

CHAI-LIGHTS

November 2007

20 Cheshvan -20 Kislev



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**Keys Jewish
Community Center**

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

November 2007

20 Cheshvan—20 Kislev

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Names denote leaders of Friday services. <i>Italicized names are Oneg sponsors.</i></p>				1	2 Jim Boruszak <i>Stephanie and Larry Gilderman</i>	3
4 Daylight Savings Time Ends	5	6 Election Day	7	8	9 Gloria Avner <i>Teresa Kwalick</i>	10
11 Celebration Of Life For Joel Cohen at KJCC	12	13	14	15	16 George Swartz and Yardena Kamely	17
18	19	20	21	22 Thanks- giving Day	23 Joyce Peckman	24
25	26	27	28	29	30 Lauren and Stuart Sax 6:30 p.m. service <i>Zoe Berk</i>	

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

President's Message Steve Steinbock



The New Year has begun, with plenty of apples and honey consumed. The *Sukkah* was put up and then taken down—both in record time, I have been told—thanks to Candy, our handy-woman supreme. Our *Simchat Torah* service was a happy occasion for all who attended. If you weren't there, you missed one of the few times during the year that we march all our Torahs around the sanctuary during services. My thanks to Alan Beth (again) for his awesome organization of services, to all our leaders, new and old (great to have new faces on the *bema*), to Cantor Mark, and his children Elior and Ariella, who delighted us by singing with their father during the High Holy Day services.

It saddens me that Joel Cohen has passed away. Carol and I went to the funeral and burial services. There, our belief in the importance of life, family, friends and love was reinforced. There was an outpouring of love, not only for Joel, but amongst the people present that you could feel in the air. Being laid to rest was a great man who always had a smile and who touched the lives of many people. He will be missed but will always

be in our hearts. (Please see our testimonial section to Joel that begins on page 14.)

I was pleased to hear from the Chai-Lights editor that many of you, including some of you we don't often hear from, responded to my request to be part of the article "What am I thankful for?" in this issue. I look forward to reading your contributions. Here is mine:

I am thankful for my wife, Carol, who gives me 120 percent of herself; a congregation that has given me the support I need to carry on with my job as president; a modest home that I love, with a garden that gives me great joy; parents who have passed on but instilled in me love for my fellow man, love of learning, theater, music and nature, two sisters who are always there for me and a mother-in-law who is like a mother to me.

(The "What Are You Thankful For?" section begins on page 26.)

Carol and I wish you all a good and healthy month and a Happy Thanksgiving.

L'Chiam

Steve

Celebrating Joel Cohen

We will be having a celebration of life for Joel Cohen at KJCC on Sunday, November 11th, 2007 at noon. Several family members expect to attend. Joel was a major force in the founding of KJCC. After the service, which will be lead by Steve Steinbock and Joel Pollack, there will be a lunch supplied by Sisterhood.

New KJCC E-mail System

According to Alan Beth, who manages our web site and KJCC e-mail, we have reached the maximum number of e-mails we can send out at a single time. Therefore, we are switching to a new service. This new service will also allow each of you the option to accept our e-mails or not. But it will also require your approval before we can send you e-mails through the new service.

In order to continue to receive KJCC e-mails, you MUST accept the invitation when it is e-mailed to you. If you do not accept this invitation, then you will not receive any future e-mails from the KJCC.

If you wish to be added to our new subscription list, and we do *not* already have your latest e-mail address, please send an e-mail message to admin@keysjewishcenter.com asking to be included. There is no cost for any of you, pre-existing or new, to be on the new list.

Oneg Sponsorships

For the upcoming season are being scheduled now. To reserve your preferred dates, please contact Joyce Peckman, Sisterhood VP, at Joyce@adoctorsbag.com or on

YARTZEIT PLAQUE

Dorothy Stanlake

March 12, 2006

Loving Wife and Mother

Remembered by her family

J.D., Candy, Rene and Teresa

her cell at 305-240-1000. Why sponsor an oneg? To celebrate an occasion or people you love and share the *simcha* with others.

About the KJCC Website

Each complete issue of Chai-Lights, along with other aspects of KJCC's operations and history, is online at keysjewishcenter.com. Many of the back issues of Chai-Lights are already posted, and others are being added. Surf on by and check it out.

New member

KJCC is pleased to welcome our newest member, Kenneth Atlas of Tavernier. We expect Ken to be an active member, since he was persuaded by Alan to lead services before he even joined. Welcome, Ken, you are already *mishpocha*.

November Anniversaries

	Years
28th Eileen & Robert Hermann.....	39
30th Eileen & Randy Kominsky.....	27
1st Patricia & Jeffrey Schocket.....	4
14th Nancy & Donald Zinner.....	20

To contact Chai-Lights

Please use our new e-mail, chailights@keysjewishcenter.com ◇

November Memoriam

By Franklin & Judy Greenman
In Blessed Memory of
SUSAN BAN
Eternal Rest

By James & Joan Boruszak
In Blessed Memory of
HAROLD GOLDSTEIN
Rest In Eternal Peace

By Melvin Jacobson
In Blessed Memory of
BERTHA JACOBSON
Remembered With Love

By Laurence & Renee Green
In Blessed Memory of
ESTHER BERNSTEIN
Forever In Our Hearts And Memory

By Marty & Bea Graham
In Blessed Memory of
DONALD GRAHAM
Always In Our Memory

By Michal Kamely
In Blessed Memory of
DAVID KAMELY
Forever Remembered With Love

By Pauline Roller
In Blessed Memory of
HARRY BROWNSTEIN
Eternal Peace

By the Sherman Family
In Blessed Memory of
NETTIE GROSSMAN
In Our Memory Always

By Sandy & Nancy Yankow
In Blessed Memory of
KATY KRAM
Always Remembered

By Michael Krissel
In Blessed Memory of
DEBORAH K. CANNON
Forever In Our Hearts

By Richard & Barbara Knowles
In Blessed Memory of
ETHEL HANKIN
Long,Blessed Sleep

By Teresa Kwalick
In Blessed Memory of
BARRY S. KWALICK
Always Remembered With Love

By Jules & Nettie Seder
In Blessed Memory of
FLORENCE COHEN
In Our Heart And Memory

By Allan & Linda Holbrook
In Blessed Memory of
HERB HOLBROOK
We Remember Always

By Mario & Linda LaGrotte
In Blessed Memory of
JOSEPH LA GROTTÉ
Rest in Blessed Peace

By Sid Samuels
In Blessed Memory of
JULIUS DEUTCHMAN
Always In My Memory

By Linda Rutkin
In Blessed Memory of
SUSIE IDESTONE
With Loving Remembrance

By Ron Levy & Beth Kaminstein
In Blessed Memory of
SOL LEVY
Never Forgotten, Always Loved

By the Blumberg Family
In Blessed Memory of
JUDY GLASSMAN
Rest In Peace

By Lawrence & Pearl Jacobs
In Blessed Memory of
DAVID JACOBS
Sleep In Peace

By Sandy & Nancy Yankow
In Blessed Memory of
MORRIS MAZUR
Always Loved and Missed

By Marc & Ellen Bloom
In Blessed Memory of
LORETTA MESSER
Eternal Rest

By Morton & Gene Silverman
In Blessed Memory of
ALBERT SILVERMAN
Rest In Eternal Peace

By Henry & Patricia Isenberg
In Blessed Memory of
HELENE TULSKY
Remembered With Love

By Joel & Linda Pollack
In Blessed Memory of
TILLIE POLLACK
Forever In Our Hearts And Memory

By Morton & Gene Silverman
In Blessed Memory of
PHILLIP SILVERMAN
Always In Our Memory

By Joan Waldman
In Blessed Memory of
ESTHER WALDMAN
Forever Remembered With Love

By Harvey & Judith Klein
In Blessed Memory of
JACOB S RAUB
Eternal Peace

By Robert & Lee Schur
In Blessed Memory of
SHIRLEY SINGER
In Our Memory Always

By Mark & Sofy Wasser
In Blessed Memory of
SOLOMON WASSER
Always Remembered

By Sid Samuels
In Blessed Memory of
SANDY SAMUELS
Forever In Our Hearts

By Robert Jay & Gloria Auston
In Blessed Memory of
SYDNEY SLOK
Long,,Blessed Sleep

By Sheldon & Carole Weiss
In Blessed Memory of
SAMUEL WEISS
Always Remembered With Love

By Sid Samuels
In Blessed Memory of
DR. SANDRA SAMUELS
In Our Heart And Memory

By Richard & Sheila Steinberg
In Blessed Memory of
ROSE STEINBERG
We Remember Always

By Larry & Dorothy Wolfe
In Blessed Memory of
DIANA WOLFE
Rest in Blessed Peace

By Jeffrey & Patricia Schocket
In Blessed Memory of
SEYMOUR SCHOCKET
Always In My Memory

By George & Muriel Swartz
In Blessed Memory of
BERTHA SWARTZ
With Loving Remembrance

By Rachael Woolin
In Blessed Memory of
ANNIE WOOLIN
Never Forgotten, Always Loved

By Harvey & Susan Schwaid
In Blessed Memory of
DAVID W. SCHWAID
Rest In Peace

By Robert & Susan Temkin
In Blessed Memory of
KENNY TEMKIN
Sleep In Peace

By Marty & Bea Graham
In Blessed Memory of
DONALD GRAHAM
Always In Our Memory

November Birthdays

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

Marc Bloom

219 S. Coconut Palm Blvd.
— Tavernier, FL 33070 —

I've been trying to figure out how to address all of my *mishpocha* and friends personally, one on one. I was thinking that Ellen and the kids, with my brother and father, of course, come first. Oh, I can't forget Barbara and Marvin and my sister-in-law Shelly whom I love dearly. Then I was thinking again that I always felt the importance of addressing all of you.

You see, when I received the news that I was getting a piece of my lung removed in August, and the word leaked out in our little community, I realized we're not so small. The calls came from Israel, New Jersey, California, Arizona, New York, Chicago, Maryland, Oregon, Maine. They came from lawyers, doctors, artists, students, all different kinds of dentists, teachers, mentors, electricians, survivors of all kinds of things. I think the parking lot at the hospital had a police officer directing traffic for people wanting to come visit. My brother was standing guard at the room. (Sorry!) Though some of you were able to sneak by him. (Bless you).

Well, I was one of those one-in-a-million lucky guys. I don't know why, but I can just guess it was those prayers and love that our little community on our little rock offered that did the trick. Sorry, I think I got carried away with the part about the parking lot story.

So I hope that I didn't miss anyone and all I can say is thank you for all your support and prayers.

Humbly yours,
Marc Bloom



Sukkot - A Joyous Celebration

Sukkot, which we have just celebrated, is a joyous holiday. It is called The Time of Rejoicing. In Judaism joy is actually a religious obligation. The tradition in Sukkot is to celebrate life (*chaim*) and freedom with joy (*simchah*.) Another *minhag* (custom) is the reading of the biblical book of *Kohelet*, or Ecclesiastes, reflecting on life and death, the polar opposites that are inevitably discussed together.

In Judaism death is seen as a tragic, though inevitable event. We suffer from loss, we feel pain, we grieve. Judaism teaches us that we *must* grieve. Yet every great loss also demands that we choose life again. We need to grieve in order to do this. The pain we have not grieved over will always stand between us and life. When we don't grieve, a part of us becomes trapped in the past, and remembering becomes a barrier to continuing with life.

Some people feel that if they let go of their pain, they would betray the memory of the lost one and diminish the value of his or her life. But grieving is not about forgetting. Grieving allows us to remember with love rather than pain.

The Torah presents, always, the full range of human emotion and behavior. We read in *Kohelet*: "...there is a time to cry and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance" (Ecclesiastes 3:4). Correct behavior consists of when and how one does all

these natural and healthy acts.

Judaism is very much concerned with life and teaches that *chaim* (life) on earth is a divine gift to be cherished. Each time we say the *Kiddush* on the wine, we add the word "L'Chaim." (To Life!) I remember my father singing the *Kiddush* with great pleasure every Friday night, and saying with enthusiasm "L'Chaim! To Life!" Is it implicitly to a happy life? My daughter asked him once. "It is just 'To Life,'" he told her. She was about eight years old and she understood what her grandfather meant. With "*chaim*," she sensed in him the great strength and the spirit of a fighter for life. Her grandfather, of course, had grown up in Israel where they have an expression and a philosophy: "Have the courage to live. Anyone can die."

My instructor at the Teachers' Seminary in Argentina, Chaim Barylko, told us that "L'Chaim!" means that no matter what difficulty life brings, no matter how hard or painful or unfair life is, life is *kaddosh* (holy) and worthy of celebration.

"L'Chaim!" It has always seemed remarkable to me that such a toast could be offered for generations by a people for whom life has not been easy. But perhaps it can only be said by such people, and only those who have lost and suffered can truly understand its power. "L'Chaim" is a Jewish way of living life. And ritual holidays like *Sukkot* are intended to reinforce that message year after year. ◇

Photo Gallery

2007-2008 Hebrew Lesson Schedule

Here's Yardená's schedule for this year's Hebrew classes,

- Hebrew II: Ulpan medium level, Thurs. 6:00 – 7:15 p.m.

- Hebrew III: Ulpan advanced level, Thurs. 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

- Intensive 2-month course for basic recognition of Hebrew letters/words, Friday 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

- Hebrew reading from the Siddur, Friday 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

If there are *at least* five people interested, she'll add another beginners' class to the schedule, time to be determined. Contact Yardená to sign up: 393-1768 or ykameli@hotmail.com.

Also, her Adult Education program will continue with its lecture series on the Jewish World, Israel, Judaic Studies and the Holocaust. Lectures will be on Wednesdays, once a month beginning in November, from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.



On Rosh Hashanah, KJCC's president, Steve Steinbock, presented Marty Graham a plaque "in gratitude for over 20 years of dedicated service as editor of Chai-Lights." Enjoy your free time, Marty. You've earned it.



Gloria Avner and friends in her Bar Harbor sukkah.

World Jewish Report

Medina Roy



Youth village in Rwanda

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee is set to open a youth village in Rwanda for approximately 500 Rwandan orphans. The children, impoverished and many infected with the HIV virus, lost their parents during the Rwandan genocide. The village will be modeled after the Youth Aliyah Village of Yemin Orde, which in 1953 housed orphans from the Holocaust. The village is scheduled to open in 2009. (*World Jewish Congress Foundation*, 10/2007)

Washington Power List

GQ magazine featured a list of "50 Most Powerful People in D.C." The list contained 13 Jews, including White House Chief of Staff Joshua Bolten, Illinois Democratic Congressman Rahm Emanuel, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, AIPAC Executive Director Howard Kohr and Daniel Snyder, owner of the Washington Redskins. (*World Jewish Congress Foundation*, 10/2007)

****Note:** This list was published before President Bush nominated Michael Mukasey as U.S. Attorney General to replace Alberto Gonzales. Mukasey, born in 1941 in The Bronx (NY), is an Orthodox Jew and would be the second Jewish Attorney General in U.S. history. The first was Edward Levi, who served under Gerald Ford.

Marcel Marceau Remembered

Marcel Marceau, the legendary master of mime, died September 22 at age 84. Born Marcel Mangel to a Jewish family in Strasbourg, France, he escaped the Nazis, joined the French Resistance and worked as a liai

son to General Patton's army. Although his father died in Auschwitz, Marceau always felt uncomfortable with people dwelling on the Jewish aspect of his life. In an interview he granted in 2001, he said, "I was once asked about my 'Jewish sensitivity,' to which I replied that I would prefer to discuss human sensitivity...I learned to become a humanist, and not to dwell on the differences between Jews and Christians." (*The Forward*, 9/26/07)

Hitler's Jewish Ear

A box of records owned by Adolf Hitler, found in a Russian attic after 62 years, included several recordings by Jewish composers and musicians. The collection included works by Russian Jewish composers Borodin, Rachmaninov and Mussorgski, in addition to an album by Polish Jewish violinist Bronislaw Huberman, who in 1937 fled Vienna before the Anschluss and was declared an official enemy of the Third Reich. Hitler, writing from jail in the 1920s in *Mein Kampf*, had declared that Jewish art "never existed." (*World Jewish Congress Foundation*, 10/2007)

An Israeli Oscar?

"Beaufort," an Israeli film about the IDF's (Israel Defense Forces) withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000, is set to open this fall in U.S. movie theaters. The film, based on the novel by Ron Leshen and named after the Beaufort Castle on the Israel-Lebanon border, won the top director's prize at the Berlin International Film Festival. "Beaufort" is believed to be the highest grossing Israeli film of the past 20 years and could potentially be Israel's official nominee at the Academy

Awards. (*World Jewish Congress Foundation*, 10/2007)

Kosher Banking

Israel's Mercantile Discount Bank is set to provide its Orthodox clients with special mutual funds which only invest in companies that observe *halacha*. To facilitate the new venture, the bank will open eight new branches in primarily Orthodox cities. (*World Jewish Congress Foundation*, 10/2007)

Substitute trees

Three professors at Tel Aviv University are conducting research into the Kenaf plant, a distant cousin of cotton with the potential to replace wood pulp in the manufacture of paper. Originally from Africa, Kenaf contains a gene which could produce a longer, thinner and more environmentally friendly fiber. (*World Jewish Congress Foundation*, 10/2007)

Jewish Woman NRA's Chief Lobbyist

Sandra Froman was only the second woman and the first Jew ever to hold the volunteer position of President of the National Rifle Association (her term ended April 2007). While there are other Jews on her side of the gun debate, including several NRA board members, the vast majority of American Jews and much of the organized Jewish community consistently support gun control measures. Hadassah, B'nai B'rith, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, the American Jewish Committee and others have been "blacklisted" by the NRA on its website. Froman's Jewish upbringing is a short story. She spoke of both her respect for the Jewish spiritual tradition and of her lack of meaningful connection with it. She made a point of connecting the NRA's reading of the Second Amendment's guarantee of the right to bear arms with the history of the Holocaust. She pointed out that the Nazi government confiscated guns from private citizens, including Jews (one NRA "proof

text" for fighting any registry of guns: to prevent the government from ever indulging in wholesale confiscation) as well as the importance of guns in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and Resistance. "It seems to me that if G-d gave us the precious gift of life, we should be able to protect it," Froman said. (*Moment*, 12/2006)

Former Defense Secretary Puts Up Mezuzah

William Cohen, former Secretary of Defense (and the only Republican in Bill Clinton's cabinet), has long had a mezuzah sitting around his house, but it was only during the recent High Holy Days that he put it up on his door. After being spurned by his childhood rabbi, Cohen distanced himself from the faith until this year, when a young, ambitious Washington rabbi invited him back into the fold. Cohen comes from a marriage of a Russian Jewish baker and an Irish Protestant woman. The family lived in Bangor, Maine and Cohen went to the local Hebrew school every Sunday for six years, where he was a top student. When it came time for his Bar Mitzvah, the rabbi refused, demanding that Cohen first convert to Judaism. Cohen was offended and parted with Jewish studies. His other childhood encounters with Judaism were also not very positive. As far as Gentiles were concerned, he was always Jewish, and for the Jewish establishment, he was never Jewish enough (though he says he still wears a ring bearing his Hebrew name, Ze'ev). Earlier this year Cohen co-authored "Love in Black and White," with his wife. It describes the Cohens' experience as an interracial couple in America. (*The Forward*, 10/3/07)

Tax Deductible Mitzvah

Since 1986, the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR) has provided monthly financial support to aged and needy non-Jews who rescued Jews during the Holocaust and worked to preserve their legacy through a national education program. The JFR strives to fulfill the Jewish commitment to "*hakarat hatov*," the searching out and recognition of goodness. It began by funding 8 individuals.

Over the years, the number of people receiving funds increased steadily as more individuals were recognized by *Yad Vashem*. The number peaked at 1,750 in 2003. Currently the JFR is supporting more than 1,200 rescuers. The foundation relies on donations to fulfill their mission. (www.jfr.org)

A "shmendrick" by any other name

The shmendrick is the nincompoop of Jewish lore, a pipsqueak, a hopelessly neurotic bumbler. Think of Jerry Lewis or Woody Allen. But the roots of this character lie in another form of entertainment: Yiddish theater. The word can be traced back to the work of Abraham Goldfaden, a 19th-century poet and songwriter. In 1876, on the advice of a friend, he began toying with the idea of a Jewish version of *Vladutzul Momei*, (Mama's Boy), a farce that was then the rage of Bucharest. The story had been constructed around the wild gestures and crazy antics of a hapless little antihero named Shmendrick. Goldfaden's production was an instant hit, and as a result the word *shmendrick* came to be used in a variety of ways. It was a term of affection as well as a term of derision. Today, it is among the crowded hierarchy of Yiddish insults: a *shlemiel* (a fool), a *shlimazl* (chronically unlucky), a *shlepper* (a jerk) and *shmegegge* (a petty person) and perhaps most famously, a *shmuck*. The *mamaloshen's* ability to capture the nuance of human ineptitude shows no sign of disappearing from the linguistic landscape. An old joke helps to clarify the confusion: In a restaurant, a waiter carrying a bowl of soup trips and the soup splashes on a diner. The waiter who dropped the soup is a *shlemiel*. The diner who was sitting at his table and through no fault of his own gets the soup dumped on him is a *shlimazl*. And the guy at the next table who leans over and says, "Excuse me, what kind of soup is that?" is a *shmendrick*. (*Moment*, 4/2007)

Jewish principal

The Khalil Gibran International Academy in Brooklyn, the first Arabic language char-

ter school in New York history, has an Orthodox Jewish woman as its principal. Danielle Salzberg replaced the previous principal who resigned after she created controversy by defending the sale of T-shirts which said "Intifada NYC." (*World Jewish Congress Foundation*, 10/2007)

Bobby Zimmerman goes to shul

While in Atlanta for a September 22 concert, Bob Dylan (born Robert Zimmerman) attended the Chabad-Lubavitch of Georgia's Yom Kippur services, where he was called to the Torah and recited the blessings in Hebrew. (*The Forward*, 9/26/07)

Rabbi Honored By Benedict XVI

Rabbi Leon Klenicki received the highest award that can be given to a non-Catholic by the Pope--the Knighthood of St. Gregory--at an August ceremony held in New York City. Klenicki was the Anti-Defamation League's director of interfaith affairs until 2001 and is the second Jew to receive this honor, the first being Joseph Lichten, his ADL predecessor. The Argentine-born Klenicki was a founding member of the Catholic-Jewish theological think tank the Interfaith Theological Forum. (*The Forward*, 9/19/07)

Hillel Campus Survey

Recently released findings by Hillel, The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, looked at the 60 schools with the largest estimated undergraduate Jewish populations. Florida tops the list with two of its public universities ranking 1st and 2nd in terms of sheer numbers of Jewish students. The University of Florida (Gainesville), comes in as the most Jewish school in North America, with 5,500 Jewish undergraduates. It is followed closely by University of Central Florida (Orlando), which boasts 5,000 Jewish undergraduates. The report also ranks the top 10 schools with the highest percentages of Jews. Yeshiva University comes in first with 93.5%, followed by Brandeis University with 61.7% and Barnard College with 43.5%. (*The Forward* 9/12/07) ◇

Sisterhood Joan Stark



Shalom and L'shana tovah! Sisterhood began the year preparing for the High Holidays. We are truly the sum of our parts, so a heartfelt thank you to everyone who pitched in to help! Rosh Hashanah was welcomed with our round challahs and the traditional apples, honey and other sweets. I think the Yom Kippur fast is more tolerable for all of us when we have the KJCC break the fast to look forward to. This is a major effort by so many behind-the-scenes cooks and helpers.

Many things remain to be planned as season begins. We will have our annual fundraiser, fashion show, Passover seder and theater outing. Of course we'd love for any and all of you to join our monthly Sunday Sisterhood meeting, as new ideas and input are always welcome. Remember, there is no fee or commitment to get involved with the Sisterhood. (The next meeting is November 4, 2007.)

I also need to thank all of you who contributed to the Burton Memorial Food Bank. It is truly a mitzvah to give to the community by remembering those in need.

Lastly, by now you should have received the Oneg Shabbat sponsorship form. So please sign up for any dates you like.

Chai Closet Donations

A major Sisterhood program for this holiday season is the *Chai* (Life) Closet, created in the spirit of *Tikkun Olam*. We will be collecting clothing and items to donate to the Domestic Abuse Shelter (DAS) via the Outreach Center in Key Largo.

Please bring donations to the KJCC beginning Friday, November 23, 2007 through Sunday, December 9, 2007 during the hours the building is open, including services, Hebrew classes and religious school.

(Services are Friday evenings at 8 p.m., except the last Friday of the month at 6:30 p.m.; adult Hebrew language classes are Thursday evenings from 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. and Friday mornings from 9-11 a.m.; Sunday School is from 10 a.m. until noon.)

DAS accepts clothing for women and children along with toys, games, strollers, cribs, play mats, blankets and shoes.

Donations may be new or used.

Clothing must be presentable and items should be in good working condition. If you have any questions, please phone Meredith at 451-3664 or e-mail maccline2@aol.com

Hanukkah-Shabbat Dinner

Our world-famous Hanukkah-Shabbat dinner will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, December 7th, 2007 in the Ruth Richardson Hall. Dinner will be dairy, with a dizzying array and variety of latkes. Following dinner there will be a Hanukkah presentation by the Sunday School students in the sanctuary. Services will begin at their usual time of 8:00 p.m.

Gift Shop Shopping

Hanukkah begins very early this year, on December 4th. Your Sisterhood gift shop at the KJCC is fully prepared, with menorahs, candles, and other holiday items. If you have something in particular that you would like, please contact Joan Boruszak, and we will assure that it is there for you. You may e-mail her at joanborus@aol.com or phone 305-852-0833.

The KJCC gift shop is there for you! It is always open on Friday night. Any other time, just call Joan and make an appointment. ♦

COLLEGE DIARY

In our second installment, we join Andrea at Vanderbilt and Suzie at M.I.T. as classes are under way. They are joined this month by Joseph Beth, who is attending Miami-Dade College.

Andrea

College is still amazing but classes are really tough. I have two midterms this week so I have been cramming pretty hard. We played Auburn yesterday, so a lot of people went to the game which made campus feel somewhat empty.

On Saturday afternoon I went pontooning with one of the fraternities. We rented seven pontoon boats and there were probably over 100 of us. It was a lot of fun, but not like being on the water at home. Homecoming week starts tomorrow and the big game against Georgia is on Saturday.



I am really enjoying the food, it is sooo much better than what I expected. I have been watching the playoffs, although it is very frustrating because it seems like every single Vanderbilt student is a huge Red Sox fan. Well the thousands of note cards surrounding me are calling my name so that is all for now!

Joe

Hi there. It's the start of a new and different experience for me, this experience called col-



lege. Unlike many young adults my age, I chose to attend a college closer to home, which I can commute to. That seemed like the best decision for me right now. Of Miami-Dade College's various campuses, I decided on its Homestead campus, because it is a much less stressful and time-consuming commute versus attending the Kendall campus. However, that may change, due to the fact that a friend of mine wants me to attend the Kendall campus so we can carpool. I'm still undecided at this point if I should go along with this.

So far my college experience is going smoothly. I have already made some good friends in these few short weeks. I really am enjoying the new things and even all the dramatic changes in my life. I have to admit that some of my professors are interesting, and some can be a challenge to understand. One stands out for a very different reason. He looks and even sounds *exactly* like Pee-Wee Herman. As I'm sure you can imagine, this occasionally makes it hard to concentrate on the subject at hand, but sometimes a little comic relief really is welcome. I guess this is only the beginning of all the new lessons I will experience.

Suzie

All right.

So the last time I wrote, school was just getting started and everything was rosy. Since then, I have learned what being a college student really means. The last few weeks have been a blur of homework, travel and school. My extracurriculars have started up. I am taking a P.E. self-defense class (just for fun, mind you), and I made ensemble in the musical *Pippin*. I also have started a tutoring program, teaching younger local kids how to read. Other than that, school has taken up my time.

Up till now, I don't think I really was ever truly challenged. The first day I walked into my calculus class, they sat us down and did Taylor series' with us. I had no idea what was going and felt so stupid. Other kids in my study group were yelling out answers and raising their hands, while the few of us in the back of the room stared with our heads to one side and our mouths hanging open. School is a serious challenge. I have realized that the homework here is literally impossible to complete alone. The curriculum is designed to promote teamwork and that is what it does. Every Wednesday night, the night before most Problem Sets are due, you are sure to find me and a bunch of friends with textbooks in our labs in a lounge until the wee hours of the morning. Above our heads will be white boards covered in symbols and diagrams that hardly make sense to us, let alone anyone just walking by.

Learning lessons and formulas is not the only thing you learn at MIT first semester; you really learn how to be an MIT student. You learn how to study and how to decipher



what a problem actually wants from you. It's really an eye-opening experience. I really thought I had everything down before now. I thought I was set and college was going to be a relative breeze, just like high school. I could not have imagined how wrong I was. Don't get me wrong, though; I love it here. I have never felt like I so naturally belonged. Everyone is having a hard time, yet everyone is intelligent. Going out into the real world actually comes with a sort of culture-shock. Not everyone is going to get the joke when you say a pick-up line having to do with derivatives. We are geeks and nerds, but this is where we can thrive. I have met some of the coolest people here and thank G-d every morning for bringing me to this amazing place, with these amazing people. Every day I learn something new and understand something that seemed so out of reach before. It is truly awesome.

The weather is just starting to turn. I look out my window every morning now and the trees are a different shade than they were yesterday. Umbrellas are becoming a permanent accessory, as the weather here changes so unpredictably. And it's cold!!!! I absolutely love it. I have been experimenting with ways of keeping warm: layering vs. big coats and I realize how much I love autumn. I stood in Killian court this morning, looked out over the Charles

River with the sun sparkling off it (nothing like the Keys of course, but gorgeous just the same). It was the most amazing feeling, like everything was beautiful and right in the world. I simply love it here.

So this weekend is parents weekend, and my parents are with me, exploring and discovering what I already have. I am actually on my way out to meet them, so Happy Autumn everyone. *Shanah Tova* ♦

Joel Cohen

KJCC Remembers

Joel will and should be remembered as a driving force in the founding and construction of the original Keys Jewish Community Center and the beautiful KJCC as it stands today. Joel will always be a reminder to all of the members of the KJCC of what can be accomplished against enormous odds and difficulties. He was a man who did not look for praise or popularity. He was a self-effacing man who asked for nothing and gave his most sincere efforts. With all of his trials and tribulations, his face always reflected a smile. Joel certainly made a difference in the community. Joel, you set the path as a truly righteous man.

Harvey Schwaid

Joel was one of the most kind, gentle spirits I ever met. I will always remember his welcoming smile and inclusive manner with which he greeted me from the first day I visited KJCC in 1982. With fond memories and deep appreciation for having had the privilege of knowing Joel.

Judy Greenman

One of our fondest memories of Joel is being invited to his house for a jam session. It

seems that several of the old-timers from the KJCC would get together to jam and had been doing so for years. On the particular evening that we went, Joel Cohen, Ben Sherman, Harold Slutzker, and two

young fellas, Jules Seder and myself, were in attendance. I was the designated listener, while Joel C., Dr. Ben, Harold and Jules regaled Linda and me with their musicality, all playing instruments and singing delightedly.

During intermission, Joel and Ben enjoyed comparing their many surgeries. This, also, was a common thread of conversation between the two cronies, and they gleefully matched scars and stories.

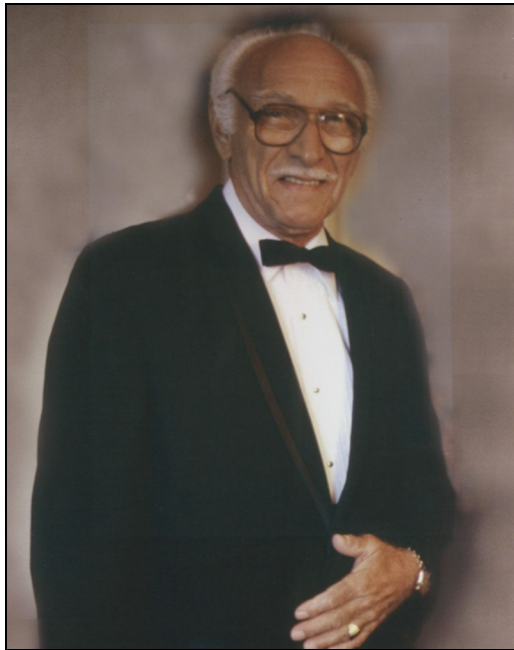
We miss Joel and his wonderful smile and pleasant greetings for everyone.

Joel Pollack (the other Joel)

Joel Cohen - Technology Master

I first met Joel about six years ago. He heard somehow that I had something to do with technology and computers; so began our friendship.

Joel invited me to his house and then showed me the thousands of VCR tapes he had collected over the years. Joel recorded everything. But the VCR tapes were getting



dated, so he wanted them converted to DVD. He bought a top-of-the-line DVD burner and started the process. Joel then ran into a problem—editing his movies. So he taught himself to edit DVDs on his computer.

In his later years his eyesight started to fail. He called me over and said, Alan – I am having difficulty reading my e-mail and burning DVDs; can you help? So we got a larger monitor, then a keyboard with huge letters on it, and of course he got better reading glasses.

A few weeks ago we went up to see Joel in Delray Beach. He had even more technical equipment hooked up to his computer and was on to another project.

If you ever think that you are too old to learn, take a lesson from the techno wiz – Joel Cohen.

Alan Beth

Years ago, my mother Rita and stepfather Milt were visiting. I took them to Ganim's Kountry Kitchen. Joel was there. I introduced him to Mom and Milt and asked him to join us.

They became fast friends.

Joel shared with them his daily routine, which consisted of dining at Kountry Kitchen and then driving to the post office to check for mail.

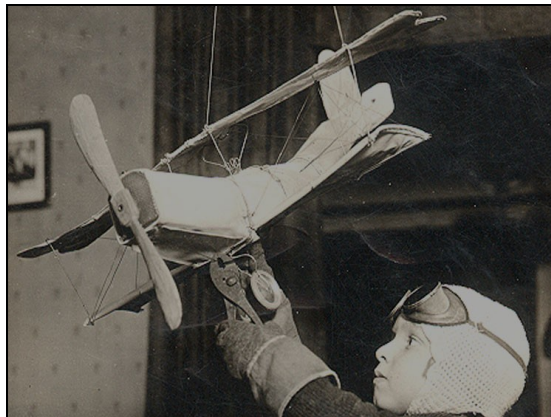
Every time I saw Joel, he would inquire about the well-being of Mom and Milt even when his health was failing. I knew it was absolutely sincere throughout all these years and not just an obligatory greeting.

To this day, I think of Joel when gathering my Scrabble Club at Rib Daddy's Kountry Kitchen, and every single time I swing into the post office.

I liked and even envied his routine. I loved him and his compassion.

The memories are locked in time....

Meredith Cline



Joel loved airplanes his entire life.

In Gratitude

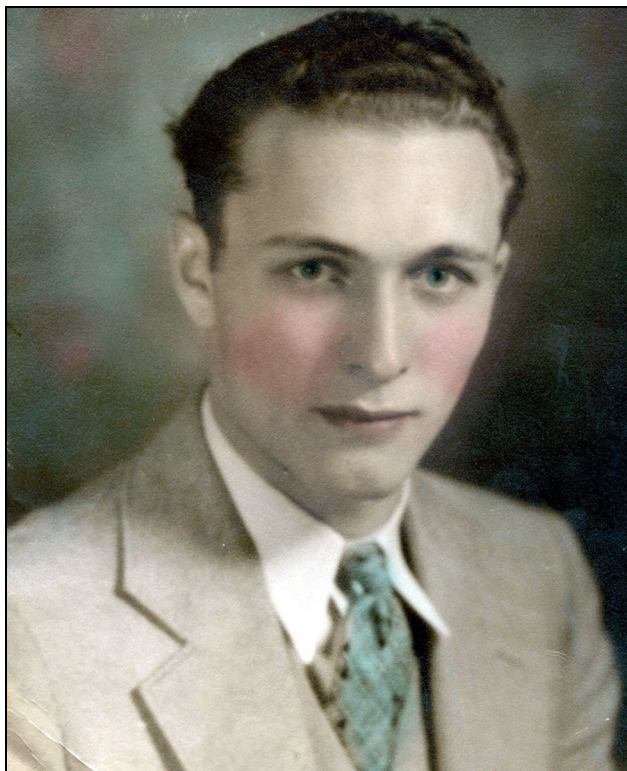
Like most of us, I've been sorting through memories of our 93-year-old patriarch. I've been smiling a lot. I'll admit to some tears too. But they are not coming from sadness for Joel Cohen. I always cry at a really good love story.

The first time I met Joel, his arms were open wide. I was heeding the call in a small *Reporter* ad, 27 years ago, asking for Jews to come together and start a new house of worship. My 80-year-old Cherokee friend said, "Go! You've got to know your people, Glo." I answered the call and have been grateful ever since. When the wooden sanctuary doors at the Coral Isles Church opened, this smiling, dignified man, all my uncles and grandfathers rolled into one, embraced me as if he'd known me all my life. I was welcomed home.

Joel and Sara made a lot of people feel at home. Sara kept everyone comfortable, entertained, well-fed, and happily involved in "yiddishkeit." You could tell from the photographs lining the upper reaches of all walls, from the sepia-toned ancestors to the ever-expanding future generations, that "family" was at the core of Joel's values and being. Even at age 91, he volunteered his house happily to host our first Chanukia lighting ceremony, cementing bonds between all generations. Our kids loved him as much as we did.

Joel Cohen is the only person I've ever known to tip a nurse. Well, he tried. As she bustled around the hospital room, settling him in just after he came out of Mariner's ICU two springs ago, he kept patting his hips and looking around, slightly confused and increasingly frustrated. Finally he blurted out, "Will someone please find me my pants and my wallet?" The nurse was touched, amused, and gently assured him that money was not necessary.

I visited Joel for the last time five months



ago. He was paper thin, frail as a leaf, and hooked up to oxygen. There he sat, at control central, surrounded by computers and recording equipment, stacks of disks and boxes of videos (he was skilled at computer use before many of us owned one). He was less concerned with the state of his health than with making a CD for me of a "Kol Nidre" version he knew I would love. Music

was a passionate part of Joel's life. I wish I could have heard him play the violin. He wanted the KJCC to have a choir. He knew about music's connection to the divine. (If you want to talk to God, pray; if you want God to listen, sing.) Our choir, like our highest service award, will have to carry his name.

Joel may be gone but he is still teaching me lessons. I am still enraptured by what I've been told about Joel Cohen's last day. You all may know that he had a serious operation some days earlier. He had survived so much already, we thought he'd conquer this, too. But he was not doing well. He'd been staying in bed, not dressing, not shaving, not talking. On his last day he said to his caregiver, "I need to be clean. Please bathe me. Would you wash my hair, shave me, and please, help me put on my best suit? I have somewhere important to go tomorrow."

She did as he asked, settled him in his chair, all dressed and clean, and she watched him. He began to talk to the air, deep in animated conversation. When she asked if he was speaking to anyone in particular, he said, "I'm not allowed to say." Then she heard the words, "See you soon, sweetheart." She saw him put his fingers to his lips and blow a kiss. He put his hand back in his lap. Then he was gone.

There is no reason to be sad for Joel Cohen. We will all miss his presence, but he left us bushels of memories, stories, and lessons on living a good life.

Gloria Avner

Our friendship began with the planning of KJCC. I fondly remember many services at his home. The success of KJCC is due in part to Joel Cohen. I will always treasure the friendship formed with Joel and his family. I will dearly miss him. KJCC will always be his legacy.

Pauline Roller

Joel, who might have been a taller man before we met almost 30 years ago, may have lost inches but never stature. We knew from the beginning of our friendship that Joel was not just an ordinary man. When Joel first introduced us to Sara he said, "This is my Sara." We looked at each other and said, "Is this your daughter?" And Joel said, "Yes, daughter." He was so used to the question that it became ritual.

Joel and his beloved wife Sara were a driving force for their family, their shul and for all who entered their lives. They achieved their hopes and goals quietly. If it was money that was needed, it was generously given. If it was food and shelter that was sought, no matter for whom or for how long, it was always provided. If it was a "volunteer" for any service, Joel and Sara never hesitated to accept the task. If it was just love, Joel and Sara were surrounded by friendship and love, enough to fill their home, their neighborhood, their world - and ours!

Joel was the man who conceived the idea for the KJCC to pay off its weighty mortgage in the first year after the purchase of our building. He suggested that everyone who could contribute towards one or more bonds backed by the KJCC would be paid bi-annual interest. The interest was paid once, but by the time the second interest payment was due, the mortgage was fully amortized and much of the bond money was also repaid! Those wonderful people who left their bonds

and/or interest for the KJCC are recorded on a plaque in the sanctuary.

The Joel S. Cohen Award, given annually in his honor at *Pesach*, speaks only briefly of his greatness. It echoes in the hearts of those of us who are fortunate enough to remember Joel and Sara Cohen when they were young, and later, when they were young-at-heart.



Brother Sandy, top left, with Sara, top Center and Joel, top right. Joel's sister Lillian is seated, center, with parents Molly and Meyer.

Bea Graham

How can you put impressions of Joel Cohen into words? The impressions come quickly and in fragments: the sparkling eyes, the wide grin and the incredibly big heart, the heart that was always concerned about others when he had so many obstacles of his own that he never seemed to think about.

The day we sat at his house watching the Belmont stakes hoping that Smarty Jones would be

the next Triple Crown winner. All the pizza parties where Joel and Joseph always shared the pineapple pizza and where every meal was topped off with Black Jack Cherry ice cream. Joel's idea of a meal was Black Jack Cherry ice cream. Food could be served before or after but the meal was the Black Jack Cherry ice cream. .

The times spent listening to Joel and Pauline tell about the founding of the synagogue and the stories about individual personalities. And Joel's elevator! Joel never could understand why I wouldn't use his ele-



Joel and Sara, honeymooners.

vator when I visited his house. I always said it was because I needed the exercise of climbing the stairs when, in reality, the thought of using his elevator made me shudder almost as much as the elevator itself. All the CDs Joel sent home with me that he had burned from his satellite network. I have such a collection of music by Ray Conniff, Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett and the CD of Jimmy Durante signed "From Joel, w/love."

Candy Stanlake

The people whose lives were touched by Joel Cohen are the fortunate ones, indeed. I feel that my life has been enriched by learning the "lessons of living life" that Joel has taught me over the past 22 years. Yes, I will miss my Papa Jo-Jo, but I will smile every time I think of him. I will hear his soothing voice, and see his brilliant blue eyes, whenever I feel the need to call on him for strength. He taught me about what it is to truly love someone, the way he loved Sara. He taught me about the unconditional love a parent has for his children, and became my own daughters' godfather when she was born. Joel was the first person who welcomed me into this community when I arrived here in the mid '80s. I was young, single, alone, had never been to the Keys and didn't know anyone. I was on an adventure to begin a new life for myself!

As I entered Key Largo for the first time, I saw a billboard sign along U.S. 1. The sign read something like "are you Jewish & want to meet other Jewish people? Call this phone number." I was amazed to see such a sign, pulled over to a phone booth (yes, a phone booth) and called the number. It was a Friday afternoon in early November of 1985, and the gentle voice on the other end invited me to his home for *Shabbat* Dinner with his wife, Sara. I knew at once that I had chosen the right place to begin my new life. Joel and Sara made me feel so welcomed and loved right from the start. They took me to services that night in the tiny Conch house in Tavernier, which would soon become my "home away from home."

I spent a lot of time with Joel and Sara during my early years in the Keys. I took Bill "home" to meet them when I was considering getting married in the late '80s. They embraced Bill into "the family" with open arms. Once again, in May of 1991, Joel's arms opened wide to welcome our daughter, Rose-Marie, into "the family." He wanted to be her godfather, since my own parents didn't live in the Keys. I felt honored to have him as my little girl's Papa Jo-Jo. He was glowing with love and pride when I watched him on the *bimah* three years ago with RoseMarie during her Bat Mitzvah. I remember when Sara died, I thought, how could Joel go on without her? Their love was so strong. They were such wonderful role models for a young bride, and I learned so much about marriage from them.

Joel told me that people come in and out of your lives, and someday, he and Sara would be together again. "Never stop loving, just because G-d took them somewhere else." I love you, Papa Jo-Jo!

Susan Gordon

The true measure of a man is not what he accomplishes in life, but how he lived, and the love and lessons that he shared. My father's achievements will be extolled for generations to come, but it is his love and the wisdom he shared with all of us that will long

remain in our memories.

My father, Joel Cohen, didn't walk through life—he ran—and never from, but toward challenges. Whether as an innovator in the aeronautical realm, as an entrepreneur, a *Yiddische mensch* who helped establish three synagogues in his lifetime, or a captain who challenged his every passenger to stay aboard without turning green—my father fished the way he lived—he never turned back! And he encouraged me in his ways.

My father gave me more than just the seed of life. He designed my template. He taught me by example the importance of love and family and selflessness. He taught me that I must always help those in need. He taught me that hearts are fragile and that I should be mindful of others' as well as my own. He showed me that though the flesh may be worn, so long as the mind can speak, it should, and it must.

My father taught me that only through faith and trust in Hashem could we overcome all adversities in this life, and that Hashem will never let our footsteps falter.

He taught me to laugh and sing and rejoice in this life, and to smile a lot. As he did. He smiled, blowing kisses, as he drew his last breath. Finally, my father taught me to call home, no matter where or how far I traveled. Now, I will have to rely on him to call me.

My father, my blessing...I am so grateful that I was privileged to be his daughter...to share his adventurous journey through this life.

Jacky Silvers

Dearest Dad,

I keep trying to write about you; words keep spinning around in my head. My sisters, Lynni and Jacky, have put it to words so well. It was an honor, a true gift for me, to have attended to your needs in those last days. It was so easy to offer the best of care, love, and compassion. You offered the same to all who were so blessed to know you. Thanks

for the gift of a small part of your essence. To walk in a mere portion of your shadow is now my quest. I am your loving Kid.

Sheila Steinberg

A note about my father, Joel Simon Cohen: So many worldly possessions were important to my parents, Joel and Sara Cohen. One of them was the KJCC. It was another "child" for them. (And we all know how many children they already had!)

KJCC was a *mission accomplished* for our parents. It took a small village of loving and determined individuals to make KJCC materialize. Over the years, we were so excited to watch our parent's dreams fulfilled. The congregation was a major part of their lives.

The story of my father's life would fill many pages of a book ... a very large book. It will take *my* entire lifetime to reflect on his glorious legacy.

He was truly a holy man - a gentle spirit who danced joyously through his life. I will miss dancing with my father for the rest of my life.

Lynni Nobil

The family of Joel Cohen has asked that donations in memory of Joel should be made either to the Keys Jewish Community Center or to the American Cancer Society.

If you are donating to the American Cancer Society, a note should also be directed to his daughter:

Sheila (and Richard) Steinberg
22528 Orange Blossom Lane
Boca Raton, FL 33428

If you are sending a donation to the KJCC, send it to P.O. Box 1332, Tavernier, FL 33070. Please enclose either a note or put a notation on the check that it is in memory of Joel.

Notes From Vilna...

By Liati Mayk



A young scholar's discoveries of Jewish history in Old Europe.

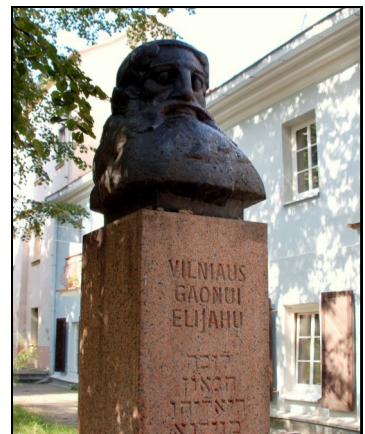
Wednesday, August 8, 2007 Where ever you go, there you are. You may not know why you are there, at that particular time and place, or why you may have crossed paths with certain people, but there is always a reason. And, the world really is a wonderfully small place. Actually, I was planning on beginning this with a meditation on the tragic history of the Jews in Vilna; however, I will begin with a little anecdote about a fun and surprising experience I had on Labdariu Gatve (Street) today.

As I mentioned earlier, much of my weight-lifting and conditioning is done by carrying around my computer, charger, comprehensive Yiddish dictionary, and, lately, a day's food and water supply. Still stiff from my week of flights, I have been thinking about trying to find a masseuse here. Although Lithuanian seems to be an extremely difficult language, I have gotten into the habit of reading the writing on the shop windows to try to figure out what kind of services they offer.

On my way back to the university today,

just as I thought about how much my back has been aching, I read the word "Masaziue" (or something like that) on the door of a little shop and decided to go in to see how massages work in Lithuania. "Do you speak English?" I said, and the man behind the desk, with a mouth full of yellow-stained and gold-filled teeth, answered, "very leetle." At that point I decided just to look around the cozy little en-

Surely the most famous Jew from this city, the Vilna Gaon. (Non-Jews, by the way, all called the city Vilnius.)





A cafe on Zydu (Jew) Street.

trance room, evaluating the credibility of the place, and something crazy caught my eye. After ten days of Yiddish immersion, my head was beginning to play tricks on me! It had turned the Lithuanian writing on the wall into Hebrew

characters! "I know that you have been completely transplanted into an environment of foreign languages, Liati," I thought to myself, "but come on, you must be *really* tired!"

Shaking my head and blinking my eyes, I gazed again at the writing on the wall and at two particular framed certificates. Indeed, there were still Hebrew letters! Realizing that I was not imagining things, I made out the word "Teudah" in bold Hebrew calligraphy. "Atah medaber Ivrit?" (Do you speak Hebrew?) I asked, and with a warm smile he said, "yoter tov me-Anglit!" (Better than I speak English!) He then proceeded to explain that he,

Lev Aryeh Zarecki, was part Israeli and showed me his Israeli driver's license (and I have not heard Hebrew at all here on the street). He said that the masseuse was also Israeli and Hebrew-speaking, and that I could make an appointment at any time.

We carried out an entire conversation, in rather good Hebrew with a few interspersed Yiddish words, and I made an appointment for Monday afternoon. He then told me that there are many massage places around Vilna. So what made me walk into his shop? Something truly attracted me as I walked by at that specific moment. In this city, where only vestiges of a once-vibrant Jewish community remain, something pulled me into this particular place, and it revived my sense of hope and belonging. All the way back to the university, I laughed in my head as I contemplated the fact that my first coherent conversation with a Lithuanian shopkeeper was conducted in Hebrew. Perhaps we really haven't left the shtetl....

Note the inset photo, which shows the same street before World War II.





Vilna after World War II, in a vintage photograph.

Friday, August 10, 2007 There you are...but where is there? Where am I? Some days I can't help but think, *where in the world am I?* Today was one of those days. I am eating a chocolate pudding, and the ingredients are written on the container in six different languages, none of which are English. Lithuanian, Russian, Latvian, German and two others I can't figure out (Estonian?). *Where am I?*

I stand on the checkout line at the supermarket, first checking out what kinds of things local Lithuanians are buying: salamis; beer; bread; beer; whole, straight-out-of-the-ocean fish; beer; milk; more unidentified meat in interesting shapes; vodka; bread; carbonated water; cheese; and more beer. The person in front of me has just bought enough alcohol for a party and his order comes to 12 litas. I buy five fresh figs and I've already spent 12 litas (\$4.50). I debate returning my figs and buying beer, but it's too late and I truly prefer my figs.

It's Friday at the neighborhood supermar-

ket. The store is packed and everyone around me reeks of alcohol. I help an unkempt man with one arm put his groceries (beer, snacks and a chocolate bar) into a shopping bag. He smiles and tries to give me a kiss on the cheek to say thank you. I kindly dodge his alcohol-breath kiss and run out of the supermarket reflecting on my kind but awkward deed and I can't help but think, *where on earth am I?* I eat my dinner (a really awesome salad), sitting on my window sill, watching the beautiful sunset and listening to the "peaceful" sound of a military roll call in Lithuanian.

I have just spent the day visiting Ponar, or Panarai, the forest on the outskirts of Vilna where 100,000 people (70,000 Jews) were shot into ditches and burned during the Holocaust. We listened to the personal stories of two survivors, whose family and friends were killed in these woods, as we looked upon empty ditches and stone monuments. A 19-year-old Harvard student said *kaddish* with the other men. The liturgy still echoes through my mind as I sit here and reflect on my second week in Vilna. However, my thoughts are broken by the evening roll call in a foreign, and seemingly harsh, tongue. I feel like I have been transported back in time to the 1940s and I get the chills.

When it finally gets dark I realize that I have forgotten to close the window in time. Five hundred different species of bugs have already made their way into my room, are busy buzzing around and have begun worshipping my fluorescent lights. I start swatting, and the sudden motions bring me back to my reality: I am a grad student studying Yiddish at the University of Vilnius, living in a dorm in a military academy (because it happens to be the nicest dorm in the city) and swatting at bugs that actually don't bite. I know this is my reality, but *where am I?* ◇

Liaty Mayk is a Ph.D candidate in Jewish literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Some of you may also know her as Bea and Marty Graham's granddaughter.

Decorating the Sukkah

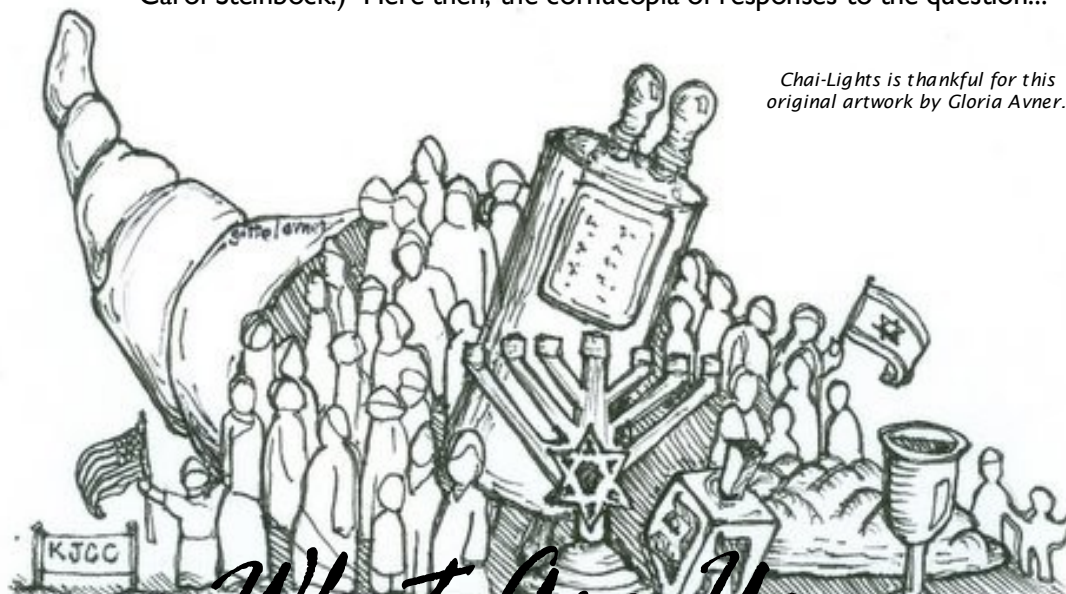
Photos courtesy of Paul Bernstein and Zoe Berk.



The central symbol of *Sukkot* is the *sukkah*, in remembrance of the wanderings of the Jews in the desert after the exodus from Egypt. In Israel, many Jews build their own *sukkot* in their backyards, while in many cases a communal *sukkah* at a synagogue or community center often takes the place of the family *sukkah*. At the KJCC the building and decoration of the communal *sukkah* has become a tradition, with the children in particular getting together and decorating it. This year, we had a growing number of parents and KJCC members participating in the building of the *sukkah*, led by Candy and Alan Beth. This motivated our children to create beautiful decorations for the *sukkah*. ♦



Since Thanksgiving is celebrated this month, we asked KJCC members to count their blessings and then put them to paper for all to enjoy in Chai-Lights. We received replies o' plenty (thanks in large part to the gentle encouragement of Carol Steinbock.) Here then, the cornucopia of responses to the question...



Chai-Lights is thankful for this original artwork by Gloria Avner.

What Are You Thankful For?

I am extremely thankful to have a wonderful wife, a caring family, and many thoughtful friends.

Joel Pollack

Thanksgiving has always been my favorite holiday. G-d has blessed me with good health, a loving family, wonderful friends, a rich and fulfilling life and blessings every day.

Medina Roy

I am thankful for waking up each morning next to the man of my dreams...

I am thankful for having received the most precious gift from God and that was Cory...

I am thankful for having my life surrounded by beautiful people who have given me so much... and also, I am thankful for the not so great situations in my life which have made me appreciate exactly what I do have...

love & peace
Sofy Wasser

For us Thanksgiving is a very hectic holiday, I use the word "hectic" in only the most loving term. When we had our home in Chicago, and all our children lived at home, the shopping, cooking, setting up, cleaning, and noise belonged to us. I remember it all, and in many ways I wish we could still have it all!

First, the boys married, and Beth would travel alternately every Thanksgiving with us to their homes. Then she married. With that we had a third alternative. Naturally, we were fair and spent every third year with different families. It was fun to all be together-and then the children grew older. After that, the alternating continued, and only once in a while with everyone.

Last year changed the routine somewhat. Our oldest son decided to bring his family to us. Once again, I enjoyed the setting up, cleaning, and noise. Only this time the shopping and cooking belonged to a dear chef-friend of ours. I have a feeling that the shopping and cooking would have been easier-but I loved every minute of it all!

My dearest wish for all Thanksgivings in our future is that we will be with our children. There are times, though, that I also wish I could have the shopping, cooking, cleaning, and noise-especially the NOISE!

Joan Boruszak

When I hear that question, I think of the song from Sound of Music whose theme is "These are a few of My favorite Things"—because I too have such a long list.

I am thankful:

For my wonderful husband, and for my mother, who has always been there for me and who I am lucky enough to have living close to me now and see often, and my younger brother (who has given me 4 lovely nieces), who I don't see often enough.

For my father, who died in 2003. For the relationship we developed over the years and for having been able to share some

special times with during him during his last six years.

For my sweet sister, who died in an accident in 1991, whose life inspires me to be kinder and gentler.

For being given the intelligence and fortitude to have been a registered nurse, an attorney and a Realtor, professions in which I have striven to help make others lives a little better.

For all the interesting people I have known, the people who have inspired me, the people who have been my role models.

For the opportunity to share my Thanksgiving with many relatives and friends, sharing our joys and sorrows, good times and not so good.

For my KJCC "family" members, both those who are here now and those who have left, who have given me support and happy memories of times shared.

For being given the capacity to enjoy a diversity of experiences: theater, music, art, nature, including the birds that sing or fly or swim, animals in nature and those we think of as our pets, the trees and flowers, the clouds and stars in the sky.

For having lived in the hustle and bustle or New York City and the much warmer and more laid-back Florida Keys.

In short, I am thankful for each day of my life, no matter how good, bad, easy, hard, happy or sad, and I am thankful that you asked me the question so I could think about all that I am thankful for.

Carol Cimkowski-Steinbock

T - I am thankful for the time I have been given to spend with family and friends.

H - I am thankful for the helping hands that are always there from my friends and family.

A - I am thankful for the appreciation I see in people's eyes even if it is just from my greeting.

N - I am thankful for the newness of friends grandchildren.

K - I am thankful for to know that I can help others emotionally and financially at this time

in my life

S - I am thankful for sun which shines so beautifully in the Keys.

G - I am thankful for the gift of friendships.

I - I am thankful for the insight of my husband to my feelings.

V - I am thankful for the vision of my husband who knew that we would live in Paradise.

I - I am thankful for the idle time which I am able to spend with others - playing or working when I want to.

N - I am thankful for the names and places in the world that I have had the opportunity to visit.

G - I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to say this.

Have a wonderful, happy, healthy and full Thanksgiving.

Gene Silverman

BEING ALIVE;

My good health, my faith in God;
Having a loving spouse to go through life with; happy and not-as-happy times...having each other as we cope with the circumstances of our lives;

Having a healthy, bright son who is self-reliant and has a strong work ethic;

A mother with a tremendous attitude,
joy, many friends and a safe/secure home;

A sister-in-law that I love and share time with;

A brother I was able to share many wonderful times with and be with in his end days on earth;

A wonderful community to live within;
Having a wonderful network of friends;
Sunny days;

Being self-employed and able to work out of the house, providing the freedom I cherish and that lets me tend to that which I deem necessary;

A warm home to shelter me on cold days;

A beautiful view of woods and nature from my home;

Gatherings with friends;

Bridge buddies;

The time we had with joyful, energetic, lovable Midgie, a dumped dog we took in and had for nearly four years (may she rest in peace);

Non-stop flights out of Detroit;

Opportunities that enter my life and my openness to receive them;

Creature comforts of our modern world that make tasks easier... washer/dryer, dishwasher, stove/oven/microwave, refrig/freezer, computer, car, etc.;

The sound of the distant train whistle; the night sky on a clear evening and the smells of the woods in the autumn;

These are a few of my favorite things that I cherish and am thankful for!

Lyn Dils

We are thankful for the diversity that has become our home. The Florida Keys and the KJCC have given us a new perspective on life, love, and living. In our past lives there were communities of homes that all seemed to resemble each other and the people had similar lifestyles and the pace of life was accelerated.

Today we interact with folks from all walks of life and equally diverse backgrounds. We live in a paradise where the pace is recognizable and acceptable and you actually find and take the time to talk with friends and strangers alike. For all of this, and so much more, we are truly thankful.

Stuart & Lauren Sax

Sam thankful for the country I live in - and the freedom I have here to have been able to choose the faith important to me and my husband. I am thankful that throughout my Jewish journey - from the Intro-to-Judaism class, *mikvah*, *beit din*, *bat mitzvah*, the wedding

under the *chuppah*, the *bris* of two sons, the *bar mitzvah* of one of those sons, all the way to the graduate degree in Jewish Education - through it all I have had the freedom to choose my relationship with Judaism. There are times when *Shabbat* has been very important to me, times when it is just another day of the week. There have been times when my yearning to become "learned" was all-encompassing and times when I have had enough of learning. There have been times when I seek solace amongst a congregation and times when I find solace in solitude. I am thankful that Judaism does not proclaim there is one answer or one way to find the answers - that through it all I am a Jew. That is never questioned. Yes, I am thankful that my country and my faith allow me to be me.

Shelley Schenker

(From Yardena's Sunday School class):

Camie - I am thankful for being able to go to Hebrew school.

Hannah - I am thankful for my family and friends.

Lili - I am thankful for Yardena.

Max - I am thankful for my Grandma and my family.

Danielle - I am thankful for the people around me.

Joshua - I am thankful for being alive.

Corey - I am thankful for my health.

What am I thankful for?

The normal things of good health, the love of wonderful friends and family. Also, I love nature and I'm thankful that I live in two places where I can experience the phenomenal beauty and solitude of nature.

Candy Stanlake

There was a week in August when I could not move or sit without pain. I am grateful for that week. It brought me eyes of wonder on the heels of a short depression. Focusing on what was good restored me. Health renewed, I am profoundly thankful for energy, for life, resilience, zest, and mobility, for the joy of time in nature, and the ability to share that joy. I am thankful for sight, for grandchildren's smiles, for color. I am thankful for my family by blood and my family by choice, for my mother's vitality and independence, for all my teachers, past, present, and future, for love in all guises, for wonderful nourishing friends, for belly laughter, for the grace of animals, for the moon and sunsets and kayak trails through mangroves, for opportunities to serve, for wit, for words, for art, music, and the ability to sing. I am thankful for all the children in my life and the parents who nurture them. I am thankful for home and work and for the seasons, for the bright reminders all around me that we, too, blaze and fade and fall. I am thankful to live on islands, surrounded by beauty, to live in community, this wondrous, generous, creative KJCC community. I am thankful for Ulpan Hebrew and intimate Shabbat services on Friday evenings. I am smiling now, both inside and out, thinking how thankful I am for e-mail and the power of connectedness. I am grateful for the opportunity to read of us.

Gloria Avner

We are thankful for every day that we have our good health. That we see familiar faces in the community to say hello to and spend a minute out of our busy lives to listen to and share conversation with. We are thankful for our beautiful earth and the wonder that each day brings to our senses. We are thankful that love survives and flourishes no matter the obstacles. We are thankful for each other and you.

Paul, Barbara and Joshua Bernstein

There are many things I have to be thankful for. Here are a few that are on the top of my list: [1] my good health as well as that of my family's; [2] the fact that I have a loving family (both in Key Largo and in Syracuse, NY); and [3] my husband and I are so fortunate to belong to the KJCC where we can attend High Holy Days and feel so comfortable among warm and friendly people.

Sheila Olsen (of Boynton Beach)

I am thankful we live in a free country and have people willing to sacrifice their lives to keep us free. I am thankful there are those who devote themselves to taking care of our elderly when we cannot. I am thankful for those who do their best to educate our young and teach them core values. I am thankful for my health and the health of my family.

Marcia Goldberg

My Gratitude List:

- A** Apples. I eat one every day.
- B** Bananas. I eat one every day.
- C** Candy. I love candy. Yes I eat candy every day. Sometimes fat-free.
- D** Dogs. All the dogs I have had in my life that has given me love and joy.
- F** Frank. My wonderful boyfriend.
- G** Golf balls. I collect them.
- H** Happiness. I love to be happy.
- I** Indian paintings and Indian knickknacks.
- J** Jewelry. All my jewelry.
- K** Kiss. I love to kiss.
- L** Love. I am grateful to be able to love and be loved.
- M** Money. For all the money I make and wish I could make some more.
- N** Nike Items. My favorite sporting clothes are Nikes.

O Onions. I love to eat fried onions, garlic, and mushrooms.

P Parties. I love to have parties.

Q Quilts. I think they are beautiful. One day I hope to make one.

R Run. I love to run. I try to run every day, a few miles.

S Sun. I love the sun. I work outside. I love the temperature to be hot.

T Trips. I have been able to travel to many places inside and outside the U.S.

U UPS store. I am glad there is one in my neighborhood.

V Vases. I love to collect vases, especially small one.

W Water. I love water, especially hot water plain.

X X-Rays. Thank G-d for x-rays. X-Rays can see all and help the doctors and dentists.

Y Yellowstone National Park. The best-kept secret.

Z Zoos. I love to visit zoos. My favorite zoo is the San Diego Zoo.

I have so much to be grateful for. I am very thankful for so many things.

Love,
Gerri Weisberg

Health, our wonderful children and grandchildren, and the fact that we have each other through all the good times and bad times. We become stronger and more in love as we stand together with each accomplishment, and believe us, we have had many tests, yet our faith survives.

Gigi & Bob Auston

I have many things to be thankful for in my life. Thinking of the last few years, I am especially grateful for the opportunity to find a new life here in America. I am thankful the KJCC has accepted me as part of their *mish-poche*.

I was always thankful for the many teachers I had, and still have, in my life. It was later, when I myself became a teacher, that I understood that every one of the people around the places I chose to live had something to teach. Each one of them knew something about how to live, about being happy with what one has, about loving, that I did not know. I am thankful for a certain kind of relationship I have with all my new American teachers, who all support and strengthen my life. And they do it in many ways, through friendship or acceptance, by kindness and generosity, through their advice, example, encouragement, active participation and caring. Thank you.

Yardena Kamely

It's hard to say what I'm thankful for because there is just so extraordinarily MUCH! A husband who keeps on loving me despite my crochits; children who are making a difference; a grandchild who will be the future; dear, dear friends who are always supportive; the sunsets on the martini deck in Key Largo; the sunrises over Denver in Colorado; the extraordinary trips to Australia where we all climbed Ayres Rock and it felt like we were in the bellybutton of the continent; New Zealand with its endless green fields dotted with sheep; Ecuador where we dove in the Galapagos and watched a train of hammerhead sharks roar on through; Costa Rica where the beaches were empty and filled with shells; Indonesia where the people were delightful and curious about Americans; Cambodia with its temple-dotted jungle land; Viet Nam where they have obviously forgiven us; the traditional inns of Japan and seeing our daughter perform the tea service in a gorgeous kimono; China where we took a YangTse River tour and saw the three gorges; Thailand where we got knocked out of bed by an earthquake but no one was hurt; trekking in Nepal and seeing "the Finger of God"

called Amadablam; riding a zipline in Mexico with an 80-year-old companion who shrieked with delight. There's way more, but I don't want to put anyone to sleep. And I'm grateful for the KJCC where I can reconnect.

Susan Roberts

We are so grateful for a very long list of wonderful blessings, but here's a quick look at the short list, which, for us is: good health, great family, real friends and financial security. These might be everyone's choices but we keep them especially close to our heart.

However, for this time around, we want to express our gratitude to Nicholas and Lilian, Martin's parents, who, in 1947, after much searching for great fishing grounds, found Key Largo. Here they discovered incomparable bayside fishing, spectacular sunsets, friends and a comfortable home. We never thought of retiring here, or any place, back then. Our kids weren't even born yet.

As time passed our kids loved visiting their Key Largo grandparents and they pretty much grew up on Grandma Lil's great food and fishing and skiing and swimming and snorkeling in Tarpon Basin.

We had some wonderful vacations at Grandma and Grandpa's paradise with our kids, but they grew up very quickly. By the time we started thinking about retirement we pretty much felt sure it would be in Key Largo. Our one concern was a serious lack of a Jewish presence. Just about then, the birth of the Keys Jewish Community Center settled our future.

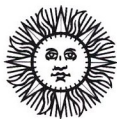
Now, our grandchildren love visiting us. The sun and the sea and the KJCC give them heartwarming fourth-generation happiness, too.

So, we'd like to say, "Thank you, Nick and Lil, for guiding us to our little paradise, Key Largo. We're very grateful to you both for your pioneering spirits that brought us here."

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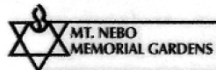
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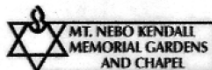
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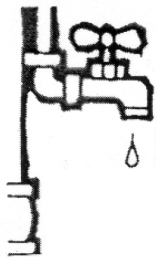
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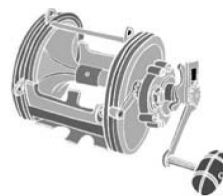
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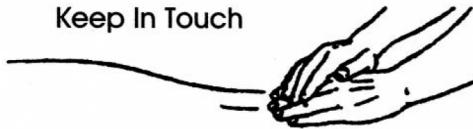
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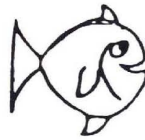
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