

# Chai~Lights



December 2008

4 Kislev - 4 Tevet 5769

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**Keys Jewish Community Center**

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

# December 2008

4 Kislev - 4 Tevet

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5 Bernie Ginsberg <i>Joyce Peckman</i>	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 Ken Atlas <i>Joan &amp; Jim Boruszak</i> <i>Franne &amp; Barry Alter</i>	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 Alan Beth <i>Patty Silver &amp; Jeffrey Schocket</i> Chanukah Dinner <i>Sponsored By Joel &amp; Linda Pollack</i>	20
21 First Day Of Winter	22 First Day of Chanukah	23 Second Day of Chanukah	24 Third Day of Chanukah	25 Fourth Day of Chanukah	26 Joyce Peckman 6:30 Service <i>Shelby Streat</i>	27 Sixth Day of Chanukah
28 Seventh Day of Chanukah	29 Eighth Day of Chanukah	30	31	Names denote leaders of Friday services. <i>Italicized names are Oneg sponsors.</i>		

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**CHAI-LIGHTS** is the  
monthly newsletter of the  
**Keys Jewish Community Center**  
P.O. Box 1332  
Tavernier, Florida 33070  
chailights@keysjewishcenter.com

## President's Message Steve Steinbock



We have been busy here at KJCC. It is a pleasure to see and welcome back many of our "snowbirds." We look forward to seeing the rest of you soon.

The KJCC Board approved a blood drive at our synagogue on Hanukkah, Sunday, December 21st. See the notice in "Nosh" to find out how you can donate much-needed blood.

The Board also approved a new Jewish Youth Enrichment Program that will give financial assistance to our children to attend summer camps and other Jewish educational programs. Dr. Neal Rakov and Susan Gordon should be contacted if you have any questions.

At the October board meeting, Yardena Kamely, in her Holocaust Committee report, informed us that the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Kristallnacht* this year would be commemorated with lighting of synagogues around the world and suggested that the KJCC join in remembering the night that marked the beginning of the Holocaust. Joan Boruszak and her committee organized the event, which was attended by some 100 people, both Jewish and Gentile, including individuals from as far away as Homestead and Marathon. The very moving event included a presentation on *Kristallnacht* and its aftermath by Dr.

Steve Smith, followed by illuminating the *Magen David* on the front entrance of the synagogue and prayers led by Yardena.

Sadly, we note the passing of Fanny Kluger and Linda Holbrook. But we will always remember how they enriched our lives.

I continue to work on a non-religious adult education program. On January 21<sup>st</sup>, Gloria Avner will conduct a two-hour Expressive Art class using ink and watercolor. The other "class" planned right now is a session on the importance of Powers of Attorney, Living Wills and Health Care Surrogate Designations, tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, given by my wife, Carol, a former nurse who was a practicing attorney for almost twenty years before taking down her shingle to sell real estate. She continues to keep current on this important subject. Again, see "Nosh" for details.

Anyone with ideas on other subjects, please contact me by e-mail or phone me at (305) 394-0143.

Carol and I wish you all a very happy and healthy Hanukkah. We hope to see you all at Sisterhood's Shabbat dinner December 19th.

-Steve

## An Evening of Expressive Art With Gloria

The first in the KJCC adult education series, will be held on Wednesday, January 21st, at 7:30 p.m. RSVP to Gloria at 305-619-0216.

“While you are being creative, you cannot be fearful or anxious or anywhere but here and now.

“Creativity heals and energizes. Those of us who made pottery at Beth's know how satisfying the process was and how good it is to interact with *mishpocha* in a creative context. We will live for at least these hours in the right sides of our brains, non-verbal, open, present.

“This is a ‘no-fail’ art class, perfect for people who, like all good artists, can’t draw a straight line and wouldn’t want to if they could. Come play. We will use line and color, ink, water, and paint. You will be the ‘artist you.’ Have fun. Be free. Go home with at least one little unexpected jewel, a perfect gift for a friend or an inspiration piece for your own wall (and a technique you can use again and again). We will do a piece in collaboration as well, to leave as a gift for the shul. I am eager to see and support and play with each of you.”

-Love, Gloria

## The Gift Shop is ready for Chanukah!

We have menorahs and candles, dreidels and wrapping paper, jewelry and toys. Please check it out. If you do not find what you want, *we can probably get it for you!* Call Joan Boruszak at 305-852-0833.

## Shabbat Service With Rabbi Agler

Alan Beth, the religious chair, would like to announce that on Saturday, January 3rd, 2009, Rabbi Agler will be leading a Shabbat Service at the KJCC. The service will start at 10 a.m. This will be an educational, meaningful and guaranteed enjoyable experience, so please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

## Anniversaries

### Years

5th	Ron Levy & Beth Kaminstein.....	19
<b>8th</b>	<b>Lawrence &amp; Pearl Jacobs.....</b>	<b>55</b>
11th	Jamie & Laura Goodman.....	3
11th	Arthur Lee & Johanna Willner.....	43
14th	Barry & Franne Alter.....	39
14th	David & Pat VanArtsdalen.....	27
17th	Larry & Stephanie Gilderman.....	42

## Adult Classes at the KJCC

President Steve Steinbock is starting a series of Adult Education classes at the KJCC. In addition to the art class that will be offered by Gloria Avner in January, he is also planning a talk and question-and-answer session on Powers of Attorney, Living Wills and Health Care Surrogate Designations. The talk will be given by Carol Steinbock, a former nurse who was also a practicing attorney for almost 20 years in New York and the Keys. The class is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, February 4th, at 7:30 p.m. in the Ruth Richardson Hall. If you have any questions, or ideas for future classes and subjects, you can contact Steve at 305-394-0143 or at [president@keysjewishcenter.com](mailto:president@keysjewishcenter.com).

## KJCC Men’s Club Road Trip

The Men’s Club is planning a visit to Key West on Sunday, December 14 to visit the traveling replica of the National Vietnam Memorial Wall. The plan is to depart from KJCC at about noon following the monthly Board meeting. The trip may include a stop in Marathon for lunch on the way. We should return in time for the I.C.E. concert in Founder’s Park that evening. For more info or to make a reservation, call Stuart Sax at 664-8445.

## Knitting/Crochet Classes

Nettie Seder would like to start a class (or club) of people who are interested in learning to Knit or Crochet. She hopes to include all who do it regularly, as an opportunity to share experience and just be social. A day and time will be set that meets most people's availability. Please contact Nettie at 305-852-7283 for more information or to sign up.

*The KJCC extends deepest condolences to*

**Allan Holbrook**

*on the death of*

**Linda Holbrook**

## A Note From The Kluger Family

During a difficult, emotional time in our family, the sincere thoughtfulness expressed by the KJCC and its members was most appreciated. My mother wanted an Orthodox departure from life. Family members in the Northeast insured her wishes. Her total devotion to and belief in her religion was a basic foundation of her existence. Her 100 years of experience and the ability to remember every detail of it inspired us all. What an incredible run she had! When her life stopped giving her the level of excellence she was used to, it was time for her to leave us, but also to leave behind an example of living life to its fullest. The financial climate, politics, WORRY and her family were her life. I thank her for what she gave to us and thank you for remembering Fanny.

*-Kurt Kluger*

## Ongoing Projects

**General Donations** - can be earmarked to our various ongoing funds; e.g. Holocaust Education Fund, Scholarship Fund, Sara Cohen Memorial Tzedukah Fund, or General Fund. Honorarium and memorial cards can also be requested. Call Linda Pollack 852-8575.

**Gift Shop** - We have many lovely gift and holiday items on hand and can special order for you as well. Contact Joan Boruszak 852-0833.

**Jewish Youth Enrichment Program** - will assist in involving our children in Jewish activities. Call Neal Rakov 852-9400.

**Sunshine Committee** - If you know of any member who should receive a get-well, congratulations or condolence card from the Center, call Rene Rose, 852-3959.

**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 Bea Graham, 852-0214.

**Picture Postcards** - We have beautiful picture postcards bearing the Millard Wells representation of the KJCC, which was commissioned by Sisterhood. Quantities 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 Joan Boruszak, 852-0833.

**Oneg Shabbat Sponsor** - To schedule your special date with Sisterhood, call Joyce Peckman, 451-0665. **KJCC Tree of Life Leaves and Rocks, Sanctuary Seat Plates, Yartzeit Memorial Plaques, Bookplates for Siddurim.** Call Linda Pollack to arrange your donation, 852-8575.

**JNF Trees in Israel** - A gift of a tree, or two or more, makes a long-remembered way to honor a loved one, a relative, a friend or an occasion. Both Israel and the KJCC benefit. Call Bea Graham, 852-0214.

**Chai-Lights Mitzvah** - Place a greeting or notice in Chai-Lights. Call Linda Pollack, 852-8575, to make your donation.

**Advertisement in Chai-Lights** - Your business ad will appear in every issue of Chai-Lights. Call Linda Pollack, 852-8575, for the low annual rates.

*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.*

### December Birthdays

Bob Freundlich.....	1st
Paul Hudson.....	1st
Jonathan Lang.....	2nd
Joseph Burke Grossman.....	2nd
Marshall A. Field.....	2nd
Ashley Berk.....	3rd
Cammie Berk.....	3rd
Jackie LePree.....	3rd
Rick McNew.....	3rd
Tracy B. Nikolas.....	3rd
Cody W. Blumenthal.....	4th
Judith Klein.....	4th
Geri Smith.....	5th
Joseph Beth.....	5th
Sheldon Weiss.....	5th
Stuart Sax.....	5th
Gerald Hirsch.....	6th
Haley Boruszak.....	6th
Kevin Gershowitz.....	6th
Leslie Boruszak.....	6th
Neal A. Jacobson.....	6th
Elizabeth Turney.....	7th
Franklin Rose.....	7th
Alan Stocking.....	8th
Leslie Dillon.....	8th
George Swartz.....	9th
James Boruszak.....	9th
Robert Jay Auston.....	9th
Harvey Robins.....	10th
Susan Greenbaum.....	10th
Sara Rose Friedman.....	11th
Lilian Forbes.....	12th
Robin Margulies Juenger.....	13th
Sarah Boruszak.....	13th
Susan Widrich.....	13th
Samuel Klimpl.....	16th
Bruce Forman.....	17th
Jeffrey Schocket.....	17th
Robert Berman.....	17th
Emelyn Anne Juenger.....	18th
Jerome Horowitz.....	18th
Aaron Stuart.....	19th
Alan Schulberg.....	20th
Jennifer VanArtsdalen.....	20th
Teresa Kwalick.....	20th
Roberta McNew.....	21st
Stuart Smith.....	22nd
Steven Smith.....	26th

### December Birthdays

Steve Kasinof.....	27th
Elaine Schulberg.....	28th
Emily Sherman.....	28th
Michael Klimpl.....	28th
Joan Stark.....	29th
Michael Goldberg.....	29th
Ellen Bloom.....	30th
Elliot S. Schenker.....	31st

### Children's Book Drive

Sisterhood is sponsoring a Children's Book Drive for the Keys Domestic Abuse Shelter. Please donate any children's books, puzzles or games (NO TOYS) in new or good used condition. There is a donation box in the lobby. Drop-offs are suggested Friday evenings or Sunday during Hebrew School hours. Contact Joan Stark, joanstark@bellsouth.net or by phone at 394-2417.

### YARTZEIT PLAQUE

In Memory of

**Richard "Papa Dick" Jacob**

*By Linda and Joel Pollack*

### A Special Thanks

Sisterhood would like to thank our members who sponsored Onegs in November, without benefit of Chai-Lights publicity. The wine was just as sweet! Thanks go to Teresa Kwalick, Barbara and Paul Bernstein, Gloria Avner as well as an anonymous member.

*The KJCC extends deepest condolences to*

**the Kluger family**

*on the death of*

**Fanny Kluger**

## BOOK PLATE

In Memory of

**FANNY KLUGER**

*By Linda and Joel Pollack*

### **Jewish Youth Enrichment Program**

The KJCC Board recently approved a new Jewish Youth Enrichment Program that will give financial assistance to our children under college age so that they may attend summer camps and other Jewish educational programs. Dr. Neal Rakov and Susan Gordon are in charge and should be contacted if you have any questions or suggestions.

### **Sponsoring an Oneg Shabbat ...**

is a wonderful way to celebrate a special event or honor the memory of a loved one. Contact Joyce Peckman at 451-0665 for more information. Those who attend Friday night services and stay to enjoy the coffee, soda, dessert and company of friends, are truly appreciative of the sponsors.

### **The Pantry is Nearly Bare**

Our neighbors at Burton United Methodist Church run a community food pantry, they are seeing a large increase in those coming to them for help. As a result, their pantry is running very low. Jim Boruszak will be placing a donation box in the lobby of the KJCC so that you may drop off your non-perishable food items.

### **Oneg Sponsors for December**

December 5th—Joyce Peckman

December 12th—Jim and Joan Boruszak in honor of Jim's birthday, and Franne and Barry Alter in observance of their 39th Anniversary.

Dec. 19th—Patty and Jeffrey Schocket in honor of Jeff's birthday. Joel and Linda Pollack are sponsoring the Chanukah Dinner.

Dec 26th—Shelby Strean

### **Chanukah Blood Drive**

The Community Blood Services of the Upper Keys will conduct a blood drive at our synagogue on Chanukah, Sunday, December 21st, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. They will be giving away dreidels and chocolate candy. To give the gift of life this Chanukah season you can sign up on the sheet in the Ruth Richardson Hall, you can e-mail [president@keysjewishcenter.com](mailto:president@keysjewishcenter.com) or just show up on the day to donate much-needed blood.

### **Sisterhood Events Calendar**

December 7	Sisterhood Meeting
December 19	Chanukkah Shabbat Dinner
January 4	Sisterhood Meeting
January 14	Fashion Show Luncheon
January 18	"Miami Bombshells"
January 23	Shabbat Dinner - Membership Drive

This is just the beginning of a busy new season! The November Sisterhood meeting had a great turn-out and we were able to get a lot accomplished. We discussed dates and venues for upcoming events, put together a team to work on the Fashion Show, planned the nosh for the Krystalnacht commemoration, set dates for the Shabbat dinners, discussed the Friday night Oneg shabbat sponsorships, the Childrens Book Drive, the Tikkun Olum fund and of course what to do for our annual fundraiser! The December Sisterhood meeting has a "bring a friend(member)" theme, so don't wait to be invited, just plan to join us! Breakfast treats will be served. 9:00am coffee and nosh / 9:30 meeting.

The Chanukkah Shabbat dinner is always a joyous party. We eat well, of course, then are entertained by the Hebrew School play, followed by services and an Oneg. Speaking of Onegs, Joyce is always busy organizing the Oneg Shabbats. Please call her if you would like to honor a special occasion.

Stay in touch, stay involved!

*-Joan Stark*

**KEYS JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER**

**We're having  
a PARTY!**

**DECEMBER 19, 2008**

**6:30 PM**

**HANUKKAH**

**LATKES**

**SHABBAT DINNER**

**CHILDREN'S PROGRAM**

**CALL JOAN STARK FOR INFORMATION/RESERVATIONS  
305 394 2417**

**Festival  
of  
Chai  
Lights**



# In Memoriam December 2008

*In Memory Of*

**ALEX AVNER**

By Gloria Avner

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**ROSE BETH**

By Alan Beth and Candace Stanlake

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**STEVE CIMKOWSKI**

By Stephen and Carol Steinbock

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**BURTON V. BORUSZAK**

By James and Joan Boruszak

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**JULIUS KOHLENBRENER**

By James and Joan Boruszak

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**HARRIETTE T. CLINE**

By Meredith A. Cline

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**EDWARD SANDBERG**

By Murray and Claire Cooper

*In Memory Of*

**DAVID M. ORANS**

By Alvan and Carol Field

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**HARRY J. FRIEDMAN**

By Stephan and Jane Friedman

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**HARRY WOLFE**

By Michael and Suzanne Gilson

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**JEANNE SCHNEIDER**

By Maryon Gould

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**SYLVIA SARAH GROSSMAN**

By Stuart Grossman

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**HERBERT GONTAR**

By Robert and Eileen Hermann

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**DINAH LEVY**

By Michal Kamely

*In Memory Of*

**BARBARA K. SILVERBERG**

By Erwin and Barbara Kantor

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**ABRAHAM GOLDSTEIN**

By Mario and Linda LaGrotte

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**SYLVIA LESSNER**

By Howard and Shaloma Lessner

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**ANETTE FOOSANER**

By Howard and Shaloma Lessner

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**JOSEPH L. SHAWMUT**

By Howard and Shaloma Lessner

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**SAMUEL LESSNER**

By Howard and Shaloma Lessner

~~~~~  
*In Memory Of*

**HANNAH OSER**

By Marjorie Present

# In Memoriam December 2008

*In Memory Of*

## **RUTH GREENWALD**

By Paul and Susan Roberts

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **RAYMOND MARTELL**

By Skip and Rene Rose

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **HYMAN SAMUELS**

By Sid Samuels

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **RHONIE LEE KLIPPER**

By Mary Lee Singer

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **SYLVIA L. SINGER**

By Mary Lee Singer

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **MURRAY BLINDER**

By Steven and Barbara Smith

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **PETER F. STEINBERG**

By Richard and Sheila Steinberg

*In Memory Of*

## **STEVE CIMKOWSKI**

By Stephen and Carol Ann Steinbock

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **CELIA STREAN**

By Shelby Strean

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **DONALD WEISS**

By Sheldon and Carole Weiss

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **IRIS WERTHAMER**

By Robert and Heide Werthamer

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **DANIEL BIRNBAUM**

By Norbert Birnbaum

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **ALEX AVNER**

By Gloria Avner

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

## **ROSE BETH**

By Alan Beth and Candace Stanlake

## **Mishebeyrach List**

For those of you who might not make it to services regularly, each week we read aloud the names of those we know to be ailing so that we may include their names in a special supplication to G-d to heal them. Our printed list is read, and then the leader asks if anyone in the congregation has names to add. If you can't be at services, and would like someone you care about to be included in the *mishebeyrach* prayer, call or e-mail and let us know. We'll happily include any name (or names) you tell us about. The main KJCC number is 852-5235. The website, which accepts e-mail, is [keysjewishcenter.com](http://keysjewishcenter.com).



## Jewish Virtues: *Hachnasat Orchim* – Hospitality

The first explicit instance of hospitality in our tradition concerns Abraham. Often quoted and referred to later in Jewish literature, it is the foundation story for this virtue. Because God's presence is part of the greeting of guests, hospitality is lent an extra air of significance.

The story begins, in Genesis 18:22-24, with the arrival of three strangers at Abraham's home. Abraham rushes off to prepare a meal for them. One of the three — all angels disguised as men — announces that, in exactly one year, the barren Sarah, Abraham's wife, will give birth to a son.

The theme continues with two of the three disguised angels arriving in the doomed city of Sodom, where Abraham's nephew, Lot, extends his hospitality.

We learn a lot about hospitality from texts of rabbinic sources. For example, Rabbi Huna is extraordinary in his hospitality, at each meal inviting in the hungry. "When [Rabbi Huna] had a meal, he would open the door wide and declare, whoever is hungry let [that person] come and eat." (*Ta'anit 20b*). The record of his attitude became so inspirational as to be included in the *Pesach haggadah*: "Let all who are hungry come and eat ....."

*Shabbat* is a gift from God. When we welcome *Shabbat*, inviting this special time into our lives and homes, we are appreciative of God. On *Shabbat*, we make special efforts to heighten our awareness of God as we "invite in" the Sabbath Bride/Queen, an act of hospitality.

A surprising amount of attention is given *hachnasat orchim* in our tradition. It is actu-

ally a *mitzvah*, a commandment, an obligation. The root of *hachnasah* (ch-n-s) means "enter," but since the form is in a causative tense, *hachnasah* means to "bring in." In other words, there is a deeper nuance to the kind of hospitality we are supposed to offer. The virtue is not about standing at the door and welcoming those who choose to enter; rather, one is to go outside and *bring in* the guest or stranger. "Inviting" is a good thing, but "bringing in" is an even higher level of fulfilling this mandate. The *mitzvah* "to bring guests in" compels us to develop the *middah* (virtue) of hospitality.

Living a Jewish life requires community. A *minyan* (quorum) is needed for the recitation of certain prayers and for celebrating most life cycle events and holidays. It has been essential for Jews to depend on each other, to support each other, and to be united as a group. To maintain this standard requires inclusiveness, and inclusiveness means "inviting people in."

*Hachnasat orchim*, mentioned frequently in rabbinic literature, is rooted in the pre-Exodus experience of our people. Stories, prayers, commandments, ethics, and holidays remind us regularly that since "we were strangers in Egypt," we should know what it is like to be an outsider. Therefore, we have a special obligation to reach out to others.

*Hachnasat orchim* involves risk. When we bring in guests, we open ourselves to encounter something new, which can at once be exciting and intimidating. Yet, we grow and learn by our exposure to such new experiences. According to Jewish virtues, hospitable personality accompanied by acts of hospitality – that is the ideal. ◇

Keys Jewish Community Center

Fashion Show Luncheon

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

11:30 am

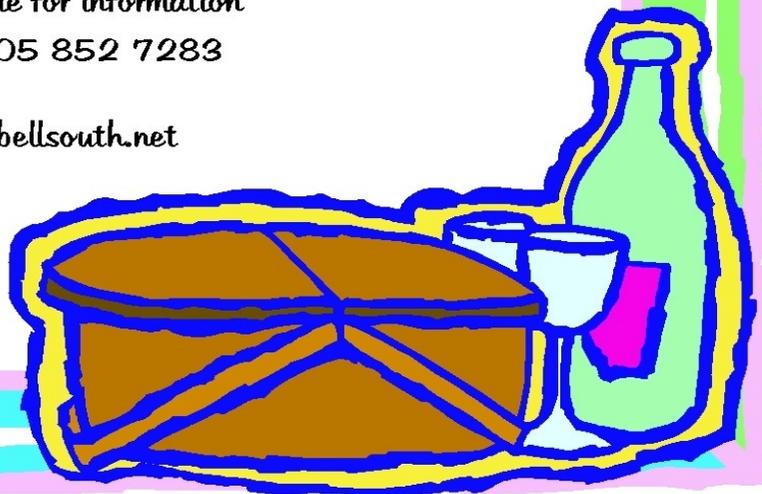


Fashions by Angelika

Contact Nettie for information

& tickets 305 852 7283

[nseder@bellsouth.net](mailto:nseder@bellsouth.net)



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## World Jewish Report Medina Roy



### **Jewish Family Records Now Online**

The world's largest online collection of Jewish family history records is now available at *Ancestry.com*, a genealogy website. Partnering with "JewishGen," an affiliate of New York's Museum of Jewish Heritage, and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), the collection features 26 million documents, many of which are online for the first time. Included are photographs, immigration data and other historic Jewish records including Schindler's List and a record of people who perished in the Nazi concentration camps.

*(World Jewish Congress, 10-30-08)*

### **The New American Congress**

The 111<sup>th</sup> United States Congress now has 46 Jewish members, a new record, with three newcomers elected to the House of Representatives on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Both men running for senator of Minnesota, Norm Coleman (R) and former comedian Al Franken (D)--at press time still in a recount--are both Jewish.

*(World Jewish Congress, 11-6-08)*

### **Rahm Emanuel**

President-elect Barack Obama has selected Rep. Rahm Emanuel, the Jewish congressman from Chicago, and former policy adviser to President Clinton, to be his White House Chief of Staff. Emanuel has a notable family. He is the son of Jerusalem-born Dr. Benjamin Emanuel, a pediatrician who was a member of the underground Zionist military organization, the Irgun, in the 1940s. His mother, Martha Smulevitz, was a civil rights activist; his older brother, Ezekiel, is a prominent bioethicist and oncologist; his other brother Ari, a Hollywood agent, is the inspiration for the main character Ari Gold

on the HBO series

"Entourage." Rahm himself was said to be the inspiration for the character of Josh Lyman on the TV series, "The West Wing." In 1991, during the Persian Gulf War, Rahm was a civilian volunteer on an army base in Israel where his job was rust-proofing brakes. Emanuel is actively Jewish. His children attend a conservative Jewish day school in Chicago, the same one he attended as a child, and the family belongs to *Anshe Shalom*, a modern Orthodox congregation. During Rosh Hashanah, he asked his rabbi if he could take a conference call regarding the financial crisis bailout package. (His rabbi said yes.)

*(The Forward, 11-7-08, and other sources)*

### **Fighting AIDS in Africa**

Last year, the United Nations announced that circumcision could reduce the rate of HIV transmission by up to 60 percent. So now, in a clinic in Swaziland, Israeli doctors have been training their counterparts in the ancient procedure. It was kind of by accident that Israel had to develop the expertise to perform adult male circumcision on a wide scale. With the mass wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union, scores of men requested the procedure. To meet the demand, Israeli hospitals set up circumcision clinics in five hospitals throughout the country. Dr. Inon Schenker, a director of "Operation Abraham," the consortium that sent the doctors to Swaziland, said, "They [Swaziland] recognize the expertise and experience gained in Israel over the past decade, where close to 100,000 male circumcisions have been conducted." These doctors of "Operation Abraham" – Jews, Muslims and Christians – have now had requests to do similar training programs in five other African

countries, among them Uganda, Kenya and South Africa. Nearly 30 percent of the world's men are circumcised, but the practice is rare in many southern African countries where AIDS has become a pandemic. Swaziland has one of the highest rates of HIV infection in the world; the life expectancy there has dropped to 31 years. ([www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org), 11-10-08)

### **The Two Best Academic Workplaces**

According to readers of *The Scientist* magazine, Israel's Weizman Institute of Science and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem are ranked #1 and #2, respectively, as the best places to work in academia internationally in 2008. Both are newcomers to the list. Overall, analysis showed Australia as the best country in which to do research, with Israel as the first runner-up. ([www.marketwatch.com](http://www.marketwatch.com), 11-3-08)

### **Paul Krugman**

Paul Krugman, professor of economics at Princeton University, has won the Nobel Prize for economics for his analysis of international trade patterns. Krugman, who is Jewish, also writes a regular column for *The New York Times*. He was one of the first economists to anticipate the U.S. housing debacle and the resulting effects on international markets. ([www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org), 10-13-08)

### **Student Outs a War Criminal**

As a result of work done on his university project, where he was researching the massacres of Jews in the Austrian region of Burgenland, Andreas Forster, an Austrian student at Vienna University, has tracked down one of the world's most-wanted Nazi war criminals. Forster, in his final year of studies, located the fugitive, an 89-year-old former member of the SS, living in Germany. He is suspected of being involved in the massacre of 60 Jewish slave-laborers in 1945 in the Austrian town of Deutsch Schutzen, where a mass grave was discovered 13 years ago. Forster's instructor conducted several hours of an interview with the former Nazi in which the man first admitted

his crimes but then denied it and withdrew his confessions. German authorities have started an investigation. (*World Jewish Congress*, 10-23-08)

### **Dead Sea Scrolls on the Internet**

In late August, six specialists digitally photographed every one of the thousands of fragments of the 2,000-year-old Dead Sea Scrolls, with the goal of eventually making the entire file available to anyone on the Internet. Using state-of-the-art equipment, the scientists and technicians have uncovered previously illegible sections of the scrolls. Found in the 1940s in caves east of Jerusalem by an Arab shepherd boy, access to the scrolls was for many years restricted to a small circle of scholars. Finally, in 2001, they were published in their entirety. The scrolls contain the earliest known copies of every book of the Hebrew Bible (except the Book of Esther), as well as Apocryphal texts and descriptions of rituals of a Jewish sect at the time of Jesus. Most of the text is written on parchment and dates from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E. to the 1<sup>st</sup> century C.E.

The Israel Antiquities Authority is the custodian of the scrolls. The project of digitalization began "as a conservation necessity," said Pnina Shor, head of the Authority's conservation department. "We needed to take precise photographs [to monitor the deterioration of the scrolls] and that's when we decided to do a comprehensive set of photos.... We realized that we could make the entire set of pictures available online to everyone..." The entire process will probably take a few years before it is available online. Greg Bearman, retired from the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, heads the project. (*New York Times*, 8-27-08)

### **New Head of the Rabbinical Assembly**

Julie Schonfeld has been named the new executive vice president of Conservative Judaism's Rabbinical Assembly, the first time a female rabbi has been selected to head one of the three major Jewish denominations. Schonfeld is a graduate of Yale University and was ordained a rabbi by the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1997. She will succeed Rabbi

Joel Meyers, who will step down after twenty years of service. (*The Forward*, 10-30-08)

### **Art Stolen By Nazis Returned**

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts has returned the painting *Smoke Over Rooftops* by Fernand Leger to the heirs of Alphonse Kann, a collector in pre-war France.

The quest to have the picture returned to its rightful owner began in 1997, when the museum received a letter from The Kann Association requesting its return. Alphonse Kann had been a legendary French art collector with a massive collection, including works by Picasso and Braque, among others. The story of the loss of his paintings inspired the 1964 movie "The Train" starring Burt Lancaster, about a trainload of art that the Nazis tried to keep from the Allies.

The Institute had received the painting as a gift 47 years ago from a patron who had purchased it from a French art dealer. (*Minnesota Public Radio* 10/30/09) This story suggested by Harvey Schwaid.

### **2,000 Yr. Old Jewel Found In Jerusalem**

A luxurious gold, pearl and emerald earring was found beneath a parking lot next to the walls of Jerusalem's Old City. It dates to the Roman period between the second and fourth centuries C.E. The earring was found in a destroyed Byzantine home built centuries after the piece itself was made, indicating that it had been passed down through generations. Archaeologists are excited by the find, not just because of its Roman origin but also because precious items are rarely found in Jerusalem.

The Israel Antiquities Authority said the earring appeared to have been made using a technique similar to that depicted in portraits from Roman-era Egypt. Finds from the Roman period are rare in Jerusalem because the city was destroyed by the Romans in the first century C.E. (*Yahoo /AP news* 11/10/08)

### **Auschwitz Blueprints Found**

The original construction plans for the Auschwitz death camp have been found in a

Berlin flat. The yellowing blueprints include rooms marked as gas chambers, crematoriums and *Leichenkeller* (corpse cellar), as well as the building that would become Auschwitz's main gate.

The plans were published in Germany's *Bild* newspaper ahead of the 70th anniversary of *Kristallnacht* and offer "authentic evidence of the systematically planned genocide of the European Jews," said Hans-Dieter Kreikamp, head of the federal archives in Berlin.

The decision to kill Europe's 11 million Jews was made at the Wannsee Conference in January of 1942. The newly found blueprints are dated October 23, 1941 and offer even earlier evidence that the Nazis planned to kill Jews on a mass scale, *Bild* said. "These documents reveal that everyone who had even anything remotely to do with the planning and construction of the concentration camp must have known that people were to be gassed to death in assembly-line fashion. The documents refute once and for all claims by those who deny the Holocaust took place," he added. (*Yahoo/AP News* 11/10/08)

### **Did You Know...**

Donald Trump's 27-year-old daughter Ivanka has begun the process of converting to Judaism at Kehilath Jeshurun, an Orthodox synagogue in Manhattan. Ivanka, a former model and now vice president of real estate development & acquisitions for the Trump Organization, is engaged to Jared Kushner, a Jewish businessman. (*www.jta.org*, 11-4-08)

"Waltz with Bashir," an animated documentary about the Lebanon War, won best film at Israel's Ophir Awards in late September. It will be Israel's entry in the best foreign film category at the next Academy Awards. (*www.jta.org*, 9-24-08)

For the third time in its history, New Zealand has elected a Jewish prime minister, John Key, 47, the leader of the conservative National Party. His mother is a Jewish immigrant from Austria and is an active member of New Zealand's Jewish community of about 5,000 members. (*World Jewish Congress*, 11-13-08) ◇

# Photo Gallery



The Sunday night of November 9th was very special

at the KJCC. About one hundred people joined us to commemorate the dreadful night of November 9, 1938, *Kristallnacht*, the "night of broken glass." It was seventy years ago when a seventeen-year-old Jewish student in Paris decided to avenge the deportation and suffering of his family and killed a Nazi embassy official. This act of one distraught and impassioned teenager became the pretext for an orchestrated, violent rampage throughout Germany that destroyed thousands of Jewish businesses,



synagogues and homes. Hundreds of Jews were injured or killed. New laws were immediately passed restricting the civil rights of Jews in Nazi Germany. Many historians consider *Kristallnacht* the true beginning of the Holocaust.

Dr. Steve Smith developed and narrated a PowerPoint program, which vividly brought us back to the horrors of that night and the even worse horrors that followed. The evening was attended by many of our members, as well as by many friends from churches throughout the area. We were particularly pleased to see the youth group from Burton Memorial Church. Attendance was so high that the program needed to be



Scenes, on this page and the following, from the November 9th KJCC commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of *Kristallnacht*. Top and top left, Steve Smith, whose presentation began the evening. Above, the event's organizer Joan Boruszak.



Along with synagogues around the world, the exterior of KJCC was brightly lit. Just before lighting, Yardena led all assembled in chanting the *Shema*. Joyce, in the center, has that smile because her granddaughter had just been born earlier in the evening.

held in the sanctuary.

After the program, everyone gathered outside before KJCC's front entrance. In a coordinated effort with synagogues and Jewish buildings in Israel and all across the diaspora, all the lights--including a spotlight--were turned on and bathed the synagogue with light, to symbolize the synagogues that were burned down that night. Our own dear teacher, Yardena Kamely, led us all in chanting the *Shema*.



presentation, to Eric Grace for bringing and operating the spotlight, and to all our members and guests who honored the victims of *Kristallnacht* by attending.

-Joan Boruszak



We then all returned to the social hall for refreshments. The committee offers its deepest thanks to Dr. Smith for his powerful





The first-ever “Keys to Peace and Wellness Expo” was held Sunday, November 16th at the Treasure Village Montessori School. Many KJCC members joined others interested in natural healing, massage, yoga, energy healing and a variety of health and holistic workshops. The organizer was KJCC’s own Dr. Erica Garrett, shown below at the welcome table (a loan from KJCC). The photo to the left is of Gloria Avner’s art booth.

Keith and Rebecca Peckman, below, have a beautiful new daughter, Libby (Hebrew for “my heart”) Eden. Keith is Joyce’s youngest son.



The photo at right is from a memorial service at Mt. Nebo Memorial Gardens conducted on Veteran’s Day by the Jewish War Veterans. Each Veteran’s Day flags are placed on the graves of Jewish veterans there and around the country. I visited the KJCC section of Mt. Nebo and placed flags at the gravesites of Marty Graham, Herb Uram, the fathers of Yardena Kamely and Roberta McNew, and many others. The memorial service is held at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, in remembrance of Armistice Day (from World War I), which was later re-named Veteran’s Day.

-Stuart Sax



# A Samurai for Chanukah

*How a Chanukah Celebration Helped Lead to the Rescue of Polish Jews in Lithuania.*

In 1900, a boy named Chiune Sugihara was born to a samurai family in rural Japan. Although his father was a doctor who expected his son to follow in his footsteps, Sugihara had other hopes and dreams. He wanted to travel the world and experience other cultures. So he put himself through school to attain a degree in English literature. After graduation, he was recruited by the Japanese Foreign Ministry and got his chance to travel the world. Along the way he became fluent in Russian and German, and converted to Greek Orthodox Christianity. He met and married a like-minded young Japanese girl named Yukiko, and together they had four sons. He was amazingly successful in realizing his dreams and reaching goals he set for himself, even the outlandish ones.

In 1939 Sugihara became vice-consul of the Japanese Consulate in Kaunas, Lithuania. He was a one-man consulate, charged with reporting on Soviet and



Chiune Sugihara

German plans at this tense time, in this small country caught between two military powers. Understandably, Japan had an interest in what these two powers, enemies a generation before, were planning to do.

Kaunas in 1939 was also home to an eleven-year-old Jewish boy named Solly Ganor. Solly was the son of a *Menshevik* refugee—the losing side in the Communist power struggle in the early 1920s after the Russian revolution. His family had moved to Kaunas and had prospered in the textile import and export business. Even at his young age, Solly was concerned about the plight of the Polish Jewish refugees entering Kaunas and gave all of his allowance money to the Jewish refugee boards. But he was also an eleven-year-old boy. On one particular afternoon he wanted badly to see the new Laurel and Hardy movie playing in town. Having given away all his own money, he went to his aunt's gourmet food shop to ask to borrow a lit (a Lithuanian dollar) for the show. Japanese Consul Chiune Sugihara also happened to be in the shop that afternoon, and overheard Solly asking his aunt for movie money. Once he heard the rest of



Yukiko Sugihara

the story, Sugihara gave the selfless young boy two lit of his own money.

Solly invited the kind Japanese man to his family's celebration of the first night of Chanukah in that year of 1939. Always curious about different cultures and practices, Sugihara gladly accepted, and he and wife Yukiko attended their first Chanukah celebration. Mr. Sugihara was impressed by the closeness of the Jewish family, and of the similarities of the Chanukah celebration to the festivals he had known in Japan.

Unfortunately, Sugihara's enjoyment of his post and blossoming career was to be short-lived. After Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, the wave of Jewish refugees streaming into Lithuania became even more intense. They arrived with nothing but tales of the atrocities being committed in Poland. Although the Jewish community in Lithuania was very welcoming and helped in any way they could, no one could quite believe the horror stories they were hearing. The Lithuanian Jews continued living normally in what they believed to be an enclave of peace and prosperity for Jews.

They weren't prepared when in June of 1940 the Soviets invaded Lithuania. The Soviets would allow Polish Jews to continue their emigration through the Soviet Union—now including Soviet-controlled Lithuania—only if they intended to continue beyond Russia and could obtain travel documents to a destination country. Some enterprising Polish refu-



**Polish refugees at the gate of the Japanese Consulate in Kaunas, Lithuania, July 1940.**

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## ***Chiune and Yukiko Sugihara woke to find a crowd of Polish Jews gathered in front of the consulate.***

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gees found a loophole that could offer one last chance. Two Dutch colonial islands in the Caribbean, Curaçao and Dutch Guiana (now Suriname), did not require formal entrance documents, and the honorary Dutch consul of Kaunas, Jan Zwartendijk, had been given permission to stamp passports with entrance permits.

But to get to these islands, for complex geopolitical reasons of the time, Jewish refugees would have to pass through the Soviet Union. The Soviet consul, who was sympathetic to the plight of the Jewish refugees, agreed to let them pass if they could also get a transit visa from the Japanese, as they would have to travel through Japan on their way to the Dutch-held islands. Sugihara began asking for permission to issue transit visas to the Jewish refugees, but the authorities in Japan refused.

One short month later, in July of 1940, the Soviet authorities ordered all foreign embassies to leave Kaunas. Chiune Sugihara applied for and received special permission to stay an additional twenty days. Now he and Jan Zwartendijk were the only foreign consuls left in Lithuania's second-largest city. They had a lot of work to do.

In late July of 1940, Chiune and Yukiko Sugihara woke to find a crowd of Polish Jews gathered in front of the consulate. Sugihara knew he could help by issuing them Japanese transit visas, but he had been denied permission to do so by his government three separate times in the last month. Going against his government would mean the end of his career, and likely the endangerment of himself and his family. However, Sugihara had been raised a

samurai, the old warrior aristocracy of Japan, with a strict code of ethics: *oya koko* (love of family), *kodomo no tamene* (for the sake of the children), having *gidi* and *on* (duty and responsibility, or the obligation to repay debt) and *haji no kakete* (do not bring shame on your family.) His family took the samurai code of ethics seriously, and he saw the chance to honor each of these codes in helping the Jews. When asked about it later, Sugihara said that standing and looking out at all the refugees begging for his help, one other samurai maxim kept coming to him: "Even a hunter cannot kill a bird which flies to him for refuge."

Sugihara and Yukiko knew that they had to help. When asked why he risked all, Sugihara said, "I may have to disobey my government, but if I don't I would be disobeying God." The family made the decision together: the visas would be signed.

For the next 29 days, from July 31<sup>st</sup> to August 28<sup>th</sup> of 1940, Mr. and Mrs. Sugihara sat for hour upon hour, writing and signing hundreds of visas by hand. They wrote over 300 visas per day during this time, which would normally be a month's worth of work for a consul. Sugihara did not even stop to eat. He said that he knew that every minute he wasted might mean another life. Yukiko helped write and register the visas. The hundreds waiting in front of the consulate became thousands. They waited outside day and night. The Sugiharas worked furiously, without stopping, writing as many visas as they could. On September 1<sup>st</sup>, they were forced to leave the consulate and board a train for Berlin due to the pending Nazi invasion of Russia. Sugihara continued writing, signing and stamping documents, handing them out the train window to waiting refugees. When the train began to pull out of the station, he tossed his consul visa stamp to a refugee who was able to use it to fabricate more documents for additional Jews.

Thousands of Polish Jews carried Sugihara

visas. They boarded trains for Moscow, then traveled on to Kobe, Japan. They had become The Sugihara Survivors.

Among the Jews who received Sugihara visas were the eleven-year-old Solly Ganor, who in a simpler world had been given movie money by Chiune Sugihara, and his family. Unfortunately, because they were still Soviet citizens, they were unable to use them. Solly and his father spent two years in the Kaunas ghetto before being deported to the Landsberg-Kaufering outer camp of Dachau in

1944. Ironically, in May of 1945, they were liberated by Japanese-American soldiers of the 522<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Battalion, men who had been interned after Pearl Harbor as security risks by their own country.

It is estimated that the numbers of Jews who Sugihara and Yukiko saved would be second in number only to those saved by Raoul Wallenberg. Now, more than 60 years later, it is estimated that as many as 40,000 Jews are descendants of the Sugihara Survivors. Even so, Mr. Sugihara never mentioned his deeds after the war. For his disobedience, he had been dismissed from diplomatic service,

and lived out his days modestly, working as a translator and interpreter. It wasn't until one of the Sugihara Survivors was able to track him down, in 1969, that his astounding acts of humanity became public knowledge. Soon, hundreds of others also came forward to tell of his acts of bravery and courage.

*Yad Vashem* recognized Chiune and Yukiko Sugihara as "Righteous Among the Nations" in 1985. A tree was planted in Chiune Sugihara's name at *Yad Vashem*, and a park in Jerusalem was named in his honor. Chiune Sugihara passed away in 1986 at the age of 86. Yukiko Sugihara died in October of this year at the age of 94. ◇

*Our thanks to Gloria Avner for suggesting this story.*

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***I may have to  
disobey my  
government,  
but if I don't I  
would be  
disobeying  
God.***

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# KJCC GIFT SHOP



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# AT THE ANNUAL WASSER SCAREFEST...

KJCC members were once again the guests of Mark and Sofy Wasser at the 2008 version of their world-famous Key Largo Halloween party. You'll also see assorted Wasser family members in the photos. First prize for costume went to Herman Munster, below.







# Illuminating the Festival of Lights...



***Chanukah is a time of gift-giving, yes, but it's also full of symbolism, history, wonderful snippets of information and memories. And that's all before we even start on the latkes...***

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## Hidden in the Candles of Chanukah...

***Or, Long Days' Journey into Light***

*by Gloria Avner*

As an avocational ethnologist, I study world religions. As a practicing, enthusiastic Jew I look for answers to life's big questions in my own tribal heritage. Every early religion found powerful teachings and created ceremonies of hope, appeasement, and gratitude in the time of shortest, darkest days. How could life go on if the sun did not return to warm the earth? I have read words from contemporary rabbis linking Chanukah to Solstice, saying that in our earliest days, sacrifices were made for eight days both before and after the shortest day of the year. Whether bonfires or candles, it is all about light.

"Light" is a big concept. As an artist I am in love with light and the act of creation. My father, whose personal light went out ten years ago on the eighth day of Chanukah, gifted me with light through his name. "NER" means both candle and light. Every synagogue in the world has its *ner tamid*, the everlasting light. ("Av," of course, is Hebrew for father.)

The light of *Yiddishkeit* nearly went out when the temple was laid to ruin by the Greeks, whose goal was to assimilate if not annihilate us. The Maccabees recaptured the temple, cleansed, restored it, and rededicated it, but to complete the dedication they/we needed an additional seven days in which to replace the consecrated oil that had been defiled by the Greeks. With only one "kosher" vial left, enough oil for just one day, we needed a miracle, the exact length of time of the creation.

We all know the history of the "Great Thing that Happened There," and more of the history is told elsewhere in these pages. But where is the deeper meaning of the miracle? This is Judaism. We know there is always more.

*Anyone who has ever prepared a Friday night "parshah" knows how many stories lie within each Torah portion and that within each story there are as many layers and meanings as we have time and energy to discover. It does not surprise me, as I look for hidden meanings in the light of Chanukah, that I am thrown back to B'reishit, the beginning, the creation of primordial light:*

When Adam and Eve came into being in the Garden on the sixth day of creation, light stepped beyond its bounds. There were thirty-six hours of intense limitless light, says the teaching, and Adam could see from one end of the world to the other.

Adam and Eve failed to do their *mitzvot* and were punished. The brilliant light that was visible for such a long, uninterrupted time

and distance was withdrawn, hidden away, saved for the righteous in the world to come. We weren't ready for it.

How does this primordial light relate to Chanukah? Let's count the candles. Not the *shamashim* with which we light the candles, but the candles themselves. One plus two plus three plus four plus five plus six plus seven plus eight makes thirty-six. The twelfth century Kabbalist, Rabbi Eliezer of Worms, says that "The 36 candles on the menorah correspond to the 36 hours when Adam and Eve were bathed in The Primordial Light of creation." Today, as we kindle our own lights, in our own homes, he suggests we are calling forth a remembrance if not a revelation of that intense, now hidden light. The light was ours before the *mitzvot* were disobeyed.

The mysterious expansion of light came to Jews who were rededicating themselves and their temple to the practice of Judaism. They did not succumb to a culture that did not want them to worship their one God in their own way. The myriad meanings of the number 36 could fill reams, and range from double "chai" to equivalence of the names of God to the amount of years it took Jacob to transform himself on his journey to the number of righteous souls in every generation who keep alive that spark of primordial light. We talk about Chanukah as a minor holiday, and yet there is an understanding that when the messiah comes the only holidays that will still be celebrated will be Chanukah and Purim.

Rabbi Ozair puts it in terms of Earth school. We are here to learn, "training ourselves to reach higher levels of consciousness. The Chanukah lights serve as antennae for holiness, drawing down the energy of the 36. With every day of Chanukah that passes, the light gets increasingly stronger. We place our lit candles in the window as a beacon to all passersby to remind the world that darkness can indeed be dispelled, obscurity can be illuminated, and that it is God's Light which will prevail."

In the dark of winter, we are encouraged to look within, make our own light shine, reconnect with the bright light of creation by

correcting behavior, observing *mitzvot*, re-dedicating our inner sanctuaries, and shining our light on all around us. It is not surprising that Chanukah is the favorite holiday of children and mystics. May we all happily give and receive both presents and Presence. ◇

## Little Known Factoids About Hanukkah (Or Hanukkah Kleinekeiten)...

*Every year we like to deepen our understanding of the Holidays we know and love and feel as familiar with as comfortable old shoes. It is good to get new insights, see that our ways of celebrating are not the only ways, and add to our grasp of the layers of rich meaning inherent in all things Jewish:*

**Effigies in Kurdistan:** The custom of Jewish children in Kurdistan is to make effigies of Antiochus and carry them around asking for Chanukah *gelt*. At the end of the day the dolls would be ignited to the cries of "Antiochus, Antiochus."

**Candles in Turkey:** In Turkey it was the custom to make the Hanukkah candles from the flax fibers used to wrap the *etrog for Sukkot*. From the remains of the Hanukkah candles another candle was made which was used to search for leavened bread at Passover time. These customs provided a beautiful continuity to the holidays.

**Hannukah Gelt:** In 1958 the Bank of Israel initiated a program of striking commemorative coins for use as Hanukkah *gelt*. The first Hanukkah coin portrayed exactly the same menorah that had appeared on the last Maccabean coins some 2000 years earlier. In 1976, the year of America's two hundredth year of independence, the Hanukkah coin featured a colonial American menorah.

**Halley's Comet Hanukkah Connection:** According to a recent astrological theory, Hal-

ley's comet came very close to the earth's atmosphere during the time of the Hanukkah story in 165 BCE. The comet's tail could be seen as a wondrous great light in the sky, and was likely seen by the Jews after the victory of the Maccabees. One recent theory has it that because of this phenomenon, Hanukkah has come to be known as *Chag HaUrim*, the Festival of Lights. ◇

-Gloria

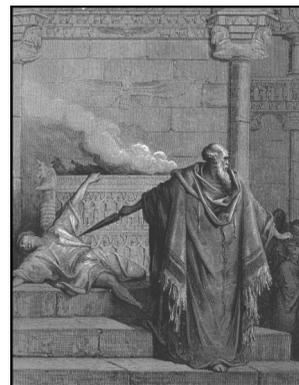
## The Maccabees: History, Not Myth...

In 334 B.C.E., Alexander the Great crossed the narrow Dardanelles, then called the Hellespont, into modern-day Turkey to continue a war against the Persians—Greece's fellow Aryans—that had been ongoing for over 150 years. He had 32,000 infantrymen. Persia had access to millions of soldiers. The Persian forces were annihilated at the Battle of Issus. Alexander demanded unconditional surrender of Darius III, the Persian King. The great Persian Empire, which had crushed the Babylonians who had defeated Judah in 586 B.C.E. and destroyed the first Temple, ceased to exist. All of its territory, which included Judea and all the rest of the Middle East, passed into Greek hands.

Alexander lived but two more years, dying of fever in 332 B.C.E., at the age of 32, after cruising the sewage-laden Euphrates in Babylon. We can't know how Jewish history would have changed had Alexander lived, but we do know that conqueror and conquered quickly established an odd rapport. Though they'd willingly fought everyone else who sought (or seized) their vassalage, they didn't take arms against Alexander. He, in turn, granted them full internal political and religious freedom. But his successors were lesser men, and after his death his empire was split (or rent) into three pieces, each controlled by one of Alexander's former generals: Greece went to Antigonus; Ptolemy (whose descendants included Cleopatra) took Egypt and Palestine; and Seleucus took Asia Minor and Syria, es-

tablishing the Seleucid Empire. It was with the Seleucids, a century and a half later, that the Maccabees would have their little tiff.

Alexander's aims had been much more than territorial: he wanted to export Hellenic culture all over the world. Even in death he almost succeeded, at least with the Jews. Jerusalem soon began taking on the look of a Greek city. A gymnasium was built very near to the Holy Temple, on Mount Moriah, supposedly where Abraham had once felt commanded to sacrifice his son Isaac. Suddenly Jewish youth were wrestling nude in public, and hurling javelins, and competing in races as far away as the Mediterranean city of Tyre, once the realm of the Phoenicians. Economically, the Jews thrived under Seleucid rule. But Hellenism was also having a seductive and corrosive social effect. Because they had to, the Jews learned to speak Greek. But commerce and communication often lead to social interaction, and it certainly did here. First it was business at the bazaars, then after-hours at the theaters and gymnasiums. Jewish life was austere. Greek life was much more fun. Jewish practices began to be discarded.



**Mattathias slays the idolator.**

More ominously, though, the Greek philosophers began to seriously affect Jewish thought. Behavior was one thing, but ideas were another. Whole new concepts, alluring and stimulating and eye-opening, began to frighten the orthodox Jewish thinkers, who feared, probably with very good reason, elegant new concepts like Epicureanism, which taught that there is no morality, only pleasure, and that pleasure, not strict adherence to a complex and demanding code of conduct, is the highest possible state of being.

But the Mosaic law still had power, and adherents. They coalesced into an anti-Hellenistic party known as the Pietists. Their

ranks grew, and with increased popularity began to thunder publicly against not just licentiousness but all things Greek.

Spurred by fear of their God's retribution against those who broke the covenant, the Pietists began to attack and kill the Jewish Hellenizers. A Jewish civil war had broken out, and the moderate center was rapidly disappearing. Antiochus Epiphanes, who succeeded his more moderate father as King in 176 B.C.E., chose this explosive time to put into effect two grandiose ideas: he wanted to complete the Hellenization of all his kingdom, even including that stubborn little corner in Palestine, and he wanted to re-establish Alexander's empire. So he increased the pressure to impose Greek culture in every aspect of daily life throughout his empire. It worked everywhere but Judea. With the confidence gained from his other successes, he attacked Egypt in 170 B.C.E.

Hearing a rumor Antiochus had been killed in Egypt, the Pietists attacked in Jerusalem, hurling both Hellenists and their statues over the walls of the Temple, killed every Hellenizer they could find in the countryside, and took over the country.

Rebuffed by Egypt but very much alive, Antiochus turned his army and fury on Jerusalem, slaughtering some 10,000 of every persuasion. He then re-installed Greek statues in the Temple and invited pagans from throughout his realm to come settle in Jerusalem in order to dilute the Jewish presence.

But he didn't stop there. Sensing all-out rebellion, Antiochus also outlawed the Sabbath and any adherence to the Torah. The penalty for disobedience was death. And the Jews' response? They flocked to the Pietists, whose ranks swelled. An uprising seemed inevitable.

It didn't take long. In the small village of Modin, just east of Lod, an old Hasmonean priest named Mattathias came upon a Seleucid official trying to force a Jew to make a sacrifice to Zeus. Some stories say Mattathias killed the official, some say he killed the other Jew, but either way the spark had been lit. Antiochus ordered reprisals, and the entire Jewish population rose in

defense of Mattathias, who, along with his five sons, took over leadership of the rebellion. They became known as the Maccabees.

Untrained and poorly armed, the Maccabees stunned the Greeks with victory after victory, in part because the Seleucids couldn't really believe these Jews were serious. Still, they fought, according to the historian Max Dimont, "...a new kind of war, the world's first religious war, fought with grim determination, heedless of cost and sacrifice."

Antiochus first sent a small but crack force against the Maccabees. It was destroyed. So he assembled a full army and marched toward Jerusalem at its head, even bringing along auctioneers to handle the disposition of slaves he expected to soon be selling. But the Maccabees smashed his army, in 164 B.C.E., and re-conquered Jerusalem. The Temple was rededicated and purged of all idols. The annual event that celebrates this impossible success, Chanukah, was the first festival not sanctioned by Biblical law.

Was that the end? No, not even close. The Jewish rebellion against the Seleucids lasted *twenty-five years*. At some point they were offered full religious freedom but turned it down and fought on for complete independence, and somehow kept winning. In 143 B.C.E., Simon, the last surviving son of Mattathias, signed a peace treaty with the weary Seleucids assuring full independence. The kingdom of Judah had been fully restored. The Hasmonean Dynasty was about to take its turn in Jewish history. The Seleucids were about to disappear. ◇

## **The Dreidel: An International Journey... A Game or a Miracle?**

*by Yardena Kamely*

### **The Ancient Connection**

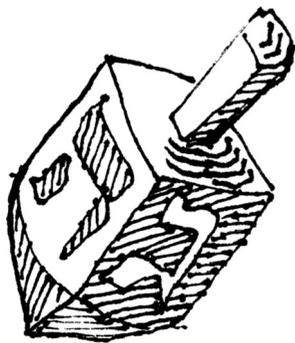
Some people maintain that the dreidel game goes back to the time of the Greek-

Syrians, and thus is integrally connected to the Hanukkah holiday. Since the Greek-Syrians prohibited the Jews from studying Torah, the Jews needed a way to hide their Torah learning. They used the dreidel as a decoy. When they saw the Greek-Syrians coming, the Jews would hide their books, take out their dreidels, and trick the Syrians into thinking they were just playing a game.

### The European Connection

While the above story is a wonderful way to link the holiday's history to its modern celebration, the true source of the game is probably European. In Europe, a gambling game with a spinning top has been played for centuries by various people in various languages. In England and Ireland, the game of totum or teetotum, first mentioned in approximately 1500 C.E., was especially popular at Christmastime. The Germans also liked to play a gambling game with a spinning top.

It is believed that the Jewish game of dreidel is a Judaicized version of the German gambling game. The Yiddish word *dreidel* derived from the German word *drehen*, which means "to spin."



The letters on the faces of the gambling toy, which were mnemonic for the rules of the game, varied in each nation. The letters on the English spinning top were: T for Take, H for Half, P for Put, and N for None. In the German game, the

letters were: N for Nichts (nothing), G for Ganz (all), H for Halb (half), S for Stell (put). The Hebrew letters on the dreidel seem to have come directly from the German gambling toy: Nun for Nichts (nothing), Gimel for Ganz (all), Hay for Halb (half), Shin for Stell (put).

In an effort to link the game to the celebration of Hanukkah, the Hebrew letters nun,

gimel, hay and shin were said to stand for the phrase *Nes Gadol Haya Sham*, which means "a great miracle happened there."

### The Israeli Connection

With the birth of Israel and the revival of the Hebrew language, Israelis called the dreidel a *sivivon*. *Sivivon* comes from the Hebrew word *sovev*, which means "to turn."

Furthermore, Israelis changed the letter shin on the dreidel to the letter pay. Thus, the letters nun, gimel, hay and pay would stand for the phrase *Nes Gadol Haya Po*, which means "a great miracle happened here." ◇

## And my favorite gift was...

*Once again, we asked KJCC members to share with us special memories of a holiday, this time about Chanukah. As an extra special treat, we also have responses for you from our Sunday School students. Our question? The best gift you ever received, or the most satisfying gift you ever gave.*

The very best Hanukkah gift I ever received was the yearly gift from my grandmother. She made latkes. I LOVE Latkes! Making latkes for our children, and now grandchildren, I think is, in reality, a continuance of my grandmother's "gift" to me.

*-Elinor Grossman*

Seeing our grandsons spinning down the aisle of the KJCC in our homemade *dreidel* costumes. We look back on that with much joy now that they are large football types.

*-David Goldfinger*

1977 was one of those unusual years when the Jewish calendar placed Hannukah at the very beginning of December, and the year when I got and received my best gift of all time - an 8 lb.10 oz. baby boy, who we named Keith, and who has just given me my third grandchild, named Libby ("my heart" in Hebrew) Eden.

*-Joyce Peckman*

I did not bear children. I helped raise some, but for the most part I proceeded directly to grandmotherhood. As often happens these days, none of my grandchildren are Jewish. Some of them have visited the KJCC over the years, one has participated in the Seder by the Sea, and the one who lives down here, Kyia, comes regularly to our Chanukah parties. They all have lit Chanukah candles with me and have shared Shabbat dinners. Still, they are primarily a product of the Christmas culture. I like to call my gifts to them "Solstice" presents, and they usually give me something in exchange, sometime during the Chanukah period. Four years ago, though, I was surprised by Kyia, then eight years old, when she came with her mother to see me on the first day of Chanukah. She was grinning ear to ear. In her small hands was a large bag, and inside the bag were eight wrapped presents. She had chosen and purchased them herself. And her young active mind and giggly body could not wait to see me open them. That eagerness, that giddy, giggly joy of generosity, was a present that stayed with me long past the gifts inside the wrapping paper.

*-Gloria Avner*

This story isn't exactly on target of "best gift," unless you count love, understanding, tolerance, and curiosity about "others," as gifts. I do. And at this momentous time in our political history, when our hopes and dreams are resting on the shoulders of an African-American, this story seems relevant.

Our youngest daughter, Jocelyn, moved to Yogyakarta, Indonesia, four years ago. As a "do-gooder," she had taken a job with the largest non-profit in Indonesia. As a practicing Jew she had found a Seder in Beijing and High Holy Days services in Singapore. So when Chanukah came around in Indonesia and she didn't have time to get to Singapore, she planned a Chanukah party and invited all of the people in her office and all the others she had met along the way in town (including her Tae Kwan Do team and her motorcycle gang!) and just about everybody came. Dozens squeezed into her tiny little house and

she made latkes with imported applesauce for them, lit her menorah, said the prayers and then told the story. It was a bit of a challenge to get the story out in Indonesian, but she said you could have heard a pin drop. Everybody loved it. And then asked dozens of questions about the Jewish religion.

All these people were Muslims (Indonesia is 95 percent Muslim) and she never felt more welcome anywhere as a Jew. She lived in Yogyakarta for three years, and each year the people who had been there the first time begged for another party so they could hear the story again.

Love, tolerance, and understanding are built one person at a time and now I've been given the gift of feeling proud of my country once again.

P.S. Jocelyn now lives in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and is planning her first Chanukah party there. And we will be fortunate enough to be with her.

*-Susan Roberts*

When I was about five years old, before the U.S. entered the Second World War, we went to my father's brother's apartment in the Bronx for Hanukkah. My uncle and aunt, both immigrants, had two sons, one older than me, and one younger. As the candles were lit, my uncle gave each of us a dime. It seemed like a fortune to me, because it could buy two Mello Roll ice creams, or two bottles of soda, or five toy balsa airplanes with rubber bands, or a pack of Crayola crayons with ten colors! Uncle Irving suffered a long unemployment as a garment center presser and they were very poor.

After the candle lighting, we sat down to a dinner which consisted of borscht, bread, sliced herring and boiled potatoes followed by tea and a few cookies. What five-year-old eats herring? But I had some borscht and a cookie. The war came. Uncle Irving was called back to work on military garments. The war ended and poverty returned. He found a few survivors from the *Shoah*, borrowed money, and brought them to live in his small apartment on beds in the living room. They

grew up, married, and had children. His sons grew up and supported their parents.

Years later, New York State began a Lottery. The prizes were small compared to the present. Uncle Irving, never a spendthrift, however, would buy a one-dollar ticket every week. It was around Hanukkah time again. He, my aunt and his older son went out for supper in the local diner. His son went upstairs to visit for a while. My uncle turned on his black-and-white television to hear the lotto numbers. He announced that he won. His son asked to see the ticket. "But, dad, this is last week's ticket." "So what, I always used the same numbers." There were seven winners. Uncle Irving was eighty years old when he won One Point One Million Dollars! He put the winning ticket under his pillow that night and told me that it was the first night in his life that he slept soundly, even though it came a little late.

He gave his children their Hanukkah *gelt*, a fine share, and said that now he could give his grandchildren Hanukkah gifts and birthday gifts as well. He, my aunt, the older son and his wife, took an escorted trip to Israel. Uncle Irving died three years later, a month before Hanukkah.

*-Elaine Solas*

The best Hanukkah gift I ever received and the most well-received gift Steve ever gave is one and the same. On Hanukkah/Christmas, Steve gave me a beautiful diamond pendant and asked me to marry him. I was surprised and overwhelmed. We had been dating for quite some time and I had pretty much given up on him. We went to my parents' home and told them. My mother was very happy but apparently had one concern. She took Steve into the kitchen and said: I hope it doesn't take you as long to get married as it did to get engaged. It didn't. We were married six months later—twice.

*-Carol Steinbock*

*And here are the responses from our Sunday School class, unedited:*

I like being in the Chanukah plays. I also like presents from my parents. I think the Maccabees were really brave.

*-Lili*

What I like the most about Chanukah is being with my family. What I don't like about Chanukah is that two of my family members died on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> nights of Chanukah. My favorite holiday is Chanukah. I love how all of my family gathers around the menorah and we light the candles.

*-Hannah*

My favorite part of Chanukah is the challah bread. There had only 7 drops left. But it lit for 8 days. I like being with my family. I like eating the food.

*-Jeri*

My strongest Chanukah memory is when I was given an 88 key electric piano. It was given to me when I was about 8. I was really excited because I had only had a 48 key piano. Another one of my stronger memories was when I was about to light the candles in the menorah. It was the first time I ever used a match.

*-Joshua*

What I like about Chanukah is you get presents. I also like that I get to bring in potato latkes to my class. But what I love the most is that the hole family comes down.

*-Max*

The favorite thing I like about Chanukah is all the songs. We get to sing. The other thing I like about Chanukah is all the presents I get every year. The other thing I like about Chanukah is I get to see my family.

*-Zach*

Chanukah reminds me when I got my ripstick. Also Chanukah is my second favorite holiday because there were eight candles that burned for eight days.

And on Chanukah you get eight presents for eight days.

*-Harry ♦*

# It's Not Just About the Potatoes...

by Joyce Peckman

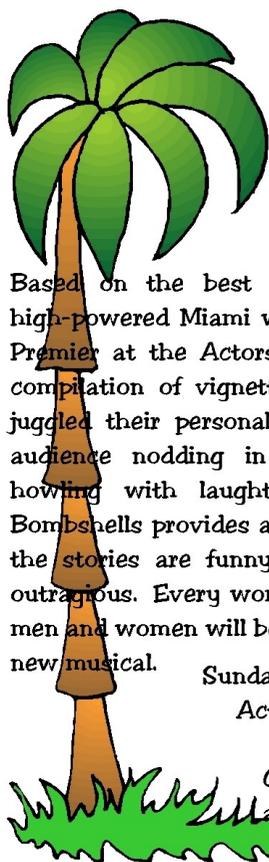
Like most Jewish holidays, Hanukkah comes with its own special food traditions and recipes. Every Hanukkah, the food processor and grater are dragged from the closet, and knuckles get scraped in the spirit of the holiday. No celebration would be complete without latkes or livivot (potato pancakes). And for Sephardim, Israelis and those who

have lived in Israel, Sufganiot (sweet deep-fried donuts) are also a must. It's not the potatoes or pastry we celebrate – it's the hot oil. Fried food reminds us of the miracle of the oil that burned for eight days when the Maccabees purified and rededicated the holy Temple in Jerusalem. Thus, the potato pancakes (latkes in Yiddish, *Livivot* in Hebrew, and *fasputshes* or *pontshkes* by the Ashkenazim) and donuts (*soofganiot* in Hebrew) are traditional Hanukkah treats.

Some rabbis have taken the explanation of why we eat fried food on Hanukkah one step further. They say that oil is like studying Torah in two ways. First, oil is not a food we eat by itself, like bread, and is not necessary for our existence. It simply adds pleasure to our food and life, as does the study of Torah. And secondly, oil has the potential to illuminate. If you stand in a dark room you can light oil to see the room around you. Likewise, the study of Torah can illuminate the world around you.

So, on Hanukkah, even the most health-conscious cook drags out the frying pan. But if deep-fried potatoes aren't included in your diet, remember, it's the oil, not the potatoes that make the holiday, so feel free to experiment with your latke recipe. You could try vegetable latkes. Replace the potatoes with a mixture of zucchini, carrots and parsnips. Add seasonings of your choice such as oregano, garlic and basil. Or maybe try sweet potato latkes. Substitute sweet potatoes for the regular potatoes, and add brown sugar, cinnamon and ginger to taste. ♦

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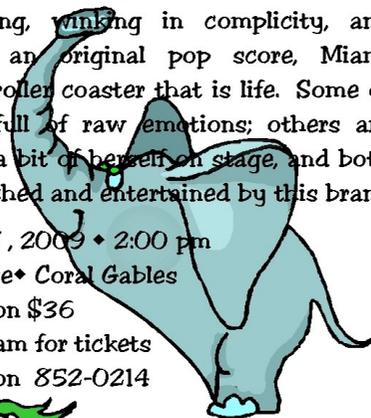
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by Joyce Peckman

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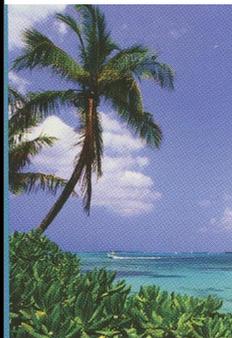
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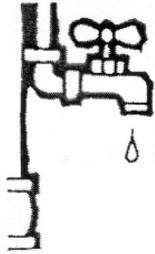
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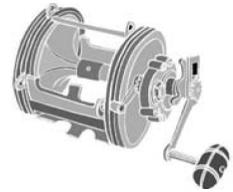
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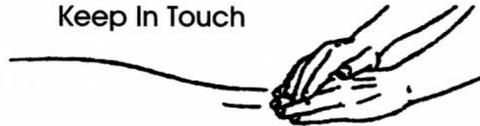
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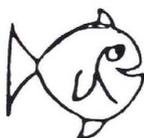
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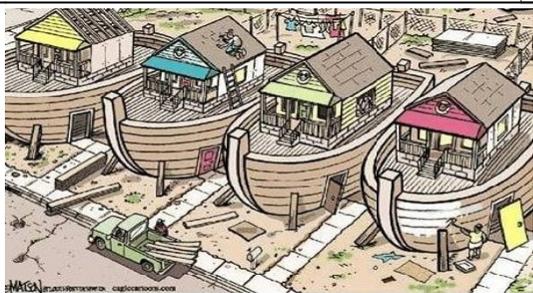
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