

Chai~Lights



May 2018

16 Iyar - 17 Sivan 5778

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Keys Jewish Community Center

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

May 2018 16 Iyar - 17 Sivan

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 Lag B'Omer	4 Joyce Peckman <i>Sisterhood</i>	5 Film 7 p.m. <i>Zero Motivation</i>
6 Sisterhood Meeting 9 a.m. Board Meeting 11 a.m.	7	8	9	10	11 Erica Lieberman- Garrett <i>Bernie Ginsberg & Medina Roy</i>	12 Film 7 p.m. <i>The Story of the Six-Day War</i>
13 Yom Yerushalayim Mother's Day	14	15 Rosh Chodesh Sivan	16	17	18 Shavuot Dinner Yizkor <i>Tikkun Leil Learning</i> Bernie Ginsberg & Jeffrey Schocket <i>Sisterhood</i>	19 Armed Forces Day
20	21	22	23	24	25 Sam Vinicur & Gloria Avner <i>Medina Roy</i>	26
27	28 Memorial Day	29	30	31		

**2018 - 2019
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President's Message Beth Hayden



Shalom u'vracha,

KJCC has just completed its annual round of Seders. It was indeed a whirlwind of celebration with the Women's Seder, KJCC First Night Seder and the Islamorada Fishing Club second night Community Seder. To Sisterhood and all the wonderful KJCC cooks and helpers – heartfelt thanks for your willingness to move tables, decorate, set tables, review haggadahs, print haggadahs, and perform the myriad tasks that need performing in order to make an event successful. Not only did you succeed, you excelled in creating a wonderful Pesach for all.

Pesach (Passover) begins on the 15th of the Hebrew month of Nisan and lasts for seven days (in Israel and for progressive Jews) or eight days for Orthodox, Hasidic, and most Conservative Jews living in *chutz l'aretz* (outside the land of Israel). Exodus commands the Israelites to celebrate Pesach for seven days. So why eight days outside the land? The answer lies in the way our forefathers observed and decreed holydays. The Jewish calendar, as we all know, is a lunar calendar. The beginning of a new month required two eyewitnesses to view a full moon (*rosh chodesh* – head or “start” of the month) and report back to the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, which would then determine how many days fell between

the start of the last reported *rosh chodesh* and the newly reported *rosh chodesh*. Festivals and holydays were then calculated for the new month and word was sent out from Jerusalem. It took time for word to be circulated and mistakes had to be taken into consideration, therefore an extra day was added for celebrations outside the land to ensure festivals were not ended too early.

Pesach is also one of the *shalosh regalim* - (three pilgrimage) festivals which include Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot. Pesach is the first of the “pilgrimage festivals”, so called because in ancient times when the Temple stood, Jews traveled to Jerusalem during these agriculture related festivals in order to pray and sacrifice. Thus, on the second day of Pesach, we begin counting the Omer so that in 7 weeks times 7 days we arrive at the festival of Shavuot (aptly named “weeks”). Shavuot is also known as *chag ha-bikkurim* (festival of first fruits) and *chag matan Toratainu* (Festival of the giving of our Torah). Traditionally Jews abstain during the Counting of the Omer from parties, weddings, cutting hair. Ashkenazi Jews relax this observance on the 33rd day of the Omer and Sephardim on the 34th day – known as Lag B'Omer. ♦

Nosh

Book Club Meets Again

The ten women who attended the Sisterhood book club meeting at Mangrove Mike's on April 30th enjoyed a vigorous discussion. Gloria Goldreich's richly imagined and well researched book about the lives of the Chagall family (Marc, Bella, and daughter Ida) in France at the time of Hitler's rise to power in Europe gives one a real feel for the country and the struggles faced by Jews, whatever their social status. We heartily recommend it whether you are interested in the lives of Jews, art and artists of that fertile but dangerous period, or if you just like a well-written story with high drama, colorful characters and important Jewish themes. Next month's selection will be "The Book Club" by Mary Alice Monroe. The group will meet on Monday, May 21st at noon; the location has yet to be decided so watch Beth's Tuesday announcements. Randi Grant assures us that the club will continue meeting monthly throughout the summer. Brava.

Jane's Garden Grows

The Food Bank at Burton Memorial Church has never been able to offer as much fresh organic produce as it has during this past month. Each week Jane Friedman, organic farmer *extraordinaire*, harvests large overflowing boxes of everything from baby eggplants to bunches of bok choy, tomatoes, herbs and colorful peppers, and then hand delivers it, at the peak of freshness, to Betsy at Burton. (The gratitude goes both ways. They have been very kind in allowing us shower privileges for our Scubi Jews when they visit.)

If you have attended any Shabbat evening services recently, you know that we have been recipients of garden bounty as well. Gigantic bowls of artistic salads and sautéed mixed vegetable curries regularly appear on our tables, created by Jane with whatever is ripe that week. Our after-service oneg noshes have become more like healthy mini-dinners. Thank you, Jane. Another reason to come to KJCC on Erev Shabbat?

Shavuot and Torah Learning

We may not be having Torah learning with Rabbi Agler at Shabbat morning services again until the fall, but we will have another chance to engage with Torah study under his guidance on May 18th. Come to our Shavuot dinner at 6:00 p.m., eat delicious dairy foods, stay for Shabbat and Yizkor services (the last *Yizkor* until *Yom Kippur*), and along with an oneg dessert of fruit and cheesecake, join Rabbi Agler for *Tikkun Leil Shavuot*. *Tikkun* means repair. *Leil Shavuot* means Shavuot night. We will make up for our sleepy people at the foot of Mount Sinai millennia ago nearly failing to waken for the moment of receiving the gift of Torah. The Torah giving (sorry, not the cheesecake) is the true high point of this holiday and signifies our covenant, the signing on to be God's "chosen" people. We were chosen to shoulder tremendous responsibility. (Actually, "selected" or "appointed" would be better terms, as they don't have the historical baggage.) This will be our night to stay awake and study, just as the mystics of Tsfat decided to do, from the 1600s forward, from nighttime until dawn. (We'll hopefully make it through to ten p.m. :-)

The Return of Sofers on Site

More than two years ago we (Sam, Bernie, Gene and I, Gloria) took our Holocaust Torah to Miami for a physical exam. Letters were flaking, some stitching was weak, places were faded or stained, and our sacred trust had lost its standing in terms of *kashrut*, or kosherness. The scribes (*sofrim*, in Hebrew) unrolled it (in what seemed to us a magical much too fast dance at the time), declared it beautiful, validated its time period and origin, told us what it would take to make it wor-

Leaf on the Tree of Life

To celebrate the marriage of
Gerri & Frank Emkey
ten years and going strong
by Linda and Skip

thy again, and then, as a congregation, we committed not merely to making it whole and kosher but to enhance its stunning beauty by removing stains and creating an event in which all of us could take part. Everyone whose hand touched the scribe's feather that day as he wrote a letter, got credit for the 613th commandment, or *mitzvah*: "Write for yourself a new song."

Rabbi Moshe Druin, who oversaw our restoration, will be visiting us soon, to inspect, and if required, to repair whatever needs updating for our scroll to retain its "kasher" status. We trust that our periodic unrolling and airing out (thank you if you were one of the helpers) will have kept up its good condition. The visit and inspection will happen sometime after Shavuot. Watch Beth's announcements for a date. This might be something you'd like to witness.

High Holiday Leadership

We have much to look forward to this year. It is not always easy to find, and then retain, the kind of leadership that one wants for the most important holy days of the year: an accomplished rabbi, with gravitas, who is personable, inspiring, warm and intellectually articulate. It is the KJCC Board's and Ritual Committee's pleasure to announce once more that Rabbi Richard Agler will be our leader, educator and guide through the 5779 Days of Awe. He will work with us to shape our experience of sincere repentance and renewal. At his side will be the mellowly tuneful Cantor Michael Dzubin for the third year in a row. High Holidays may seem many months away, but we know how time flies and are happy to report the return of this nourishing team.

May Anniversaries

	Years
2nd	Bennett & Deborah Beinfest.....28
21st	Marshall & Myra Kaplan.....46
24th	Alfred & Sue Ann Wehl.....59
28th	George & Lori Richardson7

May Birthdays

1st.....	Cheryl Margulies
2nd.....	Barney Coltman
2nd.....	Raymond K. Hess
4th.....	Laura Leigh Tallent
5th.....	Richard Palacino
7th.....	Murray Rapoport
7th.....	Scott M. Pearl
7th.....	Skyler Bella Strasser
8th.....	Kelley Greenman
8th.....	Sidney Boruszak
9th.....	Gary Margolis
9th.....	Reid Schur
11th.....	Richard Agler
11th.....	Sheila R. Steinberg
12th.....	Madelyn Ruby Pollack
12th.....	Nyan Feder
12th.....	Robert Silk
13th.....	Rose Marie Gordon
14th.....	Bernie Ginsberg
14th.....	David Ichel
14th.....	John Temkin
14th.....	Medina Roy
15th.....	Paul R. Schur
18th.....	Andrea P. Silverman
18th.....	Jaime Brennan
18th.....	Sheree Savar
19th.....	Jonathon Hodgson
21st.....	Jerry Herson
22nd.....	Christian Strasser
22nd.....	Sharon Repka
23rd.....	Bianka Kirschenbaum
23rd.....	Jenny Margulies
23rd.....	Jules Seder
23rd.....	Nettie Seder
23rd.....	Rita Williams
25th.....	Matthew Birnbaum
27th.....	Alan Beth
27th.....	Jeffrey Pollack
27th.....	Joan Boruszak
29th.....	Liati Mayk
29th.....	Nancy Zinner
31st.....	Judy Starr
31st.....	Mark E. Silverman
31st.....	Robert Sherman
31st.....	Wes Conklin

A Recipe From Nettie

We have a long-standing summer tradition of having family dinners at our house when I am back in New Jersey. My daughters are picky about what I make. Most of the dishes are made from recipes passed to me by their grandmothers or great-grandmothers.

One of the most popular dishes is my grandmother's recipe for mock chopped liver. It originally came from Ratner's restaurant on the lower east side of Manhattan. It is something she made back when I was a child. My kids loved it. People who come to our Sisterhood dinners seem to like it, too. So here it is:



Nettie's Mock Chopped Liver:

- Four hard-boiled eggs.
- A can of string beans, drained (yes, canned string beans).
- About two onions, chopped and fried slowly in a little more oil than you think you need, until they are golden brown.
- A good-sized handful of chopped walnuts. Salt and pepper to taste.
- I don't have a food processor so I chop it all with a board and knife. You can use a chopper if you have one, but don't chop the nuts too fine. Mix it all well. It is best made ahead and refrigerated several hours or even overnight.
- Serve with crackers or in a sandwich with nice fresh tomatoes. Enjoy.

—by Nettie Seder

Last Films in Series

Don't miss the last two films in this year's KJCC Winter Film Festival series, coming to us on May 5th and May 12th. Intriguing, well-produced films have filled our bill this year. We have been stirred, stung, moved to tears, and dissolved in laughter by this year's choices and once more we thank Medina Roy for her excellent taste. We also want to thank her Adult Education team (Sam Vinicur, Nettie Seder and Glo-

Oneg Sponsors for May 2018

May 4th - Sisterhood

May 11th - Bernie Ginsberg & Medina Roy in honor of their birthdays.

May 18th - Sisterhood

May 25th - Medina Roy in honor of her mother Bianka's 103rd birthday.

ria Avner) for helping select, organize and arrange for post-program nourishment during this long season of inviting, stimulating offerings.

Coming Summer Attractions

Mitch Harvey, Activities Committee Chair, and Susan Gordon, President of Sisterhood, are talking about several outings in the process of being planned, starting in mid-June. Watch for details and dates for a sunset cruise, a half-day fishing trip, a baseball game, and possibly a short cruise. Two of these events were great successes last year, and lots of fun. If you have more ideas, talk to Mitch or Susan.

Medina Wins 2018 Joel Cohen Award

For those who don't yet know, the winner (by unanimous vote of previous winners) of this year's Joel Cohen Fellowship Award is...Medina Roy. This award is given for long, productive and loving contributions to the life and soul of KJCC, and no one has ever deserved it more. To see more about this, with photos, please see the write-up in Photo Gallery on page 37.

Leaf on the Tree of Life

Congratulations to

Toby & Joel Bofshever

50 years in love, 50 years married

by Linda and Skip

Ongoing Projects and Mitzvah Programs of KJCC

BOOKPLATES for siddurim: Call Linda Pollack, 305-852-8575, for information, or send your desired inscription to lindap4000@gmail.com.

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 Beth Hayden, 305-773-0067.

CHAI-LIGHTS MITZVAH: Place a greeting or notice in Chai-Lights. Call Gloria Avner, 305-619-0216, to make your donation.

CHAI-LIGHTS ADVERTISEMENT: Your business ad will appear in every issue of Chai-Lights. Call Gloria Avner, 305-619-0216, for annual rates.

DIRECTORY ADVERTISEMENT: Your business ad will be featured prominently in our Membership Directory. Call Beth Hayden, 305-773-0067, for annual rates.

GIFT SHOP: We have lovely items for all holidays and for every day enjoyment. If you have a special request, call Sydney! Faye-Davis, 305-613-3010, or Susan Gordon, 305-766-3585.

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

ONEG SHABBAT/DINNER SPONSOR: To schedule your special date with Sisterhood, call Joyce Peckman, 732-447-5225, or email her at joycepeckman@gmail.com.

PICTURE POSTCARDS: We have beautiful picture postcards in the KJCC Gift Shop bearing the Millard Wells representation of the KJCC which was commissioned by Sisterhood. They can be packaged to fit your needs and mailed to you or your gift recipient. The price is \$36 per hundred but we will sell lesser quantities. Contact Sydney! Faye-Davis, 305-613-3010, or Susan Gordon, 305-766-3585.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE: If you know of any member who should receive a get well, congratulations or condolence card from the KJCC, call Channah David, 305-774-6048.

TIKKUN OLAM PROJECT: Bring your empty prescription and vitamin bottles to the KJCC and place in the collection box. We are assisting Burton Memorial with a project to provide empty medicine bottles to Haiti where they are needed.

TREE OF LIFE LEAVES and ROCKS, SANCTUARY SEAT PLATES, SOCIAL HALL CHAIR PLATES, YAHRZEIT MEMORIAL PLAQUES: Send your desired inscription to Linda Pollack at lindap4000@gmail.com.

Further Information about pricing can be found on the KJCC website: keysjewishcenter.com.

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

KEYS JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

TIKKUN LEIL SHAVUOT

SISTERHOOD SHABBAT DINNER



We have been wandering in the desert for 49 days.

Omer counting is over.

It is time to receive the Torah.



JOIN US at the KJCC on FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2018, 6:00 PM

SHAVUOT CELEBRATION

DAIRY DINNER, SHABBAT SERVICES, YIZKOR REMEMBRANCE

SERVICES at 7:30 P.M.

After Services there will be a TORAH LEARNING EVENT led by Rabbi Agler along with a delicious cheesecake-laden ONEG.

We can feed our brains along with our appetites.



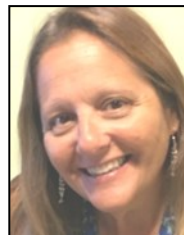
- Contact Erica -

hippiejap@hotmail.com - (305) 393-1162

to reserve your spot and coordinate your covered dish.

Please rsvp by May 14th - No Charge -

Sisterhood Susan Gordon



Welcome to May, my favorite month here in the Florida Keys! The daily pace of life is reminiscent of my early years here in the mid-80s. Everything moves slower (except for the traffic, which is a good thing!), the days are longer, the seas are calm and warm, just perfect for boating, snorkeling, and fishing, the restaurants are emptier, we enjoy our year-round neighbors, summer tourism has not yet begun, the temperatures are not yet unbearably scorching, and best of all, it's not hurricane season! The month of May will be wonderful at the KJCC as well. Although we miss our seasonal members and we look forward to their return, we manage to keep busy while enjoying our smaller group of year-round *mishpocha*.

Sisterhood will meet on Sunday, May 6th, at 9:00 a.m., an hour earlier than our usual starting time, to accommodate the KJCC Board meeting which will follow the Sisterhood meeting at 11:00 a.m. We are now planning the Shavuot Dairy Dinner, which will be held on Friday, May 18th at 6:00 p.m. There is no charge to attend the dinner. However, RSVPs are requested. Please contact Erica Lieberman-Garrett to let her know you plan to attend.

The next Sisterhood gathering in May is the monthly luncheon meeting of the KJCC Sisterhood Book Club. It will be held on Monday, May 21st, at 12:00 noon, location to be decided. The title of this month's book is "The Book Club," by Mary Alice Monroe. This will be the fifth month that the KJCC Sisterhood Book Club has been meeting. Many thanks to Randi Grant for suggesting that we offer this wonderful activity. Judging by the regular participation of dedicated women, it is obvious that our community was in need of such a club. Last month's book was *The Bridal Chair*, by Gloria Goldreich. The meeting was held on Monday, April 30th at Mangrove Mikes Café in Islamorada. If you have any questions or would like further information regarding the

Book Club, please contact Randi Grant by email at rkgcpa@bellsouth.net or call her at 1-954-383-4320. She will be glad to hear from you!

Looking back to last month, April felt like a "winding down" month for me. We had just held, on the last night of March, one of our largest and most successful planned events of the season, the second night Passover Seder, which was once again held at the Islamorada Fishing Club. Bright and early the next morning, on April 1st, to my delight, I was joined by eight dedicated women for our Sisterhood Meeting. I truly appreciated the involvement, great ideas, motivation, and positive energy that we shared around that table! It is because of that positive energy that we are able to accomplish so much for the betterment of the KJCC. We had another celebration to plan, the Shabbat Dinner, which was enjoyed by all who attended on Friday April 20th. This was a very festive event to celebrate Israel's Independence Day, *Yom HaAtzma'ut*. The formal establishment of the State of Israel happened 70 years ago, in 1948. We celebrated this most important holiday in our own style, complete with table decorations, Israeli food favorites, music from Israel, and some Israeli folk dances! We were also celebrating the 50th wedding anniversary of Joel and Toby Bofshever, who generously sponsored the evening's festivities.

At our last meeting, we needed to make an immediate change in our Corresponding Secretary position and were able to do so. I was thrilled when Jan Price enthusiastically volunteered to take on the task! I would like to thank Michele Riley for doing such a wonderful job until now, and we appreciate and understand that it was time for her to step back from the position. So, if you have sponsored an *oneg* or dinner, expect to receive a lovely hand-written note of thanks from Jan Price! ♦

KJCC's Adult Education Program
Proudly Presents Its
Second Annual KJCC
Winter Film Fest

**A Lovingly Selected, Eclectic Trove of Cinematic
Takes on Life Through a Jewish Lens**



Saturday, May 5, 2018:

Zero Motivation

Sat., May 12, 2018:

The Story of the Six-Day War

All films begin at 7:00 p.m.

GUESTS ARE WELCOME – There is no charge

REFRESHMENTS will be served afterwards

For More Information, Contact Medina Roy: hiitsmedee@gmail.com

In Memoriam May 2018

In Memory Of

Martin Roaman

By Carol Roaman

In Memory Of

Ben Horwitz

By Pauline Roller

In Memory Of

Rene Rose

By Skip Rose

In Memory Of

Lilyan Sax

By Stuart & Lauren Sax

In Memory Of

Robert Schur

By Lee Schur

In Memory Of

Elaine Beth Silverman

By Morton & Gene Silverman

In Memory Of

Robert W. Singer

By Mary Lee Singer

In Memory Of

Sam Wainer

By Richard & Sheila Steinberg

In Memory Of

Susan Cimkowski

By Stephen Steinbock

In Memory Of

Phillip Temkin

By Robert Temkin

In Memory Of

Benjamin Weber

By Judith Weber

In Memory Of

Irma Weihl

By Alfred & Sue Ann Weihl

MISHEBERACH – A PRAYER FOR HEALING

When the Torah is read, we are granted an especially opportune moment to invoke blessing for those in need of divine intervention. So for hundreds of years it has been a tradition, before the Torah is returned to the ark, to recite the names of those who are ill, asking that Hashem, who blessed our founding ancestors, also bless those in need of healing. The person is not called by the standard Hebrew name (ex: *Moshe ben {son of} Amram*). Instead the mother's name is invoked (*Moshe ben Yochebed*.)

When the Reform movement moved the major Shabbat service from Saturday morning to Friday night, the prayer for healing, often in the form composed by Debbie Friedman, became an important element of their Friday night service.

The KJCC is non-denominational, but we too have incorporated the *Misheberach* prayer into our Friday evening service, after the *dvar Torah* (Torah talk.) We maintain a list of long-term and short-term names, as well as inviting names to be called from the congregation. There are even post cards at the back of the room to be used by anyone who wants to inform a friend or family member that they have been the subject of our community's prayer.

If you have someone that you wish to add or remove from KJCC's *Misheberach* list, please, 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 305-852-5235. The website, which accepts e-mail, is keysjewishcenter.com.

World Jewish Report

Medina Roy



Israel Receives Prestigious Award

At the end of March, Save a Child's Heart, an Israeli non-governmental organization (NGO), received an award from UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund (formerly known as the UN Fund for Population Activities.) Established by the General Assembly in 1981, the award recognizes "outstanding achievement in population and health." Save a Child's Heart was founded in 1995 at the Wolfson Medical Center in Holon, a city on Israel's central coastal strip south of Tel Aviv. The non-profit organization is a world leader in providing life-saving cardiac surgery for children from developing countries. To date it has served some 4,599 children from 55 countries. (www.unfpa.org, 3-28-18)

SOLD! For Over \$500,000!

In mid-March, a violin once owned by Albert Einstein sold for \$516,500 at the New York-based Bonhams auction house. The instrument was reportedly a gift to the scientist in 1933 by Oscar Steger, a member of the Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra. Steger made the violin himself and inscribed it "Made for the Worlds [sic] Greatest Scientist Profesior [sic] Albert Einstein By Oscar H. Steger, Feb1933 / Harrisburg, PA." Sometime later, when Einstein worked at Princeton University, he gave the violin to the son of Syllas Hibbs, who worked as a janitor at the university. It remained with the Hibbs' family until the auction. The violin sold for over three times its estimated price. (www.jta.org, 3-12-18)

Stephen Hawking

Famed physicist Stephen Hawking, who died in mid-March at the age of 76, visited Israel on several occasions, giving lectures at both Israeli and Palestinian universities. But his relationship with the Jewish state was an uncomfortable one. In 2013, he boycotted an

academic conference in Jerusalem based on what a spokesman at the time said was the "unanimous advice" of his Palestinian colleagues there. Israeli organizers of the conference felt doubly betrayed because the conference honored then-Israeli President Shimon Peres, who was widely seen as an international symbol of peace. Hawking, however, has an Israeli scientist to thank for some of his most groundbreaking research. By the early 1970s, Hawking had already done work on black holes – cosmic gravitational fields – and he disagreed with Jacob Bekenstein, then a doctoral student at Princeton. (Bekenstein was the son of Polish-Jewish parents in Mexico, had Israeli citizenship and later taught at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem for 25 years. He died in 2015.) In his 1972 doctoral thesis, Bekenstein theorized that black holes had entropy – disorder in its system – and so, according to the laws of physics, they had a temperature. Hawking disagreed, claiming that black holes could not radiate anything and therefore had no temperature. At a conference in France that year, Hawking and a few of his colleagues angrily confronted Bekenstein. But later in 1974, Hawking proved Bekenstein's idea through a complicated quantum theory calculation. At first, Hawking kept his finding a secret, afraid to admit his mistake. Eventually though, he made his discovery public and today it is considered one of his most important achievements. The entropy of a black hole is known as Bekenstein-Hawking entropy. Many believe Bekenstein, who won Israel's prestigious Wolf Prize in 2012, should have won the Nobel Prize for his contributions to science, but the award is not given posthumously. (Hawking said he wanted the Bekenstein-Hawking entropy equation engraved on his tombstone.) (www.haaretz.com, 3-16-18)

Thank You, Eddie Jacobson!

Seventy years ago, on May 14th, 1948, David Ben-Gurion read the Israeli Declaration of Independence establishing the Jewish State of Israel. Just eleven minutes later, U.S. President Harry S. Truman recognized the new Jewish state. What is not commonly known, however, is that Truman's quick recognition might not have happened without one Eddie Jacobson, a Jewish man from Kansas City who had been Truman's army buddy and also a former business partner. Born to poor Lithuanian Jewish immigrants on New York's Lower East Side, Jacobson had little connection to his Jewish heritage and left New York for Kansas City, working as a stock boy in a shirt store at the same time Truman toiled as a bookkeeper at a nearby bank. Their friendship grew, and in 1917 they both reported for basic training in Oklahoma. Truman was named canteen officer and, lacking business experience, he chose Jacobson as his manager. After serving in the 129th Field Artillery in World War I, they decided to go into business together, opening Truman and Jacobson Haberdashery in 1919 in downtown Kansas City. Jacobson did the buying while Truman kept the books and sold clothing. When the recession hit in 1922, they suffered great financial hardship and were forced to close the store. But the friendship endured, even as the two took different paths in life.

Immediately after he became president, Truman found himself under tremendous pressure from all sides regarding the situation in the Middle East. He was concerned about the Jewish refugee problem created by the Holocaust, but he refused a meeting with Chaim Weizmann, leader of the Zionists. In the 37 years that Truman and Jacobson had been friends, Jacobson had never tried to exert influence. However, having met Weizmann, and by then become an ardent Zionist, Jacobson went unannounced to see Truman in March of 1948. "Your hero is Andrew Jackson," Jacobson said. "I have a hero, too. He is the greatest Jew alive...Chaim Weizmann...He has traveled thousands of miles just to see you. And now you are putting him off. This isn't like you, Harry." Five days later Truman

met secretly with Weizmann and they spoke for over an hour, Truman ultimately agreeing to support the Partition Plan and the establishment of the State of Israel. He gave his friend Jacobson the pen he used to sign the document. (www.ReformJudaism.org, 4-3-18)

A Significant Advancement

Scientists at the Kaplan Medical Center in *Rehovot* (a suburb of Tel Aviv) say they are close to developing a better method of screening for prostate cancer, taking a giant step forward in removing guesswork from the process. Prostate cancer is the second-most-common cancer among men worldwide, but testing for increased levels of prostate-specific antigens (PSA) in the blood – the main diagnostic in use – remains controversial. Elevated levels of PSA often show up years before a cancer develops or, in benign conditions, lead to unnecessary biopsies and anxiety. Now, in a study using 59 urine samples, *CellDetect*, a new screening product of Micromedic Technologies Company, offered a sensitivity rate of 91.3 percent, meaning that it could rule out cancer accurately in most patients. The company also reported a 75 percent specificity rate, indicating that it could detect cancer in three-quarters of people who had it. "The currently available diagnostic testing is known to be unreliable," Micromedic CEO Guy Lerner said. "With these clinical study results, we have the potential to transform prostate cancer diagnostics, offering patients a non-invasive, accurate and reliable test, and one that could improve the healthcare system through considerable cost savings." Tests of *CellDetect* have proven similarly high efficacy rates for detecting cervical and bladder cancer, but the product has not yet received approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. (www.timesofisrael.com, 2-17-18)

Game-Changing Technology

Researchers at Israel's Hebrew University (HU) in Jerusalem have reportedly discovered technologies that would enable standard 8-16 gigahertz computers to run 100 times faster through the use of terahertz microchips. The findings were made by HU physicist Uriel Levy

and his team after three years of research. But creating the terahertz microchip is a bit of a challenge due to overheating. Levy, head of HU's Nano-Opto Group, working with professor emeritus Joseph Shappir, has shown proof of the concept for an optic technology that integrates the speed of optic (light) communications with the reliability of electronics. Optic communications are super-fast, but in microchips they become unreliable and difficult to replicate in large quantities. But Levy's team has used a Metal-Oxide-Nitrite-Oxide-Silicon (MONOS) structure to create a new integrated circuit that uses flash memory technology: the kind used in flash drives. If successful, this technology could create new and more powerful devices that could transmit data at a much greater speed than currently possible. (www.xinhuanet.com, 4-1-18)

“What World Are We Living In?”

At the end of March, some 10,000 people participated in a memorial march in Paris after the brutal killing of Mireille Knoll, an 85-year-old Holocaust survivor who was found murdered in her apartment. She had been stabbed eleven times before her apartment was set on fire. The attack shocked her neighbors, France's Jewish community and the country as a whole. The march was covered heavily by French media and was encouraging news for French Jews who have felt ignored by their government. Among the mourners at her funeral was the 27-year-old African Muslim man from Mali whom many consider a hero, having hidden a dozen people from the terrorist who killed four Jews at a kosher grocery store in Paris in 2015. “Mireille Knoll's murder...is a painful reminder of the face of anti-Semitism in France today,” said Paris-based American Jewish Committee's Europe director Simone Rodan-Benzaquen. Two suspects, men in their 20s, have been placed under formal investigation on charges of murder with an anti-Semitic motive. It was a particularly sad end for the very French and very Jewish Mme. Knoll, who as a child had escaped deportation to a Nazi death camp when French police rounded up Jews in Paris in 1942. (www.jta.org, 3-29-18)

In Memoriam

- Johan Van Hulst, former seminary leader and Dutch politician who saved the lives of hundreds of Jewish children during the Holocaust, died recently. He was 107. Van Hulst ran a Protestant seminary whose yard bordered on the crèche (nursery) of the Hollandsche Schouwburg, a theater across the road. The theater had been annexed by the Nazis and was being used as a deportation center to the concentration camps. Van Hulst and his helpers, some of whom were students at the Universities of Amsterdam and Utrecht, would sneak the Jewish children into the seminary, often shielding them as one of their own and then running them to safe houses, ultimately saving more than 500 children. In 1972, Van Hulst was recognized by Yad Vashem as *Righteous Among the Nations*, one of more than 5,000 from the Netherlands. Van Hulst worked in Dutch politics and was a professor of pedagogy at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam. He was a prolific author and published his final work when he was 95. He also loved to play chess and was an active competitor until late in life, winning a special tournament for former Dutch parliamentarians at the age of 99. As chairman of a chess club in Amsterdam, he protected the club's Jewish members towards the latter half of the 1930s. (www.tabletmag.com, 3-28-18)

- Stephen Reinhardt, a federal judge and outspoken advocate on Jewish as well as legal issues, has died at the age of 87. Dubbed the “Liberal Lion,” his rulings were often overturned by a more conservative U.S. Supreme Court; when asked about that record he said that he was not going to help the Supreme Court take away the rights of citizens. Reinhardt was appointed by President Jimmy Carter to the U.S. 9th Circuit of Appeals in 1980. He served there until his death. Among his controversial decisions was that the words “under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance were unconstitutional, as were the bans on same-sex marriage and physician-assisted suicide. Reinhardt was born Stephen Shapiro but changed his name when his parents divorced and his mother married Gottfried Reinhardt, a movie screenwriter, director and producer (“The Red Badge of Courage,” “Town Without Pity”). (www.jta.org, 3-31-18) ◇

Contributions to KJCC

We appreciate the thoughtfulness of those who support the Keys Jewish Community Center by remembering and honoring their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions.

All donations made after the fifth of the month will appear in the following month's Chai-Lights. When you make a donation, please signify the fund it is to go to and the recognition of the name or names to be listed.

First Night Seder

Hartz, Steve & Jan
Kaplan, Linda
Steinbock, Stephen
Wolfe, Larry & Dorothy

Fundraiser

Anonymous
Anonymous
Ellner, Susan
Goldfinger, David & Toby
Hayden, Beth
Kluger, Nancy
Pollack, Linda

In Honor of

Feder Concert
Feder Concert
Feder Concert
Feder Concert
Feder Concert
Feder Concert
Feder Concert

General Fund

Plutzer Family
Pollack, Linda

In Memory of

Ann Plutzer, Al Roller &
Joel Pollack
Ellen Liebowitz

Leaf on the Tree of Life

Pollack, Linda & Rose, Skip
Pollack, Linda & Rose, Skip

In Honor of

Gerri & Frank
Emkey's vow renewal
Toby & Joel
Bofshever's
wedding anniversary

Library

Sax, Stuart & Lauren

In Honor of

Medina Roy receiving
Joel Cohen award

Meditation Garden

Sax, Stuart & Lauren

In Honor of

Joan Boruszak

Oneg Sponsorship

Blum, Laurie &
Margolis, Gary

In Memory of

Arlene Sugarman Margolis

In Honor of

Grossman, Elinor & Herb
Smith, Geri

the 61st anniversary
of their engagement
their 53rd anniversary

Sisterhood

Hartz, Steve & Jan

Yahrzeit

Blum, Laurie &
Margolis Gary
Wohl, Joan

In Memory of

Arlene Sugarman Margolis

Dr. Milton Wohl



The Limitless David Feder

Listening to Dave Feder play a concert of original music is like committing to a magical journey without itinerary. You're not sure exactly where you're going but you know you'll enjoy every stop and the scenery along the way. His work is a marvel of technique, heart and imagination. KJCC members, family, friends, and Dave Feder fans from all parts of the Keys gathered in our sanctuary on the night of March 28th to hear the master of "hillbilly flamenco" stretch himself.

We could all have been in his living room, or sitting on his porch. The casually intimate patter and rambling storytelling captured us almost as much as the music, and we have hopes that in addition to turning on the recording equipment as promised for his out-of-state dad, Dave will make a CD out of the evening for the rest of us. We'd happily wait in line for it.

Many people worked hard to make this evening possible. We would especially like to thank those who gave generous support: Joe and Kathy Shabathai, Linda Pollack and Beth Hayden were our Angels. Steve and Jan Hartz, David and Toby Goldfinger, Nancy Kluger (so delighted





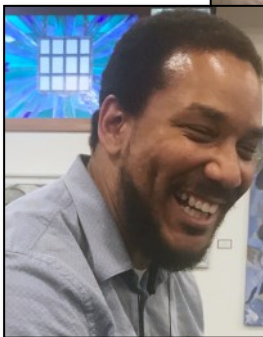
that you were back in the Keys to attend the concert, Nancy and Wolf), Joyce Peckman and an anonymous two stepped up to round out the group of donors. Big thanks also go to Donna Bolton and her crew for organizing a special (and delicious) pre-party for these supporters. The tone was happy re-union and cheery expectation.

The music was great, and the magical journey came to a grand finale beyond expectation. Dave and Suzi's son Nyan, with a mere 24 hours notice, had flown home from his new place and gig in Nashville, to be with family for Passover (a delightful presence in the first row) and join his dad on stage for two resounding numbers, followed by a cacophonously demanded standing ovation curtain call encore. Words fail. If you were there, you know how fine it was to see and hear all those talented Feder fingers playing passionately in perfect harmony. Thank you, Dave and Nyan, and all you behind-the-scenes KJCC organizers and worker bees, for a successful evening and delightful cultural experience for all lucky or wise enough to be there.

—Gloria Avner



Before the concert, Angels and Sponsors were invited to join Dave and Suzi for an intimate pre-party in the KJCC Social Hall, transformed for the evening into a boulevard café.



It was an eclectic group that filled the KJCC sanctuary that night, KJCC members and fervent local Feder Fans, teachers and close friends and extended family and New York gallery owners and international business executives and fellow professional musicians and even the sound engineer and former retailer who'd recommended to us and then installed all by himself the amazing KJCC sound system.

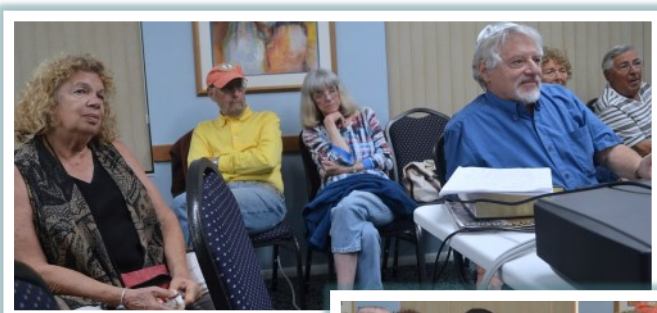
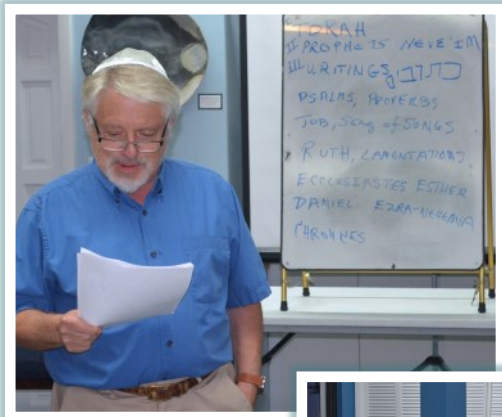
Photo Gallery

All the photos on this page were taken during the final Jewish Art and Artists discussion of the season on Wednesday, March 21st at KJCC. The evening was led by artist and educator Marcia Kreitman. The subject was Judy Chicago, still living and still creating, once named by Newsweek as one of ten artists who “rocked the ages.” The series, sponsored by KJCC’s Adult Ed Committee, included Jewish context and commentary provided by Rabbi Richard Agler, KJCC’s Resident Scholar. It became one of the most stimulating and informative program series we’ve ever had.



All the photos on this page are from the Adult Education talk Bernie gave to KJCC on March 24th. It was all about the books of the Hebrew Bible that Jews — and presumably others — seldom read. Utilizing his patented combination of practiced bedside manner and shoulder-shrugging modesty, infused with his lifelong delight at discovering and sharing things, he took particular joy in reading from Proverbs and then asking all present to say what common homily the text reminded them of. He also pointed out the historical and cultural sameness of Jewish wisdom alongside that of other ancient middle

eastern cultures. And showed clearly that human foibles and folly are the same as they were three thousand years ago...

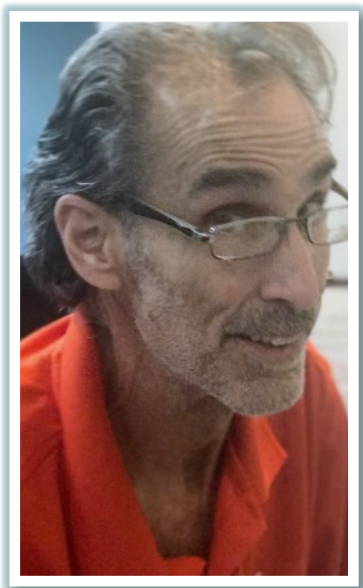




This page's photos were all taken at the oneg on March 23rd. Steve Steinbock had led the service. The oneg was jointly sponsored by Jane Friedman, shown just above blowing out the representative candles on a cake celebrating her birthday, and Toby and Joel Bofshever in honor of their 50th anniversary.



Some additional photos taken at the March 23rd oneg, one of the last full nights of membership attendance before our snowbirds began to flit and flutter their way back up north. (Some even drive.)

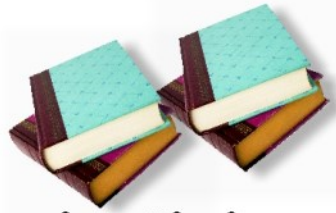


Scenes from the oneg after services on April 6th. Joe Shabathai had led services and then, as you see at right, also the Kiddush. It was the last night of Passover, so instead of cutting or tearing samples of challah, there was the breaking of matzoh into small, therefore semi-digestible, pieces. We were able to get, at bottom, a photo of Joe and Kathy's entire local family. On this special evening the group included Joe's sister Hannah, left front, visiting the Keys for the first time, from London. (How many of you know two British Jews who were both born in India?)



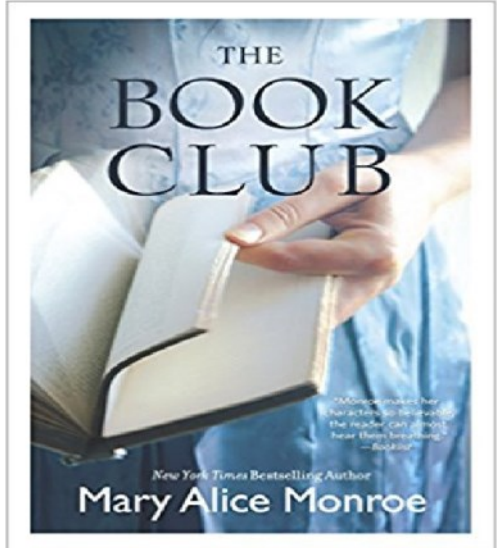
The oneg that evening was sponsored by Jules and Nettie Seder, at right. No one makes edible *Pesadich* confections quite like Nettie does...





Sisterhood Book Club

Monday
May 21, 2018 - noon
Islamorada
Venue to be decided upon



THE BOOK CLUB **BY MARY ALICE MONROE**

***THEY ARE FIVE WOMEN FROM DIFFERENT WALKS OF LIFE,
EMBRACING THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE. AND AS THEY SHARE
THEIR HOPES AND FEARS AND TRIUMPHS, THEY WILL HOLD
FAST TO THE TRUE MAGIC OF THE BOOK CLUB—FRIENDSHIP.***

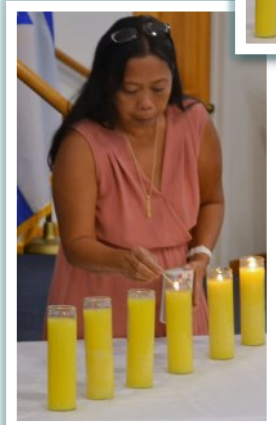
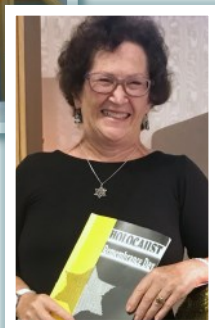
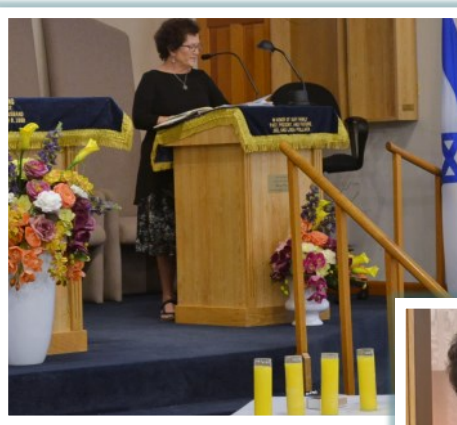
***MARY ALICE MONROE INVITES YOU TO MEET FIVE REMARKABLE
CHARACTERS AS SHE EXPLORES THE POWER OF FRIENDSHIP
WITH TENDERNESS, HONESTY AND UNDERSTANDING.***

RSVP and more information - Randi Grant
rkgcpa@bellsouth.net 954-383-4320

Additional photos from the oneg on April 6th. That huge pile of greens in front of Jane Friedman in the photo just below is organic bok choy she had just harvested from the Harry and Jane garden on the grounds of KJCC. Some of it went toward a salad for those lucky enough to be at the oneg. The rest was, following the garden's original purpose, donated to the food bank at our neighbor Burton Memorial Methodist. Fresh and nutritious produce is so often missing from food banks.

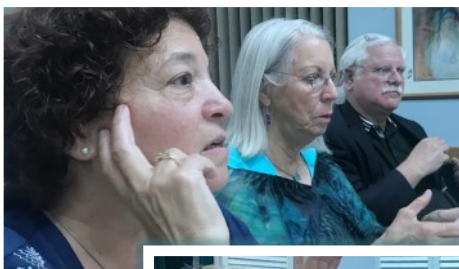


Each year, on the Friday closest to Yom HaShoah, a service is dedicated to those — mostly Jewish but also political opponents and those mentally and physically disabled and various additional groups of “others” deemed inferior by the Nazis — hunted down, swallowed up and systematically destroyed by the Holocaust. A symbolic candle is lit for each of six groups. The first lighting was reserved, lower right, for Gunther Karger, just turned 85, KJCC’s own Holocaust survivor. Wife Shirley, along with Medina, below, had initiated Shabbat by lighting those candles.





Additional scenes from the April 13th Yom HaShoah service and oneg. We had a triumvirate of oneg sponsors that evening: Susan Ellner for her birthday, Geri and Stuart Smith for their 53rd anniversary, and Laurie Blum & Gary Margolis in memory of Arlene Sugarman Margolis. (And, yes, we were back to challah being served at the oneg.)



The photo at right was sent by Gerri Emkey. She and Frank are shown formally renewing their vows in honor of their 10th anniversary.

The photo below shows Joyce Peckman with grandson Yosef burning the last of their house's *chametz* (stuff made from flour), thereby eliminating its taint in keeping with the commandment, a ritual performed by observant Jews prior to every Passover. In the photo at bottom, ten women who attended the Sisterhood book club meeting at Mangrove Mike's on April 30th.

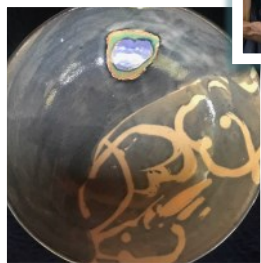


I was playing music (dulcimer) in the library just prior to Passover. When we took a break I

saw I had three phone calls from the same number. Yep, Rabbi Zucker, above, was on a matzoh mitzvah mission, delivering the real *schmear* goods to Jewish friends all the way up the Keys. He was at MM100 when I called back so he was able to come over to the library and hand deliver. Cute. — Gloria



There are many ways to repair the world. As a people, we agreed by covenant to take on this work when we received the Torah at Sinai over three millennia ago. (We'll be celebrating that commitment soon at our Shavuot celebration.) KJCC people work at it in many ways. When we march or carry signs and advocate to relieve suffering, we are, in Rabbi Abraham Heschel's words, "praying with our feet," just as Rabbi Heschel put his prayers into action when he marched alongside Rev. Martin Luther King for civil rights in Selma, Alabama.



When artists donate the work of their hands to benefit those without access to health care, they are praying with their creativity. When we support fundraisers like "Soup and Salad Daze," at Our Place in Paradise Gallery, and we buy the donated pieces, we are praying with our pocketbooks. KJCC people are generous with skills, time, creative energy and money. We admired and purchased works of KJCC potters Medina Roy, Marcia Kreitman, John David Hawver, Barbara Bernstein, and moving-force-behind-the-event Beth Kaminstein. We loved the bowls, the soups, the salads and the cause. Long live the Good Health Clinic, the work it does and all others who work for *Tikkun Olam*.

Woman's Seder Turns Fifteen!

Two Extra Questions Answered

Our 15th Annual Women's Seder was far richer than the grand party we enjoyed, and more than four questions were asked, and answered, though hearing the prescribed *feir kashas* (that's Yiddish for the four questions) sung in the clear, confident voice of honoree

Joyce Peckman's young granddaughter, Michal, was easily the most moving moment of the evening.

The first added question was: Why do we do this – commit ourselves to a third (and extra) seder, involving more cooking and preparation, when we already have two seders that call on to us to satisfy required *mitzvot*? And

this was the second: For whom do we do this??

If the first question appeared on a multiple-choice test, the answers below would be the choices. Spoiler alert: all answers are correct. But some are more important than others. Choose your own order.

A. *The food is incomparable, delicious, healthy, and climaxes with Suzi Feder's fine dark chocolate bark and Judy Greenman's cake.*

B. *We love our tradition of speaking our mother's and their mother's names as we all listen, with strong memories evoked. This year we also loved hearing and telling the stories of our family seder plates.*

C. *We want to honor one of us*



Woman's Seder Turns Fifteen!



who has worked tirelessly for our good, and hear what we've never heard about her life. Yay, Joyce.

D. We look for a woman from history, perhaps one we've never heard of, who has made a huge difference in the lives of world Jewry.

E. We want to do something! We want to change the world, renew it, repair it, refresh it, make it more fair and life-enhancing for the oppressed, the abused, the unfree, especially women and children.

And so we choose to cook more, to travel far (thank you, Myra Brahms and women of Marathon, especially Sharon Silva, who prepared and printed new Haggadahs for us, and gave them to us

Woman's Seder Turns Fifteen!

as a present), and to continue adding names of new visitors to our colorful Women's Seder tablecloth, thanks to Marcia Kreitman, inspired by the work of iconic feminist artist Judy Chicago ("The Dinner Party"). We choose to raise money and donate it to causes supporting children within our local Jewish community (KJCC Scholarship Fund), our greater community (Key Largo School Emergency Fund), and the international community (the Talia Agler Girls Shelter in Nairobi, Kenya).

The answer to the second question is easier, but also layered. We do it for the faces in these photos – ourselves, our friends and family. And we do it for the world, for vow-keeping, for remembering with gratitude all that was done for us by our foremothers, our forefathers, and the Creator, with whom we made a covenant, who brought us out of Egypt.

Some member faces seen here have left us for the season. We will miss you.

Zai gezundt (stay healthy, in Yiddish)! May we sit around the big table again, committed to taking action for the good of the world, next spring, at the 16th annual celebration of KJCC's Women's Seder. *Dayenu!*

—Gloria Avner



KEYS JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER



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SHABBAT DINNER \$300

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Honor a loved one or celebrate a special event such as a
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Please send your donation with accompanying information to:

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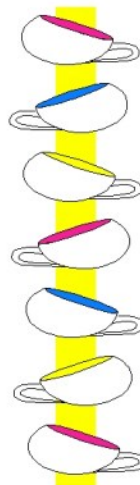
PO Box 116

Tavernier, FL 33070

We truly appreciate your generous support.

For further information contact Joyce Peckman

joycepeckman@gmail.com - (732) 447-5225



Erev Pesach - First Night Seder



The tableau: KJCC's Cathy Kaplan Social Hall at sundown on Friday, March 30th, transformed from casual rows of tables facilitating mingling to the more formal arrangement befitting a banquet, each table preening with fresh white linen and connected to one another around the room in an ordered, dignified procession. Or if not a banquet then a formal dining setting with 67 honored guests, all of whom are chefs and participants and all of whom are knowing fellow voyagers on the great and eternal Jewish journey that begins, every year at least in memory, with this ritualized celebration of the first reported mass striving toward human freedom. As we are commanded, we personally remember the dehumanizing slavery from which all of us, twelve tribes of displaced wayfarers soon to be melded into a people, were once redeemed. And, of course, we remember by Whom. This annual event is, among many things, a thorough and elaborate reminder that we are not the deliverers but the humbly delivered.

We are there to honor and re-tell the most dramatic and enduring story of the Hebrew scriptures. The order of the



Erev Pesach - First Night Seder



evening (*seder*, in Hebrew) recreates an event that, if we are to trust our literature and teachers and timeless traditions (given

precious little help by archeology), took place over 3,200 years ago, shepherded by the most famous and yet most mysterious figure in all of Jewish history. It is an annual celebration, one of only three specifically mandated in the Torah. Yet it is by far the most remembered and continuously



familiar. In survey after survey, more Jews cite Passover as the important Jewish event they observe most regularly and in which they find the most meaning. (Chanukah doesn't count.) It's so imprinted into the world's memory that one of that world's most famous paintings, one depicting a long table full of Jews but that few if any consider a Jewish painting, clearly depicts its celebration two thousand years ago. Passover, and the table settings associated with it, is so embedded in the Jewish mind that groundbreaking modern artist Judy Chicago (née Cohen) used it, mixed in with a dollop of



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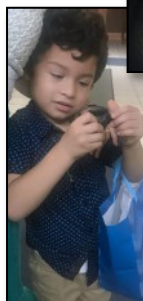
Erev Pesach - First Night Seder



anger and a soupçon of irony, as the model for probably her most famous (and yes, controversial) work, *The Dinner Party*.

This is the third consecutive year in which we've celebrated a first-night seder at KJCC. We envisioned it at first as a seder for strays, those without family to go to or host. But 40-some showed up the first year. And over 50 last year. This year, as noted, it was 67. (Special thanks go to Nettie Seder - no relation other than to Jules - for brilliantly coordinating and presenting the dinner.) The Board has voted to make the first-night seder a permanent fixture of the KJCC calendar.

There's something unique about the fit. We cook for each other, and share wine, and listen to a familiar story in a comfortable setting. Perhaps the comfort allows the deeper meanings to touch us a little more, to gently seep in to where the spirit of possibility lives. In this place, in this room, the ancient story is ours and we pass it forward... ♦





KJCC Meditation Garden

Our extended brick walkway is in place. Come and spend some time walking around our peaceful and beautiful Meditation Garden. Bricks and benches can be purchased as honorariums or memorials and as gifts. Trees line the walkway and are available for dedication to our loved ones or to memorialize a happy occasion.

Also newly dedicated is our Orchid Pergola. We invite you to become a part of this fresh undertaking. Make your donation toward a new and beautiful orchid. The orchid will be tagged with the name of the donor and the name of the person being honored or remembered.

Information regarding pricing for orchids, bricks and benches can be obtained by visiting our website, keysjewishcenter.com.



2018 Joel Cohen Fellowship Award

It was just at the break of the first seder, right before dinner. The perfect time to present this year's Joel Cohen Fellowship Award. I asked the previous winners of KJCC's most prestigious and important award who were there that night – Pauline Roller, Steve Smith, Susan Gordon, Marc Bloom, Steve Steinbock, Gloria Avner and Jules & Nettie Seder – to please stand. It seemed fitting for all of them to join Gloria and me as one to publicly honor this year's winner.

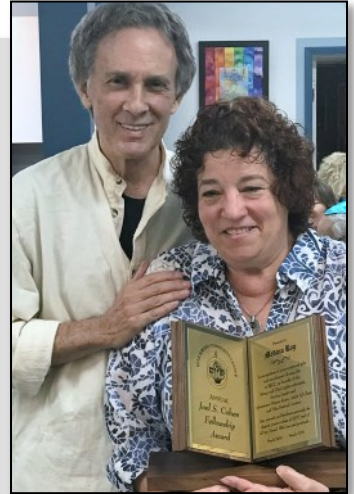
I reminded everyone that KJCC is an organization of volunteers. And that, as they all know, not all volunteers pitch in with the same vim and vigor. KJCC was very fortunate to have been founded by a remarkable group of people. They weren't perfect, but they were motivated and determined to make KJCC both a haven and a success. But even in that group, some just gave more. One of the founding couples was Joel and Sara Cohen, who have both left their imprint on KJCC in many ways.

At some point it became clear to the founders that an annual award needed to be established, to recognize those who stood out, who seemed to just have bottomless reserves of their time, their talents and especially their hearts to give to KJCC. The first recipient of that award was Joel Cohen, and from that time it has become formally known as the Joel Cohen Award. It was then and remains the highest honor that KJCC has to bestow. (A plaque listing all winners, by the way, hangs in the sanctuary.)

Each year the previous winners – and only the previous winners – get together to determine who should join their club. Nominations are made, and arguments made.

Once I explained the process to all at the seder, I asked Gloria to read the inscription on this year's plaque. (No need to repeat it here...you can read it in the photo.) As you all now know, the winner, by unanimous acclamation, was Medina Roy. About halfway through the reading, at almost the exact same time, Medina's head snapped as she realized the plaque was describing her and Gloria began to choke up with emotion. History should note that when I then called Medina up to accept her award, she couldn't find one of her shoes. So she gave up and came anyway, only partially shod but fully beaming and to loud applause and "bravas" from around the room.

—Sam Vinicur



Second Night Community Seder

The “Us”-ness of Us

by Gloria Avner

Every few years, someone asks a fifth question: why do we have to have two seders? Isn't one enough? And if you've gone to the Women's Seder prior to the official two, you just might say "aren't three seders too much?" Here is a little explanation for why we do what we do. Seeing who we are, the smiling faces on these pages, will also help answer the question.

We prepared for 64 people at the Haimische First Night Family Seder around the great big dining room table in KJCC's Social Hall turned XXL Dining Room. Members with family, members with friends, friends with friends – they all came, contributed food or funds, and were happy to be there. Read Sam's summation for details and insights, and check out the faces there, too.

Interestingly, the same number of people came to the second night Community Seder, organized beautifully by Sisterhood and catered well by (and at) The Islamorada Fishing Club. It's one more tradition. For once, we do not do the cooking. But we do (substitute the name Erica for the word “we”) train the cooks – hence the big fluffy matzoh balls in delicious veggie and meat-laden chicken soup. It may have been the same number, but the people were different – not all, but a significant portion. Some were new or mulling membership. Many



Second Night Community Seder



were members that we never or rarely see at other occasions or times of year. We were delighted to interact with a whole table of Susan and Joe Sachs' children and grandchildren.

They sang the Four Questions with our Rachel Levine, Sean Kaufman, and Maddie Bloom, helped in the search for *afikomen*, read parts of "our story" beautifully, and helped us have a solid kids' quotient for the most important Haggadah *mitzvah*, the retelling.

And then there was Michael Klimpl, sharing a table with the Temkins, who made a point of saying not just hello and thank you, but that this was his 18th consecutive Community Seder with us and he was thrilled to be here.

And at another table, enjoying the seder with Stu and Geri Smith and Jan Price (plus Luigi, of course) was an old member who had just rejoined, Leo Haviv, with a friend from Israel who not only enjoyed the seder but helped lead by taking charge of the first few verses, in Hebrew, of *Had Gadyah* and that little goat somebody's father bought for two *zuzim*.

We had one of our youngest member with us, Sean Kaufman (age 4), and our



Two birthdays were also celebrated at the Seder. Maddie Bloom was four, and Jane Friedman was... once again over 21.



Second Night Community Seder



oldest, Pauline Roller (soon to be 103). The

leaders were the same both nights, but the food and the energy, both good, were different. We gave more people a chance to experience Pesach. Some things are hard to quantify, but Passover, with its springtime energy of new beginnings, encouraging us to re-enact our flight to freedom and relive our birth as a people, re-awakens something primal in us. We hear, smell and



taste memories of childhood, when we were the ones listening to and learning the story, eating the ceremonial food and struggling to stay awake so we could find the *afikomen*. Pesach is the *Chag* that, more than any other, makes us want to be with others of us, our community, where we feel at home around that large, familial, familial table, grateful to be part of something larger than ourselves. It's the table where we commit to *tikkun olam* and helping all who suffer. Hey, it also gives Elijah

one more chance to walk through that door and join us.



— Gloria Avner

- THIS MONTH IN JEWISH HISTORY -

MAY

1282 B.C.E. – This is the traditional date marking the fall of the walls of Jericho to Joshua and the army sent by God and Moses to conquer Canaan.

1096 – On their way to join eastern Christians in Byzantium for the first Crusade, both knights and peasants attack the synagogue at Speyer, in southwestern Germany. It is the first in a series of attacks that will gather momentum over centuries, though not all atrocities are committed against Jews and not all local authorities, civic or clerical, turn a blind eye. According to Maggie Anton, author of the book series about Rashi's daughters, the local bishop, Bishop John, actually meets the Crusaders with an army, which routs the opportunistic marauders and cuts off the hands of the worst offenders. Far worse massacres occur later in the month in the cities of Worms, Mainz and Cologne, who make middling efforts to protect their Jewish citizens.

1260 – Kublai Khan becomes ruler of the Mongol Empire. Many travelers report meeting Jews engaged in trade there. Marco Polo records that Kublai Khan himself celebrates the festivals of Muslims, Christians and Jews alike, indicating enough Jews in the country to warrant attention by its rulers. Historical sources also describe Jewish communities at various trade ports, including Hangzhou, Guangzhou, Ningbo, Yangzhou, and Kaifeng.

1348 – Charles University in Prague, Bohemia is established as the first university in Central Europe. Over four hundred years later, near the end of the 18th century, Jews (as well as Protestants) are allowed to attend. In 1911, Albert Einstein is appointed a full professor at the school, a position he holds until 1914.

1718 – The city of New Orleans is founded by Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville. In 1724, the French adopt The *Code Noir*, which deals primarily with the issue of slaves but also

mandates the expulsion of Jews from the city. The first record of a Jewish residence is that of Isaac Rodrigues Monsanto in 1757. The Jewish community begins to grow after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 (which for a total price of \$15 million practically doubles the size of the fledgling United States), when Americans assume sovereignty and, in one of history's ironies for the antebellum South, eliminate the Black Code.

1847 – The first Australian opera is performed at the Royal Victoria Theatre in Sydney. "Don John of Austria" is a collaboration of composer Isaac Nathan and librettist Jacob Levi Montefiore.

1849 – The May Uprising in Dresden begins, the last of the German Revolutions of 1848, also called the "March Revolution." These uprisings are a widespread rebellion against the rigid, autocratic structure of the states of central Europe that occupy the former territory of the Holy Roman Empire. Middle and working class Germans demand increased political freedom, democracy and liberalization of social policies. The conservative aristocracy withstands this challenge to their rule and the movement fails. Many Jews participate in this movement toward liberalism and modernism. Its failure is a major spur toward the large migration of German Jews to the United States in the mid-19th century, bringing with them Reform Judaism, education, banking and commerce, widespread middle-class prosperity, and a thorough change to the face of American Judaism.

1861 – Dr. David Camden De Leon, known as the "Fighting Doctor," is appointed as first surgeon general of the Confederate Army. Born in South Carolina, De Leon receives medical training at the University of Pennsylvania. Following graduation, he joins the United States Army, where he serves with distinction during the Mexican War. As a native of the South, he chooses to resign his commission and join the Confederacy. His Union counterpart as surgeon general is one Dr. Jonathan Horowitz.

1863 – The Battle of Chancellorsville ends in the Virginia foothills. Perhaps its greatest importance is the death there of General Lee's top lieutenant, Stonewall Jackson. (Many claim his absence is deeply felt later at Gettysburg.) In the battle, Lt. Col. Edward Salomon leads the 82nd Illinois, which includes a heavily Jewish company from Chicago. Salomon becomes a hero at Gettysburg and one of the highest-ranking Jewish officers in the Union Army, ultimately brevetted as Brigadier General.

1873 – Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis receive a patent for their unique manner of manufacturing durable blue denim work pants.

1884 – Judah P. Benjamin dies in exile and is buried in Paris by his only daughter. Born in the West Indies in 1811 to observant Jewish parents, Benjamin is raised in Charleston, South Carolina, where his father is co-founder of the first Reform Congregation in the United States. At age 14 he attends Yale Law School and then practices law in New Orleans. A founder of the Illinois Central Railroad, a state legislator, a planter and slaveholder, Benjamin is elected to the U.S. Senate from Louisiana during the 1850s. He twice declines appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court. (It will be another 62 years, until 1916, before Louis Brandeis becomes the first Jew on the Supreme Court.) When the South secedes, Benjamin joins the Confederacy, appointed to the three highest cabinet positions: Attorney General, Secretary of War and Secretary of State. After the war, Benjamin seeks refuge in England, where he prospers in a second legal career.

1891 – An article entitled "Russian Jews" appears in the *New York Times*. It opens with the statement that "Every American will be glad to see...a scheme to colonize the Jews expelled from the Czar's dominions on an immense tract" of land in Argentina, in a project being underwritten by Baron Hirsch. The United States, says the article, already has too many Jewish immigrants from Russia. It describes Russian Jews as impoverished, ignorant, a burden on society and a mass that will never assimilate into American life.

1902 – Theodore Herzl writes to the Sultan of Turkey appealing for the establishment of a Jewish university in Palestine. The idea of a Jewish university, and all that such a university implies, quickly becomes an important part of the Zionist vision.

1904 – The United States begins construction of the Panama Canal. A Jewish community already exists in Panama, founded as *Kol Shearith Israel* in 1876 in territory then part of the nation of Colombia. By 1911, when the canal is almost ready to open, the Jewish community numbers approximately 500.

1910 – Tel Aviv is founded, according to most sources. Seeking a healthier environment than that of crowded and noisy Jaffa, Palestinian Jews form a company called *Ahuzat-Bayit* and, with the help of the Jewish National Fund, purchase twelve acres of sand dunes north of Jaffa. In 1910, the suburb is named Tel Aviv after Nahum Sokolow's translation of "Altneuland," Herzl's fictional, utopian depiction of a Jewish State written in 1902.

1912 – Columbia University approves plans to award prizes in several categories of American letters as proposed by the late German-Jewish immigrant Joseph Pulitzer. Pulitzer's will provides a \$2 million endowment for the establishment of a school of journalism at Columbia University and a fund to establish annual prizes for literature, drama, music and journalism. In 1922 a prize is added for cartoonists.

1934 – The district of Birobidzhan in remote Russian Siberia is established as a Jewish Autonomous Region by the government of Josef Stalin. It is to cover an area of 36,000 sq. km., with Yiddish as its official language. It will also solve a centuries-old Russian vexation with its Jews. Within two years Stalin has a change of heart and has its Jewish socialist leaders liquidated. Although a library and theater are established, it never reaches a population of more than 18,000. (Despite decades of emigration, the Jewish population of Soviet-held territory is at that point still somewhere between one and two million.) ♦

Shavuot

Childhood Memories

.....

Milk, Cheesecake, and Torah

by Joyce Peckman

A large bowl sits on the kitchen table, filled with a mixture of pot cheese and cream cheese. My mother stands stirring with a wooden spoon. Near the bowl is a tiny bottle of vanilla, the large container of sugar from the pantry, and paper towels. On the stove is a mysterious mixture of eggs and flour, which, when poured into the frying pan, would produce the thin, delicate rounds which were neither omelets nor pancakes. She knew how much to pour into the pan, and how many seconds to let each one cook before turning it out onto the growing stack of paper towels that kept the rounds from sticking to each other. In the refrigerator, sour cream and strawberry jam waited to crown the end products of her labor. This is my childhood memory of *Shavuot*. My mother seldom made those wonderful blintzes (never again, once I became a teenager and she went off to work), but the memory of their richness has made the paltry store-bought variety seem not worth the calories.

Shavuot was the holiday we didn't really celebrate. It didn't have the drama of the High Holidays, or Passover's *matzah* and family seder, reading the *Haggadah* around the table. There was no *lulav* and *etrog* to shake



in the *sukkah* at the Temple. We were allowed to take the day off from school on *Shavuot* only if we went to services at the temple, but since final exams were quickly coming up, it seemed risky.

Apparently, things haven't

changed much over the years. When I called my religious grandchildren to ask them how they celebrate *Shavuot*, the reply was, "We go to shul and eat cheesecake."

Yet *Shavuot* is an important holiday, commemorating the vital wheat harvest in Israel. The word *Shavuot* means "weeks." The Torah mandates the seven-week counting of the *Omer* from the second day of Passover. On Passover, the Jews were freed from slavery. Seven weeks later,

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they stood at the foot of Mount Sinai, ready to accept the Torah and commit to serving God. The holiday is one of the three Biblical pilgrimage festivals, when the Israelites used to travel to the Temple in Jerusalem to offer sacrifices. Other than that ancient requirement, and the traditional festival meal, special added prayers and abstention from work, there are no mandated *mitzvot* for this holiday.

There are, however many customs (*minhagim*). My childhood memory comes from the custom of eating dairy for the main meal. The reason for this custom is not clear. Some say it is because in the “Song of Songs,” Torah is compared to milk: “Like honey and milk, it lies under your tongue.” Others say it is because the laws of *kashrut*

had just been given, and since the people had not yet prepared a second set of dishes and pots, they refrained from cooking meat. Some note that the Hebrew word for milk is *chalav*, which has

a gematria numerical value of 40, corresponding to the 40 days Moses spent on the mountain obtaining the Torah.

The custom of all-night Torah study (*Tikkun Leil Shavuot*) goes back to 1533 when Rabbi Joseph Caro, author of the *Shulchan Aruch*, then living in Ottoman Salonika, invited Rabbi Shlomo Halevi Alkabetz and other Kabbalistic colleagues to hold Shavuot-night study vigils for which they prepared for three days in advance, just as the Israelites had prepared for three days before the giving of the Torah.

According to Moshe Sokolow of Yeshiva University, the mass consumption of coffee in the Ottoman Empire was a factor in the emergence of the all-night study. The earliest use of coffee is reported in the 15th century



among the Sufis of Yemen. Those Muslim mystics depended on it to keep them awake during their nighttime devotions. By the mid-16th century, coffee drinking had spread throughout the Middle East, and coffeehouses became popular for secular as well as religious purposes. And so the KJCC, under the guidance of coffeemeister and

bagelmon Marc Bloom, carries on a venerable historic tradition. (Not to mention millions of grateful college students around the world, in former Ottoman lands and beyond.)

In 1967, one week before *Shavuot*, the Israeli army recaptured the Old City and reunited Jerusalem. On *Shavuot* day, the Western Wall was opened to visitors for the first time since 1948. Since then, each year tens of thousands of people finish their *Shavuot* night-time study by walking to the Western Wall and joining in sunrise prayers.

Shavuot this year will be Sunday and Monday, May 20th and 21st. It will be celebrated at KJCC on Friday, May 18th with a dairy dinner at 6 p.m., followed by services including *Yizkor*. *Tikkun Leil Shavuot* learning will be led by Rabbi Richard Agler after services. ♦

Light the Lights

The Dramatic Story of Lag B'Omer

by Gloria Avner

This year Lag B'Omer (the 33rd day of counting Omer) falls on May 3rd, or according to the Hebrew calendar, on the 18th day of Iyar. We've been counting omer (a measure of grain offering), since the night of our second seder. We're almost two-thirds of the way through seven weeks, and to borrow a question from Passover, why is this single day different from the other days? Our newly freed slave selves were walking the long way round to Mt. Sinai to receive the Torah, but what were our slightly more recent ancestors, and we, (or some of us) doing that day, other than counting, and why?

There is a great story here, a day of great joyousness and celebration on the 33rd day of counting grain sacrifice since Passover. At this point there will be only 16 more days until we mark the full forty-nine, seven weeks (*Shavuot* means weeks) of wandering in the desert, marking the span from our escape from slavery to our arrival at Mt. Sinai and the completion of our spiritual preparation to receive the Torah.

I am stunned at how much there is to learn from this supposedly minor holiday. Most of us probably know a few tidbits: people go out in the country and have picnics and children play with bows and arrows. Some of us may know that there is a period of serious mourning during the whole forty-nine days, and that you are not allowed to celebrate *simchas* (happy occasions). During the full seven weeks we are supposed to be working seriously on our inner spiritual



development. You can't give a child a first haircut. You can't wear perfume, take luxurious baths, or even get married – except on this one day. *Lag B'Omer* (lamed gimel being the numerical equivalent of 33) is the exception. This day is supposed to be totally joyous.

But there are so many questions. What have we been mourning? Why have we been mourning for so many days? Why are we so happy today? The answers are layers thick and deep, of course. This is Judaism, history and legend, mysticism and miracles. (There is so much drama to the story I am surprised no one has written a mini-series about it.)

The main characters are Rabbi Akiva, Shimon bar Kochba, and Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai. During the years 132-135 C.E., some 60 years after the first rebellion against Roman rule that resulted in the destruction of the Second Temple, Shimon Bar Kochba led what was at first a successful revolt against Roman rule. He had the

backing of Rabbi Akiva (a late learner, who went to school with his own children before becoming the preeminent Torah scholar of his time). Rabbi Akiva believed Bar Kochba could be the Messiah, and declared him so. But though this began with what seemed like a genuine chance, it did not end well. It was to be the third and final rebellion of the Jews against Roman rule.

Bar Kochba had tremendous strength, leadership skills, and scholarly knowledge. He fielded an army of 100,000 men who actually succeeded in ejecting the Romans from the land of Israel (which at that point they had ruled for about 200 years). The Jewish people declared independence and started preparing the building materials for the Third Temple.

Rome could not allow this. Emperor Hadrian sent Julius Severus (conqueror of England), to crush the revolt. At first the Romans were unsuccessful; the entire 22nd Roman legion was destroyed. By the end of the Bar Kochba revolt, the Romans had placed almost half their entire army – 12 of 28 legions and 120,000 soldiers – in Judea trying to put down the Jewish revolt.

But Bar Kochba did something that Rabbi Akiva could not stomach; he killed another rabbi whom he thought had betrayed secrets. Rabbi Akiva withdrew his support. It took the Romans two more years, but they ground down the rebellion, and when it ended, some 500,000 Jews had lost their lives. A thousand towns and cities were wiped out.

During the next three years, Rome saw to the massive spiritual and physical destruction of Judea. Many of the generation's leading sages, including Rabbi Akiva, were executed. Jews became a minority in the land of Israel for the first time in 1,000 years and would remain so for nearly 2,000 years.

Those are the bones of the story. But the flesh consists of the actions taken by Rabbi Akiva, believing that Bar Kochba could have been the Messiah. He made his students join the fray, spiritual scholars joining forces with Jewish warriors. There are hints of misbehavior, of egos, of people held to a high standard, not treating others with respect. A

plague struck the students and 2,400 of them died within the first days of counting the omer. And then the plague stopped, on this 33rd day – *Lag B'Omer* – leaving a handful alive.

We mourn the students and we mourn the half million. We also mourn the end of hope, for more than 1,800 years, for a rebuilt Israel.

Still, there is always balance. A ray of light is visible through the darkness. We celebrate the end of the plague, but, more important, we celebrate the life and work and *yahrzeit* of Shimon ben Yochai, one of Rabbi Akiva's surviving students. It was he who, seeing the decimation of Rabbi Akiva's students, decided to put the secret oral teachings of the Torah into writing so that they would not be lost. Tradition tells us he created the *Zohar*, the text of the Kabbalah.

Today, in Israel, on *Lag B'Omer*, nearly 250,000 people make pilgrimage to Rabbi Shimon's place of birth. It is said that when Rabbi Shimon was writing down his teachings, a blindingly bright light came from his head. In honor of that light, children scavenge wood for months in advance and build structures up to 30 feet tall. On *Lag B'Omer*, the wood is set alight and bonfires blaze from streets to rooftops. Giant tents are set up with food and drink for visitors. There is dancing and singing in the streets. Planes flying over Israel are confused. Smoke, fire and celebration illuminate everything.

There *is* much to celebrate. The dream of an independent Israel was greatly delayed but not destroyed. The teachings from Mt. Sinai are with us. And gifted teachers are with us, too. Most of all, we have the gift of Torah to help us be a light to the world. Sixteen days after *Lag B'Omer* (well, maybe a little earlier this year), we will celebrate that gift, eating cheesecake and taking part in learning under the guidance of our Resident Scholar, Rabbi Richard Agler. Celebrate *Shavuot* at KJCC on May 18th. Meanwhile, enjoy May 3rd to the fullest. If you've been waiting to get married or longing for luxurious baths, or wishing to have a bonfire, now is the time. *Chag Sameach!* ♦





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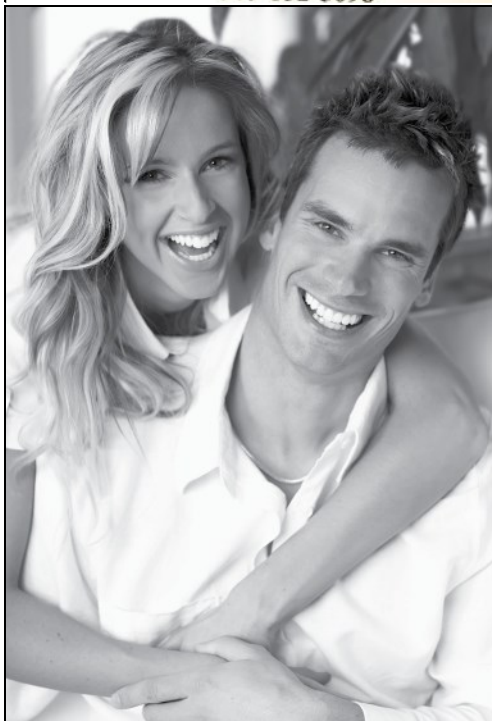
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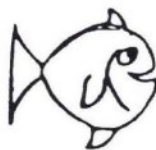
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