recognizing all the hidden miracles that surround us on a daily basis is the greater theme of Purim.

There are four commandments associated with the Purim holiday. The first and most important commandment (Mitzvah) is to listen. We are to hear every word of the *ganssa megillah* (the whole scroll) even while we are spinning our *groggers* (noisemakers), drowning out the hated name of Haman. The Purim story is a five-star drama, with plot twists worthy of the highest quality soap opera. It has court intrigue, romance, an innocent beauty turned heroine, near annihilation for an entire people, and final ironic come-uppance for the egocentric power-hungry villain due to the brilliance, bravery and commitment of the lovely young Jewish queen. Of course we will listen.

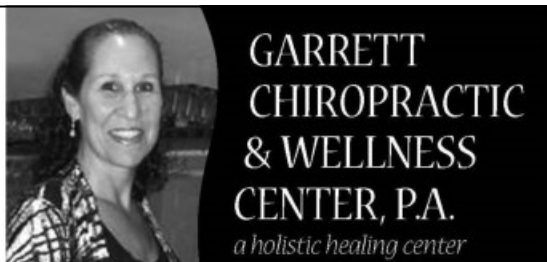
The second mitzvah is to be charitable. It is a very specific kind of charity. We are to give to two different people enough for them to have a good dinner. Perhaps the purpose is to

assure that every Jew, of every social class, with or without deep pockets, or any pockets, gets to be physically sated, assured of the next day's survival, on this special day. The third command is to distribute *mishloach manot*, bags or baskets filled with at least two different foods, a piece of fruit, a drink, a cookie, delivering them to Jewish friends and neighbors – surely this act must be affirmation of the fact that the Jewish people know the importance of community, of belonging to something greater than oneself. It simply yet profoundly expresses the value of acknowledging and caring for one another. We are, now and forever, (*I'olam va'ed*), connected.

The last *mitzvah* is to participate in a festive meal, where according to Jewish law, adults should get so drunk that they can't tell the difference between the statements of Mordechai and those of Haman (recovering alcoholics and people with health problems are exempt. I would also exempt all designated drivers). Does this lack of discrimination brought on by alcohol mean that it is easy to mistake good for evil and the other way around when not in full control of our faculties, or is it an admission that, even in jest, we must be vigilant. Still, the day of Purim is for celebration, for making fun of everyone and everything, even rabbis.

We have no silly, satiric or musical *purimspiel* this year, but let's commit to doing one next year. Party on. You will have the opportunity to fulfill all four mitzvot at KJCC on Purim day, Sunday March 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 AM. Immediately following the KJCC Board meeting. We will strengthen our link to the generations before us, stretching back to Persia and the early days of diaspora. As a united, dedicated Jewish community, we will

- 1) read the entire Megillat Esther in English, round-robin style.
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- 3) have the opportunity to bring food to share. (Think salads, desserts and drinks to enjoy with pizza.)
- 4) Enjoy a pizza party! Come in costume if you can. If not we will dress you up and give you a mask. It is a powerful experience, being someone other than yourself. Lift your glass: *L'Chaim.* ♦



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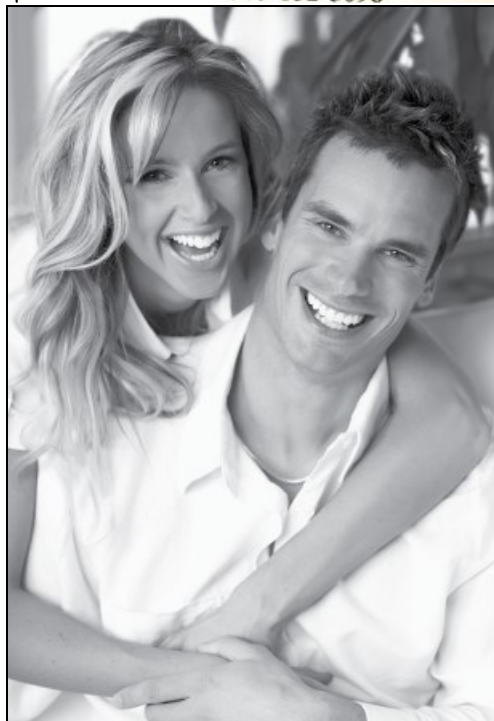
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