

Chai~Lights



November 2008

3 Cheshvan - 3 Kislev 5769

A Paris Discovery - page 17

Kristallnacht - page 19

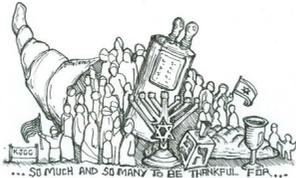
High Holidays Off The Rock - page 21

Keys Jewish Community Center

P.O. Box 1332 • Tavernier, FL 33070 • 305-852-5235 • keysjewishcenter.com

November 2008

3 Cheshvan - 3 Kislev

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
Names denote leaders of Friday services.						
2 Fall Back! Daylight Savings Time Ends	3	4 Election Day	5	6	7 Jim Boruszak	8
9 Kristallnacht 70th Anniv. Observed	10 Veterans Day	11	12	13	14 Steve Steinbock Yardena Kamely	15
16	17	18	19	20	21 Sam Vinicur and the Shabbatones	22
23 30	24	25 	26	27 Thanksgiving	28 Stuart & Lauren Sax 6:30 Service	29

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

President's Message Steve Steinbock



Here are excerpts from Steve's Yom Kippur State-of-the-Synagogue message to the congregation:

I am very happy to tell you that, as a result of your continued support, KJCC continues to be in good shape--physically, financially and spiritually.

We recently published our Membership Directory in a new format, including information we never had before plus an upgraded look.

Our Men's Club, led by Bernie Ginsberg and Joan Boruszak, sponsored a barbeque and a Casino Boat Cruise. They are looking into having a Casino Night early next year. I really hope they can make that happen.

Bernie also frequently leads services on Friday nights. We are all richer for his knowledge and insights into the Torah.

Adult education produced a memorable Holocaust Display on new panels that we purchased. Steve Smith delivered a moving presentation about the Holocaust and the liberation of Dachau that his surgeon father witnessed first-hand. Adult Hebrew classes continue. I have proposed expanding adult education to include some non-religious lectures on a limited basis.

Special thanks must go to Alan Beth, who as Ritual Chairman organizes our High

Holy Day services and also every Friday's Shabbat service. After the passing of Marty Graham, Alan also took charge of the KJCC Database, so vital to the everyday workings of the KJCC.

Jim Boruszak, as House Committee Chair, deserves our thanks for his work keeping the KJCC building in shape. This last year we needed major air conditioning work and roof repairs, on top of the everyday jobs that always need doing. Jim is also our indefatigable Membership Chairman.

Thanks to Rachel Bloom for the great job she did blowing the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah. To her father, Marc, thanks for seeing to Onegs all summer.

Thanks to Sisterhood, we have Shabbat dinners, theatre trips, an annual Fashion show, a fundraiser event and the Women's Seder.

We will deeply miss members we lost this past year: Joel Cohen, Marty Graham, Bob Schur and Jerry Spero.

I look forward to seeing our snowbirds soon. Please join us for services and the many events coming up this season.

L'Shana Tova,
Steve ♦

Nosh

Shabbat Shuvah

Members of the KJCC were fortunate to have the opportunity to attend a special service in our own sanctuary. The occasion was Shabbat Shuvah, the Saturday morning after Rosh Hashannah and before Yom Kippur. The service was led by Rabbi Richard Agler, who hails from Congregation B'nai Israel in Boca Raton. Rabbi Agler was visiting the Keys that weekend and honored us by leading a service interspersed with a learning session. The experience was most interesting and enlightening and we look forward to participating in more services like it in the future.

-Linda Pollack

*The KJCC extends deepest condolences to
Mary Lee Singer
on the death of her son,
Jon Singer*

Books for Veterans

Stuart Sax received a request from Rabbi Joshua Kreindler of the Veterans Hospital in Miami for books of a Jewish nature to be made available to Jewish veterans at the V.A. They are looking for donations of used prayer books but also for fiction and non-fiction books with a Jewish flavor. Some of the veterans have head injuries and could use easy-to-read children's books as well. Stuart plans on putting a collection box at the KJCC. He hopes to take the donated books to Rabbi Kreindler prior to Chanukah.

Sanctuary Seat Plates

Arthur Lee and Johanna Willner

Suzanne and Michael Gilson

TREE OF LIFE

**ADAM LINE
LOVED AND REMEMBERED**
By The Line Family

**IN HONOR OF
MATTHEW ADAM SILVERMAN**
Bar Mitzvah - October 2005
Love, GG and Poppy Silverman

**IN HONOR OF
ELISSA ANNE DENKER**
**University of California
Graduation
June 2008**
Love, GG and Poppy Silverman

**IN HONOR OF
MICHELLE EDEN DENKER**
**High School Graduation
June 2008**
Love, GG and Poppy Silverman

**IN HONOR OF
GENE AND MORTON SILVERMAN**
**50th Anniversary
April 30, 2005**

Department of Corrections

In a recent issue, in thanking Skip and Rene Rose for their donation of the two beautiful flags—one American and one Israeli—that now adorn each side of the KJCC Bimah, we erred when noting the name of their company. The correct name, should you, say, be searching for them in order to buy unique Hanukkah gifts, is American Rose Flag and Pole Company. Their ad, as always, is in the back pages of this month's issue.

To All Veterans, Their Families, and Friends

The Murray Solomon/Brown Post of the Jewish War Veterans of the USA (JWV) announces a special Community Open House, 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, November 16, 2008. The program is especially designed to acquaint Post 243's neighbors with the Post's community outreach programs.

The event takes place at the American Legion Post 98 meeting hall located at 303 Alhambra Circle in downtown Coral Gables. Among the programs to be presented are Post members volunteering to substitute for Christian support staff at police headquarters for the Christmas holidays. Also, there will be a presentation on a very special February event honoring "The Four Chaplains." These chaplains gave up their life vests to the sailors on the *Dorchester*, when it was torpedoed and sunk in February, 1943. Their sacrifice has become an enduring testimony to humanity's ability to stretch the hand of friendship across all faiths.

The program should end by 10:30 a.m. Attendees will enjoy coffee and bagels, compliments of the Post. RSVP the number of attendees by email to: sliebowitz@aol.com. Family and friends are welcome and you don't have to be Jewish!

The Jewish War Veterans, founded in 1896, is the nation's oldest federally chartered veteran's organization. The Murray Solomon/Brown Post 243 was established following World War II, and meets 9:30 a.m. on the third Sunday of every month at the American Legion Hall, 303 Alhambra Circle in downtown Coral Gables. For more information, visit the Post 243 website at www.jwv243.org or you can call me at 305-586-8729

Stuart Sax
Past Post Commander

*The KJCC extends deepest condolences to
the Line family
on the death of John's brother,
Adam Line*

A Note From Lee Schur

Dear *Mischpocha*,

Thank you for your calls, contributions to the KJCC, Trees for Israel, and most of all your sincere concern for me, after the very sudden death of Bob. We have been active members of the KJCC for over fifteen years, and Bob always enjoyed the informal services, the feeling of community, the many social events, and the feeling of being part of a *mischpocha*.

A very emotional memorial service was held for him on Lake Michigan, in Chicago, led by the Chicago Police Department, the U.S. Coast Guard, and twenty-five boats from the Diversey Yacht Club, which encircled our family, in the *Schur Thing V*, in a "circle of love." Even though Bob spent most of his adult life as a volunteer, he would not have believed the expressions of love and loss.

I am still in a state of shock and disbelief, but I thank everyone who has tried to ease my pain.

-Lee Schur



The flotilla on Lake Michigan in Chicago to honor the memory of Bob Schur.

Welcome New Members!

KJCC would like to welcome Dave Mont and Georgia Landau of Key Largo, and Ken Fields as our newest members. Glad to have you join us, and hope to see you often at services and the many KJCC events throughout the year.

November Birthdays

Brian Boruszak.....	2nd
Emma Neidenberg.....	2nd
Hannah Werthamer.....	2nd
Jeremy M. Schur.....	2nd
Madalyn F. Tobias.....	2nd
Matt Temkin.....	2nd
Herbert Grossman.....	4th
Jake H. Blumenthal.....	4th
Zoey Barrett.....	4th
Milton Wohl.....	5th
Michele Lindenbaum.....	7th
Jeri Goldberg.....	9th
Cathy Dutton.....	11th
Marilyn Greenbaum.....	13th
Marjorie Present.....	13th
Mark Wasser.....	13th
Larry Wolfe.....	14th
Rae Wruble.....	14th
Samantha Lang.....	15th
Sofy Wasser.....	16th
Jason Orans.....	17th
Michael E. Schur.....	19th
Christopher Gould.....	22nd
Gloria Avner.....	22nd
Arthur Lee Willner.....	24th
Will Travis Pollack.....	24th
Nancy L. Cohn.....	25th
Robert Hermann.....	25th
John Greenbaum.....	26th
Ruth Schrader-Grace.....	26th
Samuel E. Vinicur.....	26th
Sarah Slonk.....	26th
Amy LaGrotte.....	28th
Nicole Hudson.....	28th
Benjamin Rakov.....	29th
Fred Hermann.....	30th
Steven Horowitz.....	30th

Anniversaries

	Years
1st	Patty and Jeffrey Schocket.....5
14th	Nancy and Donald Zinner.....21
27th	Jenny and Stanley Margulies.....14
28th	Eileen and Robert Hermann.....40
30th	Eileen and Randy Kominsky.....28

Adult Hebrew Classes Schedule 2008 - 2009

Thursday Hebrew Classes

Hebrew (II) Ulpan, intermediate
time: 6:00 pm - 7:15 pm
Hebrew (III) Ulpan, advanced
time: 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

Friday Hebrew Classes

Hebrew Siddur and Prayers Reading
We invite all members of our community who would like to continue practicing Hebrew Liturgy reading to join this class.
Time: 2:00 - 3:00 pm
Hebrew (I) Beginners
Time: 3:00 - 4:30 pm

All Classes will be in the KJCC School of Jewish Education class-room.
Former Students, please bring your notebooks and books from last semester.
New students, please call Yardena at 305-393-1768.

Thanks Marc!

Our thanks to "Honorary Sisterhood Member" Marc Bloom for all his support, especially this past summer. We appreciate you!

Cathy Kaplan Sisterhood



BOOK PLATES

In Loving Memory Of Harry Joseph Friedman

By The Friedman Family

In Memory Of Toby Mitchell Sister Of Linda Pollack

By Muriel and George Swartz

For My Loving Friends, Linda And Joel In Memory Of Beloved Sister Toby Mitchell

By Bea Graham

In Memory Of Robert Schur Beloved Husband Of Lee Schur

By Bea Graham

Honoring Pasquale DeEsposito On His 97th Birthday

By Toby and David Goldfinger

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. Watch for more details in Chai-Lights. For more info or to make a reservation, call Stuart Sax at 664-8445.

A Message From Sisterhood

The Cathy Kaplan Sisterhood is open to all female members of the KJCC. There are no dues for the membership. We are the "backbone" of most of the activities that the KJCC provides for you and your family to enjoy and participate in Jewish life. Our small congregation needs as much help as it can get, in any way you are able to give, so we can continue to offer the feeling of "mishpocha" here in the Keys. You may choose to become involved in any of our committees or just attend a meeting and have a voice in our decisions and see how it all works. We really have a great group of women and a wonderful social atmosphere! Meetings are the first Sunday of every month at 9:30 am, September through May. Again, please show your support so we can continue to provide all the wonderful events that define the KJCC! If you can't attend meetings, just give me a call to ask how you can help. Here are some committees you can join: High Holidays, Shabbat dinners, Onegs, Fashion Show, Theater, Seders, Installation lunch or Fundraising. Joyce Peckman, our Oneg Shabbat chairperson, is currently working on sponsorships for Friday night Onegs. Please contact her at 451-0665 (home) or 240-1000(cell) if you have a special date which you would like to observe. We look forward to a wonderful new season and to seeing new and familiar faces this year!

- Joan Stark

YARTZEIT PLAQUES

In Loving memory
Barry Kwalick
November 2, 1992

In Memory of
Dr. Harry Stoler
Loving Husband, Father, Grandfather
January 21, 1994
Kominsky Family



IT'S A
NEW YEAR -
THANK YOU FOR YOUR DUES.

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.

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.

In Memoriam November 2008

In Memory Of

SYDNEY SLONK

By Robert Jay and Gloria Auston

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

**LORETTA MESSER**

By Marc and Ellen Bloom

~~~~~

In Memory Of

HAROLD GOLDSTEIN

By James and Joan Boruszak

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

**DONALD GRAHAM**

By Bea Graham

~~~~~

In Memory Of

ESTHER BERNSTEIN

By Laurence and Renee Green

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

**SUSAN BAN**

By Franklin and Judy Greenman

~~~~~

In Memory Of

HERB HOLBROOK

By Allan and Linda Holbrook

In Memory Of

HELENE TULSKY

By Henry and Patricia Isenberg

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

**DAVID JACOBS**

By Lawrence and Pearl Jacobs

~~~~~

In Memory Of

BERTHA JACOBSON

By Melvin Jacobson

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

**DAVID KAMELY**

By Michal Kamely

~~~~~

In Memory Of

JACOB S. RAUB

By Harvey and Judith Klein

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

**ETHEL HANKIN**

By Richard and Barbara Knowles

~~~~~

In Memory Of

DEBORAH K. CANNON

By Michael Krissel

In Memory Of

BARRY S. KWALICK

By Teresa Kwalick

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

**JOSEPH LA GROTTE**

By Mario and Linda LaGrotte

~~~~~

In Memory Of

SOL LEVY

By Ron Levy and Beth Kaminstein

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

**TILLIE POLLACK**

By Joel and Linda Pollack

~~~~~

In Memory Of

HARRY BROWNSTEIN

By Pauline Roller

~~~~~

*In Memory Of*

**SUSIE IDESTONE**

By Linda Rutkin

~~~~~

In Memory Of

DR. SANDRA SAMUELS

By Sid Samuels

In Memoriam November 2008

In Memory Of

JULIUS DEUTCHMAN

By Sid Samuels

In Memory Of

SANDY SAMUELS

By Sid Samuels

In Memory Of

SEYMOUR SCHOCKET

By Jeffrey and Patty Schocket

In Memory Of

SHIRLEY SINGER

By Lee Schur

In Memory Of

DAVID W. SCHWAID

By Harvey and Susan Schwaid

In Memory Of

FLORENCE COHEN

By Jules and Nettie Seder

In Memory Of

ALBERT SILVERMAN

By Morton and Gene Silverman

In Memory Of

PHILLIP SILVERMAN

By Morton and Gene Silverman

In Memory Of

ROSE STEINBERG

By Richard and Sheila Steinberg

In Memory Of

BERTHA SWARTZ

By George and Muriel Swartz

In Memory Of

KENNY TEMKIN

By Robert and Susan Temkin

In Memory Of

DICK JACOB

By David and Pat VanArtsdalen

In Memory Of

SOLOMON WASSER

By Mark and Sofy Wasser

In Memory Of

SAMUEL WEISS

By Sheldon and Carole Weiss

In Memory Of

DIANA WOLFE

By Larry and Dorothy Wolfe

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.



Fall Holidays and the Concept of Renewal

Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaKohen Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of Israel, explained that the *sukkah* is “an embodiment of an exalted and complete elation, a joy that emanates from a sense of renewal constant through the holiday.” The word in Hebrew for renewal is *hitchadshut*. While one can easily discern the connection between the holidays earlier in *Tishrei* – *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* – and the concept of renewal, the relationship between *Sukkot*, the structure of the *sukkah* itself, and *hitchadshut* is more elusive.

When the *shofar* is sounded at the end of *Yom Kippur*, we feel spiritually refreshed and awakened. It is with these feelings that we begin the work of building the *sukkah*, a dwelling that removes us from the physical trappings of our home and places us, vulnerable, in the hands of God, just as we were in the *Yamim Nora'im*. In the *sukkah*, exposed to the forces of nature, we find ourselves sitting not only in a replica of the booths that our ancestors built in the wilderness, but also in the embrace of God’s Glory, the protective shelter that God provides for the Jewish People. *Sukkot*, thus, magnifies our spiritual renewal experienced during the Ten Days of Repentance (*teshuvah*) by reminding us that all our blessings of life, shelter, and abundance come from God.

Shanah chadasha, a new year, means new beginnings. There are few beginnings that are not truly difficult. They demand of us a great deal of self-discipline and self-motivation, forcing us out of our complacency. Most beginnings require courage and fortitude. But they also give us opportunities for making changes. *Rosh Chodesh* – the

beginning of a new month on the Jewish calendar – provides us with a monthly opportunity for renewal. The commandment of *Rosh Chodesh* teaches us to continually *l'chadesh*—renew—our perspectives and relationships, and to embrace *chiddush*, innovation, as a fundamental value of Jewish being. The word we receive with the commandment of time is *hodesh*—month, or more literally, newness. It is very instructive that our word for this basic time unit implies renewal and revelation, as opposed to a continuation of the status quo. Even the word for year, *shanah*, is connected to the word for change, *shinui*.

On *Rosh Chodesh*, (in actuality a celebration of the appearance of the new moon, marking the beginning of the month), on Passover, on *Shabbat*, and with the rising of the sun each day, we are reminded that renewal is possible at every moment. As we experience the changes of time, we should be changing and adapting along with them. And as we grow, we cannot afford to ignore the natural world.

Renewal, *hitchadshut*, is about starting *m'chadash*, anew. When it occurs in nature, we are aware of the tremendous energy of renewal that occurs in the springtime, the rebirth of flowers and greenery, the new life in the fields. Renewal can also give energy to a person’s life by producing many positive feelings. Renewal can produce greater hope, love, ease, zeal, knowledge, fortitude and direction. Renewal can also produce other feelings, including confidence, dedication, faith, focus, strength, and growth. To move forward, sometimes a person must simply start over. ◇

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CHALLAH PLATES, CHALLAH KNIVES AND MORE

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Call Joan Boruszak 852-0833.

World Jewish Report Medina Roy



The Diary of Ilan Ramon

Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon, who, along with his fellow Columbia astronauts died when the space shuttle disintegrated upon reentry in February 2003, kept a diary during his journey into space. Two months after the disaster, 37 pages of the diary were found in Texas and NASA returned them to Ramon's widow, who asked Israeli forensic experts to restore them. A portion of Ramon's diary is now on display at the Israel Museum. Ramon was the first Israeli to fly into space. (*www.jta.org, 10-3-08*)

"The Beaters"

Researchers at Israel's Rappaport Faculty of Medicine at the Technion have, for the first time ever, succeeded in creating beating cardiac tissue in a lab from human embryonic stem cells. They also managed to create tiny blood vessels within the tissue, making it possible to implant these tissues into a human heart. In the lab, technicians call these tissues "the beaters" and the whole idea began with a question: instead of transplanting an entire heart, why not replace only the damaged scar tissue with new cardiac tissue? The technique is still a long way away from everyday application. (*www.rambam.org, [ND], and The Jerusalem Post, 1-14-07*)

Methuselah Tree

A four-foot-tall date palm, named "Methuselah" by one of its cultivators, is growing in a laboratory in Jerusalem. The sapling grew from a 2,000 year-old seed – the oldest scientifically dated seed to ever be germinated. In a study reported in June in the journal *Science*, a team of Israeli researchers confirmed the seed's age,

using radiocarbon dating which determines age by measuring levels of a type of carbon found in all living organisms that decays at a specific rate. The seed was discovered 40 years ago, having been excavated at Masada. Along with its fellow seeds, it sat in a drawer until 2005 when Israeli scientist Dr. Sarah Sallon and botanist Elaine Solowey procured them for study and planted them. Sallon has spent more than a decade studying the medicinal properties of plants, most of which are found in the Middle East, after she had a severe intestinal illness in India that only responded to an herbal potion provided by a local doctor. Many plants of this region believed to have had medicinal properties are now extinct. Climatic conditions at the Dead Sea may be responsible for the longevity of this seed.

(*Boston Globe, 6-16-08*)

They Said Goodbye, He Said Hello

In late September, 43 years after the Beatles were told they could not perform in Israel because of their corrupting influence on the country's young people, Paul McCartney wowed a crowd of 50,000 Israelis at Yarkon Park in Tel Aviv. Before the concert, McCartney visited the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music in Beit Sahur, east of Bethlehem. He sat in on music lessons, jammed with the students and spoke with teachers about music being a gateway to tolerance. McCartney's visit was originally scheduled for the school's Ramallah branch but Palestinians were upset with his decision to perform in Israel and began staging a protest outside the school. McCartney also met with a group from OneVoice, a grassroots group working for a peaceful resolution to

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, saying "I'm not a politician; I just want to bring a message of peace." (*The Forward*, 7-2-08 and *The Jerusalem Post*, 9-23-08)

A Rabbi in the Family

Rabbi Capers Funnye is the chief rabbi and spiritual leader of the mostly black Ethiopian Hebrew Congregation on Chicago's South Side. His mother and Michelle Obama's paternal grandfather were brother and sister, making him Michelle's first cousin once removed. Funnye and Michelle were not particularly close while growing up, seeing each other several times a year, mostly at family functions. Funnye is well known for trying to build a bridge between mainstream Jewry and the black Jews, sometimes referred to as black Hebrews or Israelites. He hopes to make the larger Jewish community more accepting of Jews who are not white. Funnye converted to Judaism and was ordained as a rabbi. He serves on the Chicago Board of Rabbis. (*The Forward*, 9-2-08)

"The Voice of Peace" Goes Silent

Former Israeli air force pilot, peace activist and founder of "Voice of Peace" radio station Abie Nathan, died last August at Tel Aviv's Ichilov hospital. Nathan was 81. Born Abraham Jacob Nathan in Iran in 1927, Nathan was educated in India and served in the Royal Air Force as a fighter pilot before emigrating to the newly born state of Israel in 1948. He flew for El Al, ran an art gallery and an American style restaurant, which not only helped popularize the hamburger in Israel but also became the center of Tel Aviv's Bohemian life. But his real claim to fame occurred in 1966 when, in a one-man effort to end the Arab-Israeli conflict, he took diplomacy into his own hands by making a dramatic solo flight to Egypt. "We are getting nowhere with the politicians," Nathan said, and flew "Shalom One" to Port Said with the disapproval of the Israeli government. The Egyptian authorities were courteous but sent him home. Seeing no victory, he then bought a 188-foot freighter,

funded in part by John Lennon, and anchored it off the coast of Tel Aviv, turning it into a pirate radio station, "The Voice of Peace." In his maiden broadcast in 1973, Nathan said, "The Peace Ship is a project of the people. We hope through this station we will help relieve the pain and heal the wounds of many years of suffering of the people of the Middle East." For more than twenty years, Nathan's "Voice of Peace" was especially popular with Israel's young people, with its mix of pop songs and peace messages. Finally, in 1993, he sank the ship when Israel and the PLO signed an interim peace agreement. (*Jerusalem Post*, 8-27-08)

Hill 24 Re-released

What some call the first classic of Israeli cinema has been released on DVD to coincide with Israel's 60th anniversary. Originally released in 1955, "Hill 24 Doesn't Answer" was Israel's first movie filmed in English. It tells the personal stories of three men and one woman, all Zionists and of different ethnic and religious backgrounds, assigned to protect a strategic location hours before the cease-fire that ended Israel's War of Independence in 1948. (*The Forward*, 7-1-08)

Dog bark Analyzer

Israel's Bio-Sense Technologies, established in 2000 and based in Beer Sheva, has electronically analyzed 350 different dog barks. They discovered that dogs of all breeds and sizes, when they sense a threat, emit the same alarm-type of a bark. As a result, Bio-Sense has designed a security device which uses a sensor to identify a dog's natural instinctive reaction to emergencies and then alerts the human operators. Bio-Sense is looking to sell its technology to high-security facilities such as prisons and power plants. No training is required and the technology works on all dogs. This is just one of many innovative security systems to emerge from Israel. (*Israel Startup News*, www.isunews.com, 3-23-08)

A Genetically Modified Rose...

Would smell even *more* sweet. So say researchers at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The scientists there have genetically engineered flowers so that they give off up to ten times the normal level of scent, and are fragrant twenty-four hours a day instead of having a dormant period. Researcher Alexander Vainstein is hopeful this method can also be used to enhance the scent of fruits and vegetables, since aroma is a key factor in our sense of taste. (*The Week*, 10-24-08)

Khazar Capital Found?

A Russian archeology professor believes he has found Itil, the capital city of the medieval Khazars, in the Caucasus between the Caspian and Black Seas.

Dmitry Vasilyev, of Astrakhan University on the northwest Russian part of the Caspian, has been in search of the Khazars for nine years. His team recently found the foundations of a triangular fortress of flamed brick, along the legendary Silk Road that connected Europe and Asia. By law, Khazars could only use flamed brick in the capital city.

Why are the Khazars important? An empire that controlled the entire Caucasus between the 7th and 10th centuries C.E., the Khazars are notable in that, caught between the armies of Christian Byzantium to the west and militant Islam to the south, the kingdom converted en masse to Judaism.

In his book "The Thirteenth Tribe," Arthur Koestler postulates that it was the Khazarians, after their defeat and dispersal by Russians and Mongols, who formed the bulk of what became Eastern European Jewry. (*Yahoo News/Associated Press*, 9-20-08)

Did You Know...

It was Golda Meir who, 40 years ago, really cracked that glass ceiling. Now, former Mossad agent Tzipi Livni has a good chance of becoming Israel's next prime minister and, should that happen, all three branches of Israel's government will be headed by women - unprecedented in a

Western democracy. (*www.newsweek.com*, 10-6-08)

Israel took home six medals (five silvers and one bronze) from the Paralympic Games in Beijing. (*www.jta.org*, 9-17-08)

Elie Wiesel, 1986 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, author and likely *tzadik*, turned 80 on September 30th, which fell this year on Rosh Hashanah. (*World Jewish Congress*, 9-29-08)

The "Sarah Palin Wig" is now on sale at Sheitl.com, a Brooklyn, New York wig shop for Orthodox Jewish women who, for modesty reasons, conceal their natural hair by sporting a wig. Made of 100% human hair, it's a steal (?) at \$795 (marked down from \$895) (*The Forward*, 10-7-08)

At the end of September, Jason Marquis, playing for the Chicago Cubs, became the first Jewish pitcher to hit a grand slam since 1950 and led the Cubs to a 9-5 victory over the New York Mets. The last Jewish pitcher to hit a grand slam was Saul Rogovin of the Detroit Tigers in 1950. (*www.jta.org*, 9-23-08)

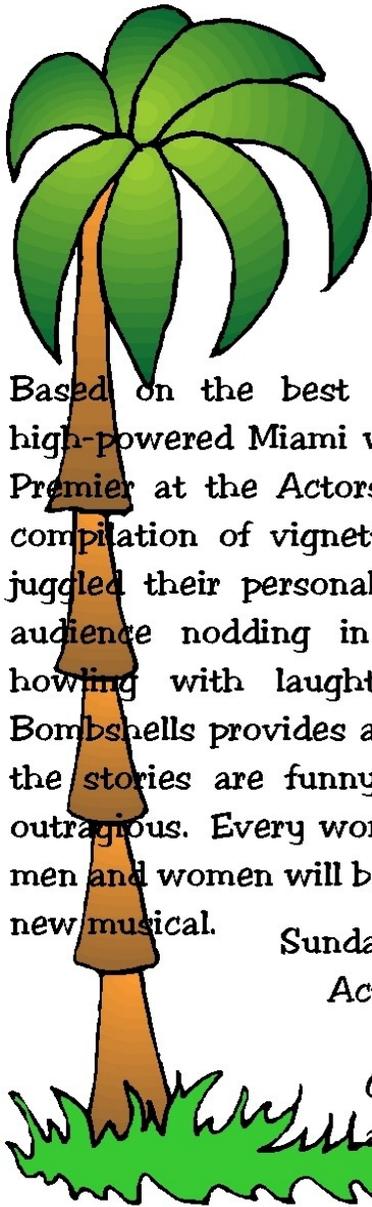
Paul Newman, Jewish Icon

We take time to note the passing last month of Paul Newman, who although he was technically only half-Jewish, was undeniably a member of the tribe. Newman's father was Jewish, his mother a Catholic, but Newman always identified himself as a Jew, commenting one time that it was "more of a challenge." Austrian-Jewish director Otto Preminger reportedly cast Newman in "Exodus" because he was of Jewish descent, but didn't "look Jewish." Looks aside, he certainly took to the idea of *tikkun olam* through his many charitable causes. His Newman's Own food empire alone has donated more than \$250 million in profits. Newman seemed to be more than a movie star, he was *mishpoche*. (*The Forward*, 10-10-2008)

American Moms With Israeli Eggs

At least three egg donor companies in the United States offer a unique product: all their donated eggs come from Jewish Israelis. Their market? Infertile American couples who want babies from a familiar gene pool. (*The Forward* 10-03-08) ◇

Keys Jewish Community Center



Based on the best selling book "Dish and Tell" written by 6 high-powered Miami women, Miami Bombshells celebrates its World Premier at the Actors Playhouse. The musical, like the book, is a compilation of vignettes based on the stories of how the women juggled their personal and professional lives, which will leave the audience nodding in understanding, winking in complicity, and howling with laughter. Set to an original pop score, Miami Bombshells provides a look at the roller coaster that is life. Some of the stories are funny, some are full of raw emotions; others are outrageous. Every woman will see a bit of herself on stage, and both men and women will be moved, touched and entertained by this brand new musical.

Sunday, January 18, 2009 ♦ 2:00 pm

Actors Playhouse ♦ Coral Gables

Donation \$36

Call Bea Graham for tickets

and information 852-0214

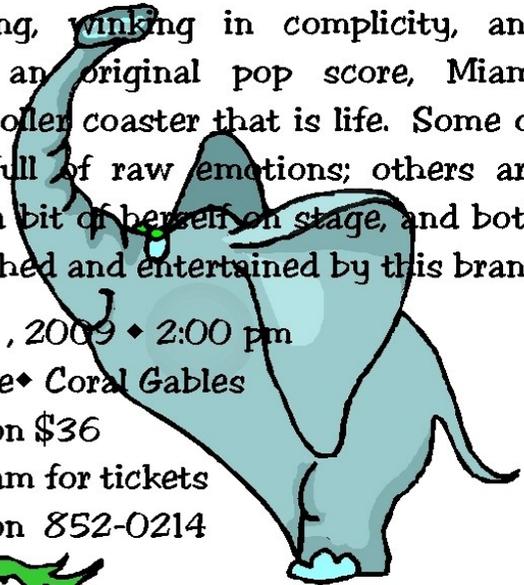


Photo Gallery

Water and Autumn Holidays

When teaching the Fall Holidays, on *Sukkot* we focus on the environment, both locally and in Israel, and discuss with our students the Jewish relationship with *Ha'aretz* (the Earth). Another central theme of *Sukkot* is water. Connecting to *Shemini Atzeret* (eighth assembly), the eighth day of the *Sukkot* festival, a holiday in its own right, celebrated with great joy, students learn about water in their communities, in Israel and around the world. They also explore personal responsibility for protecting nature, the environment, and living creatures.

-Yardena



Some scenes from building and decorating the KJCC Sukkah. Special credit should go to the designer and annual assembler, Candy, shown with assistant Paul Bernstein.





Candy happily celebrated her retirement, left and above, at Meredith's ocean-view house. Note the boa and occasional glass of wine.

Joyce always takes the long way home. At top, in the sukkah with Nissan and Bea in New Jersey. Above, with Yardena and friend Barbara Levy on the famed Brooklyn Bridge.



The Mah Jongg group had their annual getaway recently, at an undisclosed location. Photos left and above courtesy of Gene and her Minolta.



They'll Always Have Paris

In France, the Rakovs find an ancestor's name and, in the process, meaning for Yom Kippur and Yizkor.

Cathy and I recently spent a few days in Paris. Before we left, I spoke with my uncle who was born in Paris in 1930. The Nazis captured the city in 1942. He and his mother survived capture, by their wits, for over two years. His infant brother was saved by a Christian family. But his father and most of his relatives were captured and murdered in the camps. Today, there is a memorial/library dedicated to the over 79,000 Jews of France who were slaughtered by the Germans. The names of the 79,000 martyrs are etched into stone monoliths at the facility. My uncle told us where we could find his father's name.

We found ourselves in the Jewish section of Paris during our last afternoon in the city. After a wonderful lunch at a kosher Israeli-style restaurant, we visited the memorial and found the name of my uncle's father. Cathy then said that we should look for the names of other relatives. I was quite skeptical,

The monolith at Paris' memorial to France's Jews.



as all our relatives, I thought, were from eastern Europe. Well, Cathy found an Efraim Rakovstchik who was murdered in 1942. I was stunned. This was my family name before it was changed at Ellis Island in 1918. And this is where I would visualize the

A street scene in the old Jewish Quarter of Paris.



name for the first time in my life. We then sought information on Efraim in the library. We found that he had emigrated from Minsk to Paris. My family was also from Minsk. He must have been a distant relative. We were given his Paris address. He was an auto mechanic and there was no known family.

This brings us to Yom Kippur services at the KJCC. I had the honor and responsibility of carrying the Holocaust torah around the sanctuary. During the procession, I started to think about my relative, Efraim Rakovstchik. He had been murdered over 65 years ago. As he apparently had no family, there is a significant possibility that no one has said *Kaddish* or *Yizkor* for this martyr. He deserves better. I normally do not participate in *Yizkor*, as I have been fortunate. I have not lost a parent or a sibling. But I prayed during *Yizkor* this Yom Kippur. I remembered Efraim Rakovstchik. ♦



Ephraim Rakovstchik's name is on the third line.

Keys Jewish Community Center



The most celebrated musical of all time and the longest running musical worldwide, Actors' Playhouse proudly produces the first regional production of Cameron Mackintosh's 3-time Tony Award winning musical theatre masterpiece at the Miracle Theatre. Les MisÈrables is an epic saga of social injustice. Full of passion and the triumph of the human spirit, Les MisÈrables recounts the struggle of the French people during the late 1800's. No matter how many times you've seen Les MisÈrables, its heart-wrenching ballads and powerful ensemble will make for an extraordinary experience for the entire family.

Sunday, March 15, 2009 ♦ 2:00 pm

Donation \$40

Call Bea Graham for tickets
and information 852-0214

KRISTALLNACHT

Most of you know the basic story. On November 9th and 10th, 1938, Nazi thugs carried out the most organized and comprehensive pogrom in history, one that would have made any Russian tsar envious. Throughout greater Germany, synagogues and Jewish-owned businesses and property were looted and reduced to rubble by mobs, or set ablaze and allowed to burn unmolested until they were but masonry shells or a pile of smoldering cinders. German police stood by to protect not Jewish lives and property but the mobs destroying them. German firefighters were fully mobilized, but their job was to protect non-Jewish property from inadvertent damage; calls about Jewish property went unanswered.

The event has been known ever since as *Kristallnacht*, literally German for, yes, "crystal night." The term, sneeringly coined by Nazi official Walter Funk, referred to the billions of shards of broken glass in streets throughout Germany, all of which the night before had gracefully adorned Jewish places of worship and Jewish businesses and Jewish homes. (Replacing the glass required *six months* of production by the Belgian glass industry; Germany at the time did not manufacture plate glass.) It is believed that some 7,500 Jewish businesses were smashed and their wares looted. Hundreds of synagogues had their Torah scrolls desecrated and then were set afire. Armed mobs rampaged into homes of wealthy Jews, stealing valuables, raping the women and tossing both Jews and their pets from upper stories to the street or into cold, local rivers. Up to 30,000 Jewish men were arrested and sent to concentration camps. The next day, from minutes of a meeting of the Nazi police and propaganda elite, Hermann Goering is quoted as having concluded some remarks with, "Incidentally, I would like to say that I would not like to be a Jew in Germany."

Despite being consumed by tertiary, historic European anti-Semitism, the Nazis did not have a clear plan for the Jews when they

took power. It was complicated. Germans liked shopping in Jewish stores, which had quality merchandise at good prices. Jewish businesses often had Christian landlords, who liked the regular rent they received. Jews as a whole were productive, and Germany was still desperately in the throes of the Great Depression. Nothing comprehensive had been done since the Nuremberg Laws in 1935. But an opportunity soon presented itself.

Thousands of Polish Jews had migrated to Germany for economic reasons. As bad as Germany was, Poland had it worse. In late October of 1938, some 15,000-18,000 Polish Jews in Germany had been summarily rounded up and deported to Poland. Poland had withdrawn their passports, and Germany did not want thousands of stateless Jews on its hands. Dumped on the Polish side of the border in early winter with little food or shelter or clothing, all their possessions confiscated, many of the Jews died. Zindel Grynszpan wrote to his 17-year-old son Herschel, then studying in Paris, to tell him of their plight. Overcome with grief and rage, the young student shot and killed Ernst vom Rath, Third Secretary of the German Embassy in Paris. Here was the pretext the Nazis needed, and they acted. Jews were a danger and needed to be completely eliminated from German economic life. Ironically, Ernst vom Rath was anti-Nazi.

Now the propaganda machine found its stride. New laws were passed. Jews were held responsible for all the damage on Kristallnacht, and forced to pay Germany reparations of one *billion* Deutsch marks. New laws stated that Jewish businesses could not re-open unless managed by non-Jews; Jewish children were barred from attending school; and Jews were to be prohibited from selling goods or services anywhere. They were also to be barred from public transportation and hospitals. On November 12, Goering announced instructions from Hitler that "the Jewish question be now, once and for all, coordinated and solved one way or another." The Final Solution, replacing random laws and sporadic action, was now under way. ◇

KEYS JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

Kristal Nacht

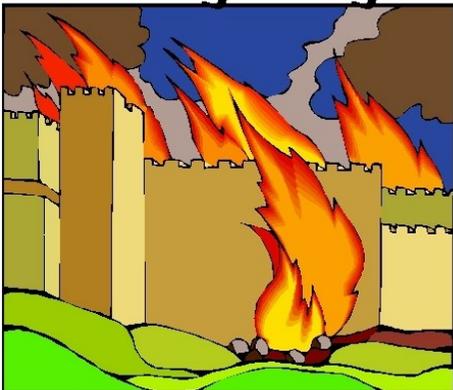
Sunday, November 9, 2008

7:30pm

KJCC joins Israel and the world as
we commemorate the 70th
anniversary of Kristal Nacht ☆

Special presentation by
Dr. Steve Smith

Lighting of the KJCC building



Coffee and Dessert
to follow

Call Joan Boruszak 852-0833
for information

High Holidays Redux

The Days of Awe are done for this year. The High Holidays also signify the beginning of the new season at KJCC. But before we move on, a last holiday treat. We asked three of our regulars—Gloria Avner, Joyce Peckman and Medina Roy, all who celebrate the Holidays elsewhere—to share with us their non-KJCC experiences. We begin this section with reflections on the KJCC religious experience by Alan Beth.

Alan Beth, KJCC VP and Religious Committee Chairman, addressed a full congregation on Erev Yom Kippur.

My name is Alan Beth, and I have the privilege of being the head of the religious committee. I would like to say how good it is to see so many of you here this evening, this *Kol Nidre*, the holiest night in our religion.

First, thanks to Cantor Mark and his family for joining us these High Holidays, and for providing us with a beautiful service.

I have belonged to several synagogues, as I am sure you have. This time of the year, sadly, money is usually involved and synagogues require payment for High Holy Day tickets. Most synagogues even have a guard at the door ensuring you do not enter without a valid ticket.

This actually reminds me of a story from years ago, of a colleague who was trying to get me a message in one synagogue. I was inside on Yom Kippur. He was told at the gate by the security guard: no ticket, no entrance. But he pleaded that he had to get an urgent message to Alan. Sorry, said the security guard, and repeated his instructions: no ticket, no entrance. So finally, desperate, my colleague pleaded: "Please, I'll just be a minute, let me in. *I promise I won't pray!!*"

This leads me into a thank you: I would like to thank all of you and also the members of our board. Our open-door policy at the

KJCC is something we should all be very proud of.

Kol Nidre: This is a time of reflection, to look back and of course to fix the things that have needed to be fixed. I have been giving these speeches for several years now on *Kol Nidre*. This will be my last, I promise!! (*This is an annual joke. Ha, ha. Alan threatens to resign every year. - ed.*)

You know, of course, that we have no Rabbi. Instead, we have a few select volunteers that offer to lead services. Every Friday night one of them leads service in their own special way: Some introduce more English, some introduce more Hebrew. Some introduce more singing and....some introduce singing even when they cannot carry a tune!! (*For non-regulars, Alan is making a little joke at his own expense. No one loves music more, but he is, in truth, a tad harmonically challenged.*) Tonight I would like to give thanks to our Leaders for their efforts this past year. Steve tonight is leading us through *Kol Nidre*, but recently you will have noticed Jim, George, Yardena, Bernie, Gloria, Stuart and Lauren, Meredith, Joel and Linda and Susan. Also, recently we have a couple of new leaders: Ken Atlas and Steve Friedman.

There is a book recently published: *Stars of David: Prominent Jews Talk About Being Jewish*. Written by a prominent journalist (Abigail Pogrebin), *Stars of David* interviews some of America's most visibly successful

Jews: actors (Dustin Hoffman, Gene Wilder, Richard Dreyfuss, Sarah Jessica Parker, William Shatner and Leonard Nimoy of "Star Trek" fame, Natalie Portman, Jason Alexander, Fran Drescher); directors (Steven Spielberg, Mike Nichols, Aaron Sorkin, Barry Levinson); CEOs; broadcasters (Mike Wallace, Morley Safer, Larry King, Aaron Brown); musicians, politicians (Ed Koch, Barney Frank); lawyers (Ruth Bader Ginsburg); doctors (Dr. Jerome Groopman); designers (Diane Von Furstenberg); and athletes to divine to what degree Judaism is "resonant, crucial, or incidental" for their lives and careers.

A common thread running through the sixty-two narratives is the clear and distinct separation between being Jewish culturally and Jewish in a religious sense. With few exceptions, nearly everyone mentioned letting Jewish ritual (*davening*, Shabbat, synagogue, keeping kosher) go by the wayside after bar/bat mitzvah (if they did indeed make it that far). All mentioned the inherent pride in being Jewish, the attraction to other Jewish friends and spouses, and embracing the Jewish fundamental ideals of *tikkun olam* (healing the world) and *tzedakah* (charity). Some mentioned the Jewish drive as an extra push for success, many mentioned disturbing incidents of anti-Semitism from their childhoods, and many, although they aren't particularly observant themselves or married non-Jewish spouses, want to make sure that their children grow up with the rituals, language, and culture of Judaism.

This is a fascinating glimpse at some of the most famous names and faces in the media today. The author notes in her epilogue that researching the book and conducting the interviews led her to an increased interest in the Torah.

It was very enlightening to see that "famous" people struggle with the same issues of faith that the rest of us do. While

most don't hold on to traditional Jewish customs, most are fiercely loyal to their heritage.

I look out here tonight and I see that is true of us here as well. We may not think of ourselves as religious, but being here tonight, together, praying on this Yom Kippur, we are holding to our heritage.

I have been head of the religious committee for what seems like a very.... very.... very long time. Confession time: I should tell you that prior to this position at KJCC I was a three-time-a-year Jew. So, I understand perfectly well that coming to the synagogue is not a requirement to being Jewish. However, belonging to a cause greater than yourself and being a member of that cause brings a lot of satisfaction.

This is a story of a small town in Australia. You may know that Australia is suffering from the worse drought in its history. It has not rained for a few *years* in certain sections of the country. Last year it was so bad that the Prime Minister, John Howard, actually went on television and asked the whole country to pray for rain. Guess what? The next day it actually rained. *Some would say this is*

the power of prayer.

Also in Australia, there is a small town going through this same drought. There was a historic tree in the center of the town. The community was in fear it would die. The mayor asked the entire community to take a small part of their daily ration of water and give it to the tree in the center of the town. The tree flourished and continues to live. Everyone in the town contributed to what they could afford. *Some would say that is the power of community.*

This is our synagogue. I should refer to it by its correct name – Keys Jewish Community Center. We are the only synagogue between Homestead and Key West, a distance of nearly 130 miles. We *are* the center. We can make this a study center, a religious center, a social



center, a getting-together center. Or all of the above. It is *our* center and we should be proud.

Keeping our center should be top priority for all of us. This center cannot survive without everyone giving something, much like the small community in Australia.

If being Jewish is important to you, if keeping Judaism is important to you, then we need to keep the center alive. Contribute: Be it your time, your energy, your money, your presence or even your smile. We are the center of the Jewish religion in the Keys. We can come here to schmooze, to nosh, to pray, to study, to socialize, and of course to meet people. It is a place in these troubled times that you know is yours, and is yours to make as much of or as little as you want. But this comes at a price. The price is you. Please give part of yourself, in a small or a large way, to the center.

Shana Tova. I wish you all a healthy and happy New Year. ◇

High Holidays Downeast

By Gloria Avner

“Downeast” is a funny word. It refers to the part of coastal Maine that I always want to call “up north.” I live on Mt. Desert Island, a beautiful island with easy access to this country’s second-most-visited national park, Acadia, but with little access to services for Jews who would like to practice in community. The closest temples to my island are all

in Bangor, ninety minutes away. I attend only on High Holidays. This year I chose to spend the holidays with the Reform Congregation, Beth El, mostly because they have been bringing musical programs to the island and I want to support their outreach.

At first I thought I’d be writing about the



Gloria, smiling despite the frozen tuckness, with Rabbi Lerner atop Cadillac Mountain, the first Americans to see the sun that day.

new experience of taking part in a large choir (imagine our liturgy sung accompanied by guitar, with clarinet solos, punctuated with African drums), or about how much I enjoyed going to services with Linda Perloff’s sister, or how inspired I was by Temple Beth El’s *tikkun* work, partnering with African Jews in Ghana and opening up dialogue with Islamic college students at Orono.

But then there came the third annual Beth El sunrise service held on my Island on Shabbat morning two days after Yom Kippur. It was a first for me, and if it had not been for a woman named Esther who stood looking Jewish (ok, I’m not sure what that means exactly, either) near a path I’d never noticed before on one side of the parking lot away from the paved paths, I might still be wandering the mountain with the early morning photo-snapping tourists. Esther took me in hand and walked me up a wide gravelly path to a perfect mountaintop sunrise viewing spot where Beth



Upon her return from the top of Cadillac Mountain and the service, Gloria sketched the scene from memory.

El people were assembling. She greeted another woman with two children climbing down the path looking for bathrooms. (We would wait for their return before starting.) Eighteen of us met on top of that uniquely “Downeast” bit of Maine geography-- Cadillac Mountain--the first place in all the United States to be touched each morning by the sun.

There we stood, a motley but committed group of Jews on the rocks, freezing our Yankee *tuchesses* off, wearing mittens and scarves, huddled against the wind, holding our prayer books with their fluttery pages. Two college students are wearing colorful *tallit* over their overcoats. Rabbi Darrah Lerner, in wool cap and jacket, asks why no one has brought her any coffee. Then, when the children come back, she starts the service in a way that makes me feel quite homey—we sing “*Ma Tovu*” in the same melody we use at KJCC, just in a slightly more raggedy version as the wind tries to rip away our words.

The sky gets lighter, the vista more majestic, the wind more frigid. I can see that the service will not be a long one as we go quickly through the basic, traditional, necessary, and somehow more-meaningful-than-ever prayers. This post-Yom Kippur, pre-

Sukkot time is, after all, when the Jews of antiquity would have been at the mountain, living and worshipping outdoors and in improvised shelters. We could, with just a little imagination, be listening to Moses himself talking this morning’s *Parshah* to us on that mountain.

We reach the part of the service where we recite the blessings of the *Sh'ma*, and drama takes over. Just as the Rabbi says the words “. . . *Yotzayr Or*” (“Blessed are *You who has formed the light*”), she spins around, lifts her arm, looks out instead of at us, and the sun rises up, a shimmering golden bubble, whole and huge, out of the sea.

We involuntarily exclaim with true delight at the work of creation, a simulcast this brilliant morning of living color and living words--the psalms, the *Amidah*, the *Kaddish*, *Al-einu*, and *Ein Keloheinu*. A familiar service in a huge, brand-new to us but ancient surround, it is a short and essential service. It creates layers, wide and deep, in all of us, with extra heartfelt meaning in those words of praise and appreciation we recite so often that sincerity and wonder can easily get lost in rote rhythms.

Have I ever been more grateful for that profound sudden presence of light, that beauty, that sense of connection to “all that is?” I don’t think so, not even on the rambling walk back down to the parking lot. The upliftment (no, I know it’s not a word, but it should be) lasted through the logistical direction-giving and arranging of whose car would follow whose down the long and winding road out of the park, into Bar Harbor, and over to the house where the not-so-early-birds (as many of us as had been *davening* on the mountain), were preparing food. We snaked our way down the mountain, not quite a Lewis and Clark expedition, but I have no doubt that like their exploring party, we were filled over and over again, at each turn and vista, with awe. And that was before they even met Sacajawea.

Arriving at our hosts’ house, we parked our cars where we could, entered and thawed. We jabbered and shared. We laughed. We ate and connected and ate and

talked some more. We segued into ordinary time from our extraordinary experience with rosy cheeks and a sense of fullness. In that way, at least, “downeast” felt just like home. ◇

High Holy Days in the High Country

by Medina Roy

The northwest corner of North Carolina is known as the High Country. It is part of the southern Appalachian Mountains and includes the towns of Banner Elk, Linville, Blowing Rock, Beech and Sugar Mountains and Boone, among others. Boone is where I observed the High Holy Days this fall.

There are 163 churches in the High Coun-



Some shul presidents are pharmacists, some sell Christmas trees from their pickups, like Chuck and Elinor Lieberman.

church foyers; their Torahs are stored in people’s attics. Weekly services are held Friday nights at an Episcopal church. But for Rosh HaShanah & Yom Kippur, a larger place is needed, since many people come from neighboring towns. For the past nineteen years, the congregants of St. Elizabeth’s of the High Country Catholic church have graciously played host to their Jewish brothers and sisters. The Christian symbols and statues are covered; an *aron kodesh* is brought in containing two Torahs, one of which is a Holocaust Torah from London, just like the one at KJCC.

I met with the president of the BJC, Chuck Lieberman, and his lovely wife Elinor. Born in Chicago, Mr. Lieberman lived in Miami and Gainesville until about thirty years ago when he moved to Boone. He spent twenty years as the BJC’s Vice President and when he was asked to take on the presidency, he agreed but it would have to be on three conditions: 1) Board meetings would no longer drag on for hours – they would be limited to thirty minutes and they would be held right before services, ensuring that they would be brief. 2) No one is permitted to say “we need to...”.... You can only say “I want to...”; and 3) “If you do, you have control,” meaning if you are in charge of an event, an oneg for exam-



Approaching St. Elizabeth’s of the High Country Catholic Church for services. The crucifix is behind the tree.

try and no synagogue. The nearest ones are in Charlotte to the southeast and Hendersonville to the south, both some two hours away. There is, however, a small but strong Jewish community here, calling themselves the Boone Jewish Community (BJC). For thirty years they have worshipped as nomads, holding services in basements, living rooms and

ple, you do it your way – don't ask for permission or call numerous meetings. Needless to say, Lieberman was nominated and elected president on the spot. But that's not all. He is also the Hebrew school teacher (currently about six students ranging in age from 5-26), has tutored about 18 *B'nei Mitzvah* students over the past twenty years, and works closely with the Hillel group at Appalachian State University, which has grown over the past few years and has become an active part of the BJC. Mr. Lieberman, a former agricultural



An artist's rendering of the future home of the Boone Jewish Community.

inspector, also works three full-time jobs. He is a Christmas tree farmer, a rural mailman

and sells rhododendron shrubs and blueberries (if the deer don't get to them first).

There are about 135 families that make up the BJC and it's actually a three-part congregation -- the "regulars," about twenty families, the summer residents (the majority of the membership) and the Hillel students.

Recently, something amazing happened to the BJC. A prominent local family, not very religious but still wanting a place to worship as Jews, donated \$1 million plus the services of an architect for the BJC to find a piece of land and build a house of worship, a permanent home for the BJC. When I asked Mr. Lieberman how this all came about, he told me he had received a call from a member of this family and was asked to help with a Jewish funeral for their cat. It would appear they were happy with the service and decided to make a donation. It'll be interesting to see how that story gets told and morphed over the upcoming years. ◇

What's in a Sukkah?

by Joyce Peckman

I believe The High Holy Days should be a very personal time for introspection and one-on-one prayer with the Almighty. These days are very spiritual in nature. For me, Sukkot is a more family-oriented holiday, celebrated on a smaller scale. It focuses on the physical. Its spirituality is related to nature, outside in the open air. There is a reason Succot follows the High Holy Days. We spend *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* in *shul* surrounded by other Jews because it's the time of judgment, and we don't want to be judged solely on our own merits. *Sukkot*, however, after the contemplative Days of Awe, requires actual physical action in this world, eating in the Sukkah and "bentching" with the etrog and lulav. This is why I love this holiday and chose to focus on it in my article.

The first Sukkah lodged in my memory stood in the parking lot behind Temple Gates of Zion. Large enough for a hundred people, it was made of wood and canvas, and decorated with mobiles of fresh vegetables and fruit, which soon attracted minyans of bees.

The sukkah behind Israel and Nissan Mayk's house in New Jersey. That's Nissan, center, with Bea and Joyce.



For most of us, a Sukkah is a synagogue construction, often crowded and noisy, where people go once during *Sukkot* to nosh on gefilte fish and cake.

After I married and moved to Brooklyn, an older business acquaintance invited this young couple (us) to his home one Sunday afternoon in October. There, beside his house, was a small wooden Sukkah decorated with holiday cards, plastic fruit and Indian corn, with the artwork and paper chains of their grandchildren. The long table comfortably sat ten hungry people, and the food was delicious.

The following year, we, too, brought the holiday home, with a 10 x 6 pre-fab Sukkah made of blue and yellow canvas that hung by shower rings from iron poles, screwed together with Allen keys and hex nuts, and topped by bamboo poles.

The whole thing fit perfectly on our little front porch in Canarsie. A few years later we moved to Long Island, and the Sukkah came with us. Our boys helped put it up and decorated it with posters, strung faux fruit and shiny garlands from the bamboo, and called in the neighbors. We were the only ones on the block with this little personal sanctuary. Our Italian friends, who invited us each December to help decorate their tree, came to dine in our Sukkah.

When we became part of a more religious community, we learned about groups of men who helped widows and elderly people construct and take down their huts, about complex scheduling of lunch and dinner visits, and about Sukkah-hopping -- going from one friend to the next for never-ending dessert.

This has been called the handyman's holiday, a chance to use creativity in construction. Some Sukkahs have plywood walls which bolt together on pre-drilled wooden frames, others use blue plastic tarps or light-

weight canvas, hung from steel or aluminum frames. Now there are EZ-up constructions of fitted aluminum rods that one person can easily bang into place.

Branches from trimmed trees or shrubs add a nice touch to roof covers. Some years ago, we gathered lovely delicate reeds from the marsh to throw on top, but discovered the abundant insect life living in the plants.

Not to mention the seeds that dropped into the food.

Sukkot is a time when we can have a quiet breakfast outside, hearing the voice of the Almighty in the call of birds and rustling of branches, seeing the unfiltered light of the sun and moon through the open roof. It is a time of visits and visitors, and memories. A wayward bird who had to be ushered out, the construction and placement of yellow jack traps, a tropical wind that

blew off half of the roof poles, children in snow boots in a white-covered Sukkah in Denver.

My little canvas sukka is now permanently stowed under the house in Key Largo; I have no need to miss it. In New Jersey, a 10 x 12 lightweight EZ-up, brightly decorated, brings smiles to a new family. And in Denver, a 10' x 20' wooden Sukkah, complete with rattan furniture and carpet, is decorated with the artwork of my grandchildren. ♡



Joyce at Keith and Rebecca's sukka, with Rebecca's mom Susan, at right.

The Joy of Sukkah-Fest

by Gloria Avner

I had heard the words "Jewish Renewal" before, but had only a glimmer of what the words meant. I knew joy was involved and so was music. So when my friend Chaim told me that he was going to this great Jewish retreat

**When's
the last
time you
heard live
music in
a sukkah,
or saw a
sukkah
this
large?**



center in Connecticut to celebrate Sukkot for two days (and I realized it was just a hop and skip out of the way of my usual route south to Florida and might coincide with the date I'd actually be leaving Maine), I opened to the possibility that my going to the "Sukkah-fest" might be meant to be--*bashert*.

I missed the beginning, but came, of course, at a perfect time, just as a parade of people holding *lulavs* and *etrogs* were parading down to water's edge, singing the *Hosananot*.

Though most of the hundred-plus attendees had come from the Northeast, there were people from all parts of the globe. Most of them were younger than I, some by a lot, but there was a goodly smattering of all ages. There were many rabbis, all inspiring. There were a number of women studying to be rabbis and cantors. There were orthodox people who held their own services in a red yurt across the pond. There were a zillion personal stories.

But there seemed to be one overriding, unifying goal, one intent, one *kavanah*. All wanted to be part of a community celebrating the earth and our connection to her, our trust in the creator, and all committed to celebrating Sukkot in song, dance, study, service, and creativity.

What an amazing experience, especially for someone who has researched and written about Sukkot but has limited experience with the actual services or immersion in Sukkot living. To talk about joy and to see, feel, live, and overflow with it are two different things. I have never been in the same space with so

many committed, ecstatic, loving, open Jewish people. And I have never so appreciated my own tribe's teachings and appreciation of nature, the elements, the cycles and the mysteries of life.

Ooops, did I forget to say that the food was vegetarian and delicious? That there were five different tracks of workshops? Did I mention walks in the woods? Organic farming? A pond with kayaks and Canadian geese drifting in for landings at key punctuation points? Meals shared in the giant Sukkah? Chairs, tables, cushions, and mattresses under the Sukkah to cover all tastes in eating and seating styles? Did I forget to tell about the big concert the last night, or the small sweet one in the morning before we closed

the circle?

I am especially interested in sharing what I learned about sacred music and how most of it, maybe



Gloria with pal Chaim and two other happy renewers.

90 percent, is about listening.

I have to admit, I have the fantasy of returning next year, but with some of our KJCC *mishpocha*. I still do not know very much about Jewish Renewal, but I am impressed with the joy and openness and love for Judaism that I felt in the midst of this (very) assorted gathering of peace and social-justice-oriented people. Maybe it was the beautiful abandon with which the young people danced their prayers. Maybe it was the new insights, the good humor, the singing, or the exquisite colors of the gold and orange foliage around the pond. Whatever the reason, I know I came out of the experience refreshed, grateful, and eager to share. ◇

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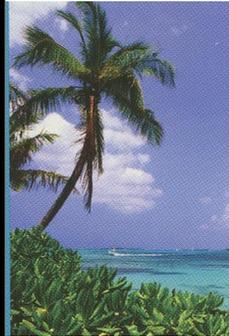
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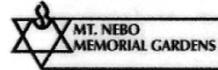
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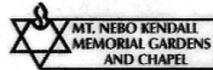
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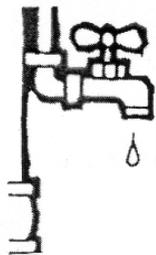
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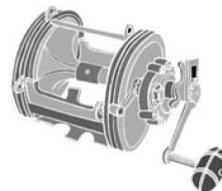
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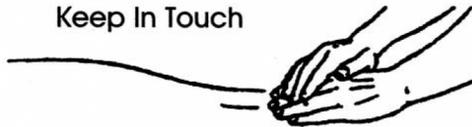
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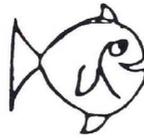


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