

Chai~Lights



March 2010

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Keys Jewish Community Center

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CHAI-LIGHTS is the
monthly newsletter of the
Keys Jewish Community Center

P.O. Box 1332

Tavernier, Florida 33070

chailights@keysjewishcenter.com

President's Message Alan Beth



We welcome the new officers and board who were sworn in at our annual KJCC meeting on Valentine's Day. (Also, thank you, I think, for electing me again for a second term as your president.) Those that attended the meeting witnessed KJCC democracy in action, when Elinor Grossman was nominated from the floor. Thanks to Carol Steinbock for helping us with the secret ballot procedure and tabulating the results. Carol also officiated the swearing-in, as she has the last couple of years.

The running of the synagogue depends on all of us to chip in and assist in any way we can: serve on a committee or help Sisterhood, every action counts. As an example, one of our members, Dave Mont, helps every single day by checking the KJCC answering machine for messages. There's Marc Bloom, who is always ready to make coffee for any event at KJCC. (Imagine how meetings would be without Marc's coffee.) Participate as much as you can – every little bit helps and it all adds up.

Last month saw a wonderful membership drive on a Monday night. The Yiddishkeit play—a musical event written, arranged and produced by Erica Garrett—was unforgettable. Last month also saw our first visiting rabbi for 2010. Many of you

had requested this when responding to our survey. Thanks to our Ritual chair, Gloria Avner, who worked with the Rabbi, and thanks also to Stuart and Lauren Sax for introducing Rabbi Young, from Temple Judea in Miami, to our synagogue. We got a lot of positive feedback for his service. I was particularly proud of how welcomed we made him feel. I enjoyed his sermon, about recognizing the miracles of life in little, everyday things.

By now, you should all have received your invitations to the KJCC 30th anniversary celebration. (Thanks, Gene. They are beautiful.) Many of you have noticed that the event is free to members. We wanted to be able to celebrate our anniversary with as many members as possible, not worry who could afford to come or not. The truth is that this event will cost a lot, though far less than it might have due to Gene's negotiating skills. We do not, of course, want the synagogue to lose money. We encourage all to donate as much as you can to help defray our costs.

In closing, I would like to thank the officers and the board for all their efforts. We've had a wonderfully successful year, and I eagerly look forward to another.

-Alan

March 2010

15 Adar - 16 Nisan

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 Fashion Show 11:30 a.m. at Snook's	5 Bernie Ginsberg & Yardena Kamely <i>Carol & Steve Steinbock</i>	6
7 Sisterhood Meeting Theater Outing: "Miss Saigon"	8	9	10	11	12 Jim Boruszak & Gloria Avner <i>Patricia & Henry Isenberg</i>	13
14 KJCC 30th Anniversary Gala Bloodmobile at KJCC	15	16	17	18	19 George Swartz <i>Mah Jonggettes</i>	20 First Day of Spring
21	22 Women's Seder 5:30 p.m. at KJCC	23	24	25	26 Steve Friedman 6:30 Service	27
28	29 Erev Pesach	30 First Day of Passover KJCC 2nd Seder	31 Second Day of Passover	<div>Names denote leaders of Friday services. <i>Italicized names are Oneg sponsors.</i></div>		

Nosh

A Welcome to our Newest Members

KJCC is very pleased to welcome several new members this month: Ken and Jerri Grossman of Key Largo, Gladly Roberts of Key Largo, and Stephan and Eva Gabor Ban of Marathon. Actually it's a welcome back to Stephan Ban, who was a founding KJCC member and is the father of longtime member Judy Greenman. We look forward to seeing you all and hope you'll become regular fixtures at services and our many events.

Book Club is Underway

Several KJCC women gathered together at Bea Graham's home for an afternoon of book reviews and insightful discussion of recently read books, some new and some not-so-new. It was both interesting and enjoyable. Try these: The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society by Mary Ann Shaffer -- Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout -- Out of Egypt by Andre Aciman -- Small Miracles by Halberstam and Leventhal (set of six). Look for the date of our next meeting in Chai-Lights and *join us*.

-Bea

Carpooling to the 30th Gala

Anyone wanting to carpool to the 30th Anniversary Gala on Duck Key Sunday, March 14th should contact Beth Kaminstein, 664-2875 or bethkam@bellsouth.net; Beth will be matching up cars and riders. Gene Silverman has also arranged a special group rate of \$129 per room for anyone wanting to stay over at Hawk's Cay (a lovely resort) on Sunday night after the party. Contact Gene at 664-3316 or gsilverman122@gmail.com.

BOOK PLATE

IN HONOR OF CAROL STEINBOCK

With Many Thanks
By Pauline Roller

BOOK PLATE

TO HONOR DR. STEVE SMITH

Country Doctor of the Year
2009

From Rene and Skip Rose

Oneg Sponsors for March 2010

March 5th—Carol & Steve Steinbock for Steve's birthday.

March 12th—Patricia & Henry Isenberg in honor of their anniversary.

March 19th—Mah Jonggettes

TREE OF LIFE

To honor Dr. Gerri Emkey

By Joel and Linda Pollack
2009

Steve Steinbock

to Honor 70 Years of a Good Life
With Love, Carol

Happy 70th Birthday to Steve Steinbock

2010

From Joel and Linda Pollack

In honor of my Dad, Irving Rosen

by Joan and Harvey Kay

In honor of my Aunt, Herta Schapira

by Joan and Harvey Kay

Congratulations Dr. Steve Smith

2009 Country Doctor of the Year
From Jim and Joan Boruszak

To honor Dr. Steve Smith

For the 2009 Country Doctor of the Year award
From Joel and Linda Pollack

March Birthdays

1st.....	Melvin L. Jacobson
1st.....	Sasha Dutton
2nd.....	Barbara Kantor
3rd.....	Stephanie Gilderman
3rd.....	Stephen Steinbock
4th.....	Benjamin K. Kwalick
6th.....	Bea Graham
6th.....	Bill Gordon
7th.....	Hannah Feig
7th.....	Toby Goldfinger
8th.....	Allen Holbrook
9th.....	Pearl Jacobs
10th.....	Kate Horowitz
10th.....	Laurence Green
11th.....	Alvin J. Gottlieb
11th.....	Bryan Schur
12th.....	Heath Greenbaum
13th.....	Carl Roy
13th.....	Eileen Hermann
14th.....	Jenna Lane
14th.....	Seth Horowitz
15th.....	Allan Boruszak
15th.....	Johanna Willner
16th.....	Steven Nobil
17th.....	Benjamin Schwaid
17th.....	Daniel E. Friedman
18th.....	Eric Grace
19th.....	Michelle Palacino
20th.....	Janet Palacino
20th.....	Susan Sachs
21st.....	Barbara A. Calev
21st.....	Erwin Kantor
21st.....	James Jr. Nobil
21st.....	Joseph Palacino
21st.....	Lois S. Kaufman
24th.....	Doug Graham
24th.....	Gloria Auston
25th.....	Sylvia Berman
27th.....	Michelle E. Denker
28th.....	Roger Vorcheimer
29th.....	Joel Pollack
30th.....	Anthony A. Gutierrez
30th.....	David VanArtsdalen
30th.....	Lee Schur
31st.....	Eva Faust
31st.....	Jane S. Friedman
31st.....	Robert Gintel
31st.....	Sari Eliz. Goldstein

It's Scholarship Application Time

Anyone wanting a KJCC scholarship application, please contact Kurt Kluger at 394-7571 or e-mail kurtkluger@bellsouth.net.

BOOK PLATE

IN HONOR OF STEVE STEINBOCK

Always Helpful
By Pauline Roller

March Anniversaries

		Years
1st	Jerry & Sheila Olsen.....	51
4th	Robert Jay & Gloria Auston.....	28
7th	Joseph & Susan Sachs.....	45
14th	Henry & Patricia Isenberg.....	40
18th	Alvan & Carol Field.....	22
22nd	David & Patti Gross.....	13
24th	Morris & Sherrie Willner.....	41
25th	Joseph & Susan Goldberg.....	17

BOOK PLATE

IN HONOR OF GERRI EMKEY

from Joan and Jim Boruszak

YAHREZEIT PLAQUE

Our Beloved

David M. Cohn

4/6/1933--1/15/2009

BOOK PLATE

In Honor of

STEVEN J. SMITH M.D.

Awarded

Country Doctor of the Year 2009

Congratulations!

From Muriel and George Swartz

KJCC GIFT SHOP

COME TO THE KJCC GIFT SHOP FOR ALL YOUR NEEDS!

WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING:

HOUSE GIFTS

BAR AND BAT MITZVAH GIFTS AND CARDS

WEDDING GIFTS AND CARDS

Yes, we have yahrzeit candles - traditional or electric!

plus JEWELRY, MEZUZAHs, SEDER PLATES, MATZOH SWEEPERS,

CHALLAH PLATES, CHALLAH KNIVES AND MORE

If you do not see what you want, we can order it for you.

Call Joan Boruszak 852-0833.



Ongoing Projects and Programs of KJCC

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

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

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

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

Cemetery Information - If you wish to plan for the very distant future, you can reserve space at the Kendall Mt. Nebo Cemetery in the KJCC section. Call Bea Graham, 852-0214.

Picture Postcards - We have beautiful picture postcards bearing the Millard Wells representation of the KJCC, which was commissioned by Sisterhood. Quantities can be packaged to fit your needs and mailed to you or your gift recipient. The price is \$36 per hundred but we will sell lesser quantities. Contact Joan Boruszak, 852-0833.

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

JNF Trees in Israel - A gift of a tree, or two or more, makes a long-remembered way to honor a loved one, a relative, a friend or an occasion. Both Israel and the KJCC benefit. Call Nancy Kluger, 852-4353.

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

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

Call the names listed above for assistance or send your request and check to the KJCC, P.O. Box 1332, Tavernier, FL 33070. Recipients of your gifts will be notified by card and listings will appear in Chai-Lights as well.

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.

Book Plates

Boruszak, Jim and Joan
Roller, Pauline
Roller, Pauline
Rose, Skip and Rene
Swartz, George and Muriel

General Fund

Begam, Delores
Emkey, Gerri
Shiloch, Chanoch and Jan

General Fund

Sax, Stuart and Lauren
Duquesnel, James and Janice

JNF Certificates Sent By

Graham, Bea
Kluger, Kurt and Nancy
Rose, Skip and Rene
Hayden, Beth

KJCC Tree of Life Leaves

Boruszak, Jim and Joan
Kay, Harvey and Joan
Kay, Harvey and Joan
Pollack, Joel and Linda
Pollack, Joel and Linda
Pollack, Joel and Linda
Steinbock, Carol

Oneg Fund Sponsors

Kay, Harvey and Joan

In Honor of

Dr. Gerri Emkey
Carol Steinbock
Steve Steinbock
Dr. Steve Smith
Dr. Steve Smith

In Honor of

Cathy Urbo
Bob Kinney

In Memory of

Laurie Beth
Laurie Beth

In Memory of

Laurie Beth
Laurie Beth
Laurie Beth
Laurie Beth

In Honor of

Dr. Steve Smith
Irving Rosen
Herta Schapira
Dr. Gerri Emkey
Dr. Steve Smith
Steve Steinbock
Steve Steinbock

In Memory of

Cele Rosen

Yartzeit Contributions

Feinberg, Arthur
Friedman, Max and Ingrid Dr. Max and Flora Rosenthal
Graham, Bea
Horn, Ronald and Dorothy
Isenberg, Henry and Patricia
Krissel, Michael
Kwalick, Teresa
Marmar, David and Pameka
Nason, Stanley
Roller, Pauline
Steinberg, Richard and Sheila
Tallent, Ralph and Lillian
Wolfe, Larry and Dorothy
Wolfe, Larry and Dorothy

Yartzeit Memorial Plaques

Cohn, Nancy

30th Anniversary

Conklin, Wes and Rita
Cooper, Alan and Susan
Friedman, Stephan and Jane
Gould, Maryon
Gross, David and Patti
Grossman, Herb and Elinor
Hartz, Steve and Jan
Kluger, Kurt and Nancy
Kwalick, Teresa
Margulies, Stan and Jenny
Pollack, Joel and Linda
Silverman, Morton and Gene
Wasser, Mark and Sofy
Weihl, Alfred and Sue Ann

In Memory of

William Feinberg
Max and Flora Rosenthal
Nicholas Goldenberg
Ida Ratchik
Fannie Phillips
Joseph Krissel
M. Astray-Caneda
Samuel Marmar
Gloria Nason
Al Roller
Sara Cohen
Morris Estrin
Samuel Wolfe
Morris Feinberg

In Memory of

David Cohn

YEDA VE'TORASHA

Yardena Kamely



Customs Of Jewish Communities Around The World

Exploring the history and heritage of the Jewish people, we find that Judaism is deeply connected to the Middle East and North Africa: Sarah and Abraham came from Mesopotamia, (today's Iraq), the same land where the first yeshivas and the Babylonian Talmud were developed. Purim celebrates the liberation of ancient Persian Jews, and Passover tells the story of ancient Egyptian Jews. Regardless of where Jews lived most recently, all Jews have roots in the Middle East and North Africa. Some communities have more recent ties to this region. *Mizrachim* and *Sephardim* are two distinct communities that are often confused with one another.

Asiatic (or Oriental Jews)—from Central, South and Eastern Asia, and the Middle East, and who have created and preserved their own cultural and religious customs and traditions in Judaism from as far back as Biblical times—are known as *Mizrahi* Jews (plural form: *Mizrachim* in Hebrew). *Mizrahi* means "eastern" in Hebrew.

Sephardim are among the descendants of the line of Jews who chose to return from the First Exile and rebuild Israel after the Persian Empire conquered Babylon. About half a millennium later, under the Roman Empire, the Jews in ancient Israel were exiled for the second time, many eventually becoming settled in Spain (*Sepharad* in Hebrew) and Portugal.

Today Mizrahi Jews, also referred to as *Edot HaMizrach* (Communities of the East), are Jews descended from the historic Jewish communities of the Middle East, Central Asia and the Caucasus. The term *Mizrahi* is used in Israel for Jews from the Arab world and adjacent, primarily Muslim-majority, coun-

tries. This includes Iraqi Jews, Syrian Jews, Lebanese Jews, Yemenite Jews, Persian Jews, Afghan Jews, Bukharian Jews, Maghrebi Jews, Berber Jews, Kurdish Jews, Mountain Jews, Georgian Jews and Ethiopian Jews. It would also include the Jews of India and Pakistan.

Despite their heterogeneous origins, Mizrahi Jews generally practice rites identical or similar to traditional Sephardic Judaism, although with some differences among the customs, *minhagim*, of the particular communities. In certain areas, where the Sephardic immigration was weak, Sephardim assimilated into the predominantly Mizrahi communities, taking on all-Mizrahi traditions and retaining just a hint of Sephardic heritage, such as Spanish-sounding names.

Different traditions show up very clearly on major holidays. Some examples:

Sephardic Tradition: Most Sephardic Jews permit eating *kitniyot*, (approximately translated as "bits" in Hebrew), like corn, rice, and beans on *Pesach*. The Sephardic prayer book is a bit different, as are the melodies used. Ladino is a language used by Sephardic Jews based on Spanish and Hebrew. Sephardic Jews follow a specific way to put on tefillin and say blessings for it. The Mizrahi tradition is to keep the Torah scroll in a hard case, not a fabric cover.

Hungarian-Jewish Tradition: To commemorate the gold and silver that the Egyptians showered on the Israelites as they fled (*Shemot* 12:35), Jews in Hungary decorated their Seder tables with all of their valuable jewels. If you don't mind rinsing off grape juice spills, this ritual will make your Seder shine.

Persian-Jewish Tradition: At the Pesach Seder during the song "*Dayenu*," green onions are distributed and people hit each other with the stalks when the ninth stanza begins. Besides being hilarious to watch, some have speculated that the ritual refers to when the Israelites yearned for Egyptian onions, instead of manna, while in the desert (*Bemidbar* 11:5-6).

Bukharan Jews: On Hanukkah, Jews in Bukhara (southern Russia) baked cakes with coins, called Hanukkah *gelt*, in the dough. Brides wear long, embroidered caftans and hats with fur-lining. Bukharan Jews play a style of music called shashmakam, which mixes klezmer, Muslic, and Central Asian sounds.

Jews of India: After services on Shabbat, the communities gather for *Kiddush* and *hamotzi*, but instead of challah, they eat *chapatti*, an Indian flatbread.

Jews of North Africa: Mimouna is a holiday celebrated the day after Pesach and in Israel people have picnics and BBQs.

Syrian Jewish Tradition: In Syria on Hanukkah, the synagogue caretaker would send a beautiful candle to each family in the congregation as a gift to use as their *Shamash*. During the week of Hanukkah, children in Damascus would collect food and money. Then, on the last day of the holiday, they would prepare a meal for their teachers, a meal for the poor, and a meal for themselves.

Passover customs in different Jewish communities were and are primarily reflected in the foods served at the Seder meal, where ingredients particular to the region have been either added to traditional Passover foods, or foods consisting mostly or solely of ingredients found in the region themselves became a tradition. There are also differences in the ways the Exodus story is told: with Ashkenazi Jews, the story will simply be told, while within both Sephardi and Mizrahi communities, the story will be both told and acted

out, but this custom will vary from place to place. Still, the fundamental structure of the Seder meal, outlined in the *Haggadah*, remains the same for Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Mizrahi cultures.

Mizrahi Jews are now half of the Jewish population in Israel. Throughout the rest of the world, Mizrahi Jews have a strong presence in metropolitan areas--Paris, London, Montreal, Los Angeles, Brooklyn, and Mexico City. As Mizrahi and Sephardi Jews are a minority of Jews in North America, their heritage remains foreign to many Ashkenazi Jews. But just as the world has begun to embrace multi-culturalism, so too has the Jewish community begun to acknowledge and celebrate the wonderful cultural diversity that exists among its own people. ◇

KEYS JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

THE PRODUCERS

Sunday, April 25, 2010
2:00 pm

Murray E Nelson Cultural Center
Key Largo
MM 102 Bayside

A shady Broadway producer and his nerdy accountant concoct a scheme to overfinance a huge flop and pocket the excess budget, but the show unexpectedly becomes a smash.

This show has taken its place as one of the all-time great comedies.

Book by Mel Brooks and Thomas Meehan

Music by Mel Brooks

Lyrics by Mel Brooks

Directed by Debra Ginsberg

Original Choreography Recreated by

Gerri Caruncho & Serena Salva

Musical Director: Randy Lichtman

Produced by the Miami Acting Company

Contact: Linda Pollack to reserve your ticket

lindap4000@earthlink.net

Donation: \$25

Sisterhood Joyce Peckman



Before I write about our busy March schedule, I have to mention a few highlights from the recent past. Yiddishkeit night was an amazing success, and thanks must go to the organizer, Dr. Erica Garrett, whose dedication, energy and creativity are beyond description. Thanks also to David & Patti Gross, who won the 50/50 and donated the proceeds back to Sisterhood. Then yesterday, at the KJCC general meeting and installation, I was inspired by Alan's "State of the Union" address. We really are a union of diverse interests and talents that come together, each group complementing and enriching the other. Although Sisterhood produces many events (details to follow), our potluck meals seem like the glue that cements the community. So, my personal "thank you" goes to everyone who worked to provide us with a delicious lunch immediately after our KJCC Annual Membership Meeting. Thank you also to Michael and Suzanne Gilson for their sponsorship of this event.

February 28 was (or will be, depending on when Chai-Lights is received) our Purim celebration and lunch. A joyous *seudah* (feast) is obligatory on Purim. We can always count on our members to perform this obligation very well! Thanks again to Erica Garrett for coordinating.

You will need your date book, beauty rest and a healthy dose of vitamins to keep up with the schedule for March. We start off with a day of fun fashion. On Thursday, March 4 at Snooks Restaurant (MM 99.5 bayside), we'll meet at 11:30 for lunch and Angelika's latest spring wear. Menu choices are: hazelnut chicken, mahi mahi française or pasta with vegetables. Tickets are \$25. If you haven't obtained yours yet, contact Joan Stark or me

with your menu choice.

Just a few days after that, we have our next Sisterhood meeting, on Sunday, March 7th at 9:30 a.m., and then we're off to Miami to "Miss Saigon" that afternoon. I've been told to bring a hankie. If this year is anything like past years, folks will be car-pooling and/or getting together for lunch or dinner. Let me know if you want to give or get a ride. We can figure out the meals at the morning meeting. Let me know if you have any favorite locations. (Chinese, anyone?)

There's one short week to catch our breath, and then the event we've been waiting 30 years to attend – the gala 30th anniversary celebration at Hawk's Cay Resort on Sunday, March 14th. If you are a KJCC member in good standing and haven't gotten an invitation, contact me or Gene Silverman (gsilverman122@gmail.com). If you have received the invitation, please respond; you're right on deadline. Gene and Sofy have been working hard to make this a memorable evening. Don't miss it!

Passover comes very early this year. On Monday, March 22, the Women's Seder will honor Linda Pollack. It is always a wonderful event, and this year we should have a packed house. We will also be creating a commemorative tablecloth. To reserve your place at the Women's Seder, and let us know what you are bringing (meat or pareve - no dairy) please contact Beth Kaminstein (664-2875) or Erica Garrett (393-1162). Donation is \$18 (chai).

This extremely full month ends with Passover's Second Seder on Tuesday, March 30th. Make your reservation with Leslie Dillon (853-2693) or Joan Boruszak (852-0833) as soon as possible.

Hoping to see you soon and often! ♦

KJCC Annual Second Passover Seder



Tuesday, March 30, 2010

6:30 pm

Islamorada Fishing Club

Your check is your reservation. Checks must be received no later than March 20, 2010.

Make checks payable to KJCC Sisterhood, c/o Leslie Dillon, PO Box 370736, Key Largo, FL 33037. Call Joan Boruszak at 852-0833 for information.

PASSOVER

Adults \$45

Children 12 and under are our guests.

Keys Jewish Community Center

7th Annual Women's Seder

Monday

March 22, 2010

5:30 PM @ KJCC

**Homemade Seder Dinner
w/Wine**

Limited seating - Contacts:

Beth (305) 393-4013

bethkam@bellsouth.net

Erica (305) 393-1162

hippiejap@hotmail.com

Dinner-Chai Donation \$18

**Additional Tzedakah
donations will be welcome.**

**Join us in celebration as we
continue our efforts of
Tikkun Olam - repair the
world.**



World Jewish Report

Medina Roy



IDF in Haiti

IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) medics in Haiti treated 960 people, performed 294 life-saving operations, and delivered 16 babies, all in less than two weeks beginning January 12th, when the devastating earthquake struck the Caribbean nation. The medical and rescue teams have returned home to Israel but they left behind medical supplies, light equipment and tents for other medical personnel to use. Israel's assistance was highlighted on more than a dozen major networks. Former President Bill Clinton, who is the U.N. Secretary General's Special Emissary to Haiti, paid homage to the team and told Israeli President Shimon Peres, "I don't know what we would have done without the Israeli hospital in Haiti. [It] was the only operational facility which was able to perform surgery and advanced tests." And now, IsraAID, the Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid, is partnering with actor Sean Penn and Israeli-born actress Moran Atias in its earthquake relief efforts by providing medical care and post-trauma support to refugees in makeshift camps that are now home to more than 50,000 people. (www.israelnationalnews.com, 1-26-10 and www.jta.org, 2-1-10)

2010 Sydney Taylor Book Awards

Winners of the 2010 Sydney Taylor Book Awards for Jewish Children's Literature were recently announced by the Association of Jewish Libraries. The winners are:

- Older readers' category: "The Importance of Wings," by Robin Friedman
- Young readers: "New Year at the Pier: A Rosh Hashanah Story," by April Halprin Wayland.
- Teen category: "Tropical Secrets: Holocaust Refugees in Cuba," by Margarita Engle.

The Sydney Taylor Book Awards are

named for the author of the popular children's series "All-of-a-Kind Family." (*American Libraries*, February 2010)

The Centenarian Knish

There are no longer very many knisherries around, but the Yonah Schimmel Knish Bakery on Manhattan's Lower East Side is celebrating 100 years of the softball-sized potato delicacy. After immigrating to New York City from Romania, Yonah Schimmel, a trained Torah scribe, wanted to be a teacher. But, to make ends meet, he started selling his wife's knishes on Coney Island in the 1880s. He opened his legendary store on East Houston Street in 1910; during its century-long existence, the store has been passed down through family members. Ellen Anistratov is the current owner along with her father, a distant relative of Yonah Schimmel. (*The Forward*, 1-20-10)

More Problems for Holocaust Survivors

Half of the estimated 517,000 remaining Holocaust survivors are living in poverty. This according to the Jewish Claims Conference, the organization set up in the 1950s to negotiate with the German and other governments on behalf of Holocaust victims. Most of the 260,000 survivors that live below the poverty line are in countries of the former Soviet Union and Israel and a fifth of all survivors, most of whom are over 80 years old, are in need of care. "We have an obligation to ensure that old-age Holocaust survivors can spend their remaining years in dignity," Georg Heuberger, representative of the Claims Conference in Germany said. (*World Jewish Congress*, 1-27-10)

Mengele's Diary

The diary of Josef Mengele, the Nazi doctor who conducted cruel experiments on Auschwitz inmates and sent hundreds of thousands to die, was bought by the grandson of a Holocaust survivor, an "east coast Jewish philanthropist" who wishes to remain anonymous. The diary was up for auction by Alexander Autographs, the historical artifacts house in Connecticut. At the end of World War II, Mengele fled to Brazil, where he died in 1979. He began his diary in 1960 when he was 49. The 180-page journal was sold for an undisclosed amount, but it was expected to bring in more than \$64,000. Initially, news of the auction prompted anger and revulsion among Holocaust survivors and their families, but apparently the manuscript will be donated to a museum devoted to the Holocaust. The diary includes a description of "lesser races" as "inferior morons." (*World Jewish Congress*, 2-2-10 and www.jta.org, 2-3-10)

And The Oscar Goes to...

Three films with Jewish themes and one Israeli film are in the running for this year's Academy Awards. "*Inglorious Basterds*," a "Jewish revenge fantasy in which a squad of Jewish GIs wipes out the Nazi leadership," won nominations in four categories, including Best Picture. The two other Jewish-themed pictures that received nominations for Best Picture are "*An Education*," a film from Britain, and "*A Serious Man*." For the third consecutive year, Israel has an entry in the foreign-language film category. The film is "Ajami." The Oscars will be announced on March 7th. (www.jta.org, 2-2-10)

An Extraordinary Act of Kindness

At the end of January, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown met with Denis Avey, 91, a former British Prisoner of War who helped a Jewish inmate survive Auschwitz. Avey hatched a plan to trade places with a Jewish prisoner by swapping clothing on two separate occasions to smuggle himself into the camp. His heroic actions provided the Jewish prisoner with the opportunity to receive vital food and rest in the British camp, and for

Avey, it was a chance to gather facts from within the death camp. Avey was held in Monowitz, a smaller camp near Auschwitz, and he heard rumors about the conditions at the neighboring camp. He convinced the unknown prisoner to swap uniforms two nights so he could witness the atrocities himself. In that short period of time, Avey befriended the prisoner, Ernst Lobethall, helping him to survive by smuggling cigarettes – as valuable as gold in the camps – to him to use to bribe the camp guards. Before his death in 2002, Lobethall recorded his story for Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation. Lobethall knew his savior only as "Ginger," never learning the name of the British soldier who saved his life. Avey is being considered for the title "Righteous Among the Nations" by the Yad Vashem Memorial in Jerusalem. (*Jerusalem Post*, 1-24-10)

An Israeli "American Idol?"

Vered Benami, a 22-year-old "sort-of Israeli," made it through the first round of auditions on the popular TV show "*American Idol*." Now a waitress and living in Los Angeles, Benami is competing for a spot among the show's final 24. "*Entertainment Weekly*" ranked Benami third among all those who performed in the series' initial round of auditions. She even earned praise from Simon Cowell, the show's often merciless critic. Ynet, the Israeli news web site, is reporting that Vered (the Hebrew word for "rose") was born in New York to a "family of Israelis" and raised in Tennessee. She's not the first "Idol" contestant with Israeli roots. Elliott Yamin, who placed third on the show's fifth season, has an American Jewish mother and a father who immigrated to the United States from Israel. (*The Forward*, 2-10-10)

In Memoriam

Avrom Sutzkever, the great Yiddish poet who is also considered to be one of the great poets of the 20th century, died in Tel Aviv at the end of January. He was 96. He was the founder and editor of the leading Yiddish literary journal *Di Goldene Keyt* (The Golden Chain), which is no longer in publication. He

received the Israel Prize in 1985 and remains the only Yiddish poet to win that prestigious award. Sutzkever was born in 1913 to a family of rabbis and Torah scholars in Smorgon, southwest of Vilna. His family escaped to Siberia during the First World War but he returned to Vilna in 1921. In 1933 he became active in the Yiddish literary group *Yung-Vilne* (Young Vilna) together with Chaim Grade, Shmerke Kaczerginski and Leyzer Volf. During World War II he smuggled arms into the Vilna ghetto. He was able to hide treasured manuscripts and documents of the YIVO Institute along with his own writings. In 1947, Sutzkever arrived in Palestine. He had a profound cultural impact on the city of Tel Aviv and became the *de facto* national Yiddish poet. (*The Forward*, 1-20-10)

Mount of Olives Finds a New Home

The Jewish cemetery on the Mount of Olives, the oldest and most important Jewish cemetery in the world, just went online. A new project undertaken by the City of David Archeological Park has begun the process of identifying and documenting tombstones throughout the entire area and uploading the data to the web. Thousands of graves have already been mapped and incorporated into a database in the first-ever attempt to restore the graves and record the history of those who were buried there. While more than 20,000 gravestones have already been documented, organizers estimate that there are between 200,000 and 300,000 in the cemetery. Among the graves already documented are those of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, the reviver of the Hebrew language; Shai Agnon, Nobel Prize for Literature laureate; former Prime Minister Menachem Begin; Henrietta Szold, founder of Hadassah Women's Organization; and Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Kook, the first Ashkenazi chief rabbi of the British Mandate. Burial on Mount of Olives dates back around 3,000 years to the First and Second temple periods and continues to this day. While under Jordanian rule, from 1948 to 1967, the cemetery was badly vandalized. Tombstones were destroyed, broken and uprooted. After the Six-Day War, the cemetery was slowly re-

stored. The project includes the creation of a website, (www.mountofolives.co.il) that "aims to raise awareness of the City of David and to honor the memory of those buried in the cemetery." (*Jerusalem Post*, 1-23-10)

Did You Know...

-The Jewish National Fund (JNF) has planted 240 million trees in Israel since the founding of the organization in 1901. This makes Israel the only country in the world which has more trees now than it did 100 years ago. JNF aims to plant seven million trees in the next ten years for the purpose of absorbing carbon dioxide and to help fight against global warming. (www.ynetnews.com, 1-26-10)

- The original blueprints for the Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi death camp went on public display at Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem. The collection of 29 plans (four of which are now on display) was given to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during a visit to Germany this past August. An estimated 1.1 million Jews were murdered at Auschwitz. (*World Jewish Congress*, 1-26-10)

-J.D. Salinger, reclusive author of "The Catcher in the Rye" (still required reading at many high schools across the country, including incoming 9th grade English Honors students at Coral Shores High School), recently died at the age of 91. The grandson of a rabbi, Salinger was a product of a mixed marriage, with his mother, Marie Jillisch, of Irish descent. To appease her in-laws, she changed her name to Miriam. (*The New York Times*, 1-29-10)

- After a group of Jewish leaders protested at a Target store in New York, the retail giant removed a mini-globe from their shelves that "wiped Israel off the map" and instead labeled all the land as "Palestine." "We are no longer selling the product in our stores and we are sorry for offending our guests," a Target spokeswoman said. (www.nbcnewyork.com, 1-31-10)

- January 27 marked the 65th anniversary of Auschwitz's liberation. Benjamin Netanyahu, Soviet veterans, and 100 survivors attended a ceremony at the former camp. ♦

KEYS JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

Sunday, March 7, 2010

2:00 PM

Actors Playhouse, Coral Gables

A classic love story is brought up-to-date in one of the most stunning theatrical spectacles of all time. In *Miss Saigon*, Alain Boublil and Claude-Michael Schönberg, creators of last season's acclaimed hit, *Les Misérables*, along with Richard Maltby, Jr., bring Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* to the modern world in a moving testament to the human spirit and a scathing indictment of the tragedies of war. An international sensation, *Miss Saigon* is an epic, daring pop opera that is universal in its emotional power even as it deals with controversial, contemporary issues. In the turmoil of the Vietnam War, an American soldier and a Vietnamese girl fall in love, only to be separated during the fall of Saigon. Their struggle to find each other over the ensuing years creates an unparalleled drama and a must see musical theatrical experience.

Donation \$40
Contact Nancy Kluger
klugerkeys@bellsouth.net
305-393-2129



Photo Gallery



Top left, Gloria with student Medina at Gloria's Jan. 19th class at The Rain Barrel. Middle right, Gloria and David at Keys Conch Café in Key Largo. (Great prop, great photo, Easy Rider days long past.) Above right, photos taken at Roberta McNew's house in Key Largo as Zoe formally installed mezuzot on both the downstairs apartment and the house's main door. Below and below right, some shots from the ceremony at Fishermen's Hospital in Marathon on January 22nd when Steve Smith was officially proclaimed Country Doctor of the Year for 2009. Many KJCC members were on hand, notably our matriarch, Pauline Roller. As you see, Steve wore his best Keys fishing shirt for the occasion.



KEYS JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

Luncheon and Fashion Show



Styles by

Angelika



Date: Thursday, March 4, 2010

Time: 11:30 am

Place: Snooks - MM 97.5 Bayside

Contact: Joyce Peckman 305-240-1000

Donation: \$25

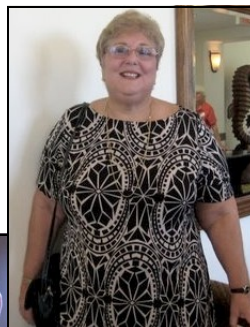


The top four photos are from the January 29th service at KJCC led by Rabbi

Danny Young. Top left are Stuart and Lauren Sax, who brought Rabbi Young to us, along with our Ritual Chair, head of Sister hood, and of course our prez.

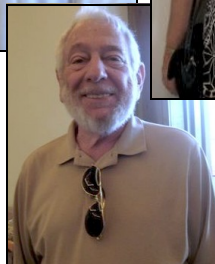


The center photo is at the formal dedication of the painting now hanging at the entrance to the KJCC sanctuary and its blessing by Rabbi Young. The painting was donated to KJCC by the artist, Rosie Biskar, in memory of her daughter Dale.



The five photos lower left are from the February 6th annual luncheon organized by Gene Silverman for Voices for Florida Keys Children, Inc. Many members of KJCC are active in Voices, the premier Guardian Ad Litem organization for Keys children. The center photo is of David Perry, this year's main speaker and a resounding Voices

success story. He had been an abused and neglected child of druggies, and thanks in part to Voices he's now healthy and moving on with his life.





The photo top left is of the Jan. 31st Tu B'Shevat planting of a fig tree by the KJCC Sunday School class. Top right are Yardená's

son Andy Loi with his wife Sharon, right, and his cousin Andrea Loi, in a photo taken in January in Miami. An attorney and U.N. worker in Haiti, Andrea was

killed in the earthquake that leveled Port-au-Prince. All the other photos are from Sunday, February 14th at the KJCC Annual Meeting. Joyce is shown with her daughter-in-law Rebecca and granddaughter Libby; Yardená is shown with her granddaughter Naomi. Carol led The swearing-in. Not pictured with the new officers and board are new Vice President Gloria Avner, Steve Smith, Bernie Ginsberg, and David Goldfinger.



World War II Letters Home

One of the things we Jews do best is remember (in Hebrew l'izkor). We are specifically commanded to remember our history, our heritage, our laws. Pesach, which comes at the end of March, is all about remembering how we were once slaves in Egypt and how that has fundamentally formed us as a people.

Linda Rutkin has offered us access to the letters her father wrote home to her mother during World War II, at first from military bases in the States and then from the front in Europe. Many KJCC members still remember that time. It is particularly appropriate that we remember Frank Idestone, Linda's father, this month because as you'll see from our In Memoriam listings, this month is also his Yahrzeit.

The letters begin with an August 8th, 1943 note from Private Frank Idestone in Camp Lee, near Richmond, Virginia, to his wife Susie at their home in Baltimore. The original letters were much longer, of course; our portions here are all excerpts.

My sweetest,

I just came from the station, where I saw you off and I am now waiting for George to come out of the movie. So I thought I'd utilize the time, and now that our too very short meeting is over, let you know just how I feel. I feel lousy, as a matter of fact, very lousy. As much as I want you to come and see me, as much it hurts me when after a very few hours we have to say good-bye again. However, I suppose, that such is life and you can't do very much about it. As a matter of fact, you can't do anything about it.

I love you deeply.

Yours,
Frank

August 9, 1943

My darling,

This will be my last letter from Camp Lee. I am leaving here shortly. Please do not be disappointed if you will not hear from me for quite some time. Wherever I am going, my dearest, I love you deeply and hope you will follow me there as soon as possible. I shall try to send you some cards while on the way.

Your everloving husband,
Frank

August 22, 1943
Fort Custer

My dearest,

Last night we arrived here, and I called you right afterwards. I am really awfully sorry that I hollered at you on the phone. But you acted so foolish about my being so far away, as though it was my fault.

Fort Custer is located right between Battle Creek, Michigan and Kalamazoo...We have not had any hot water here yet, nor do I have a pillow or bed sheets. That is very inconvenient and I hope the situation will be helped soon. This morning we were inter-

viewed and I insisted that I be transferred to Finance. I do not know how I ever got in the Military Police.

I do not think it is possible nor necessary to come here for the next few weeks. Basic training starts tomorrow and we are (in) for 13 weeks of the toughest training the Army has to offer. I understand it is even worse than the infantry...please do not be alarmed if you will not hear from me for a few days or even for a week, because I understand that



Cpl. Idestone in Germany just before the war ended.

when the fellows come back from the drill field they just fall on their bunks and are asleep...If I can transfer to another branch of service I shall; otherwise I shall be as good an M.P. as I can be.

I love you,
Frank

August 27, 1943
Fort Custer

My sweetest,

I am sitting in the latrine, but I have to go upstairs soon because shortly we are going to have bed check...Today we had the worst day since I am in the Army...this morning we went through the obstacle course, which is supposed to be one of the toughest in the Army. And I do mean tough...We had to put on full field packs (50 lbs.) plus the rifle and went on a four-mile hike marching in step. That was the longest four miles I ever marched.

Well, I am dead tired now and I am going to sleep. We have to get up at five in the morning.

Your loving husband,
Frank

August 29, 1943
Fort Custer

My sweetest,

Did you get your allotment yet? We will not get paid for another month or so, because we have to sign the payroll first..

I forgot to tell you in my previous letter to send me a few pairs of white woolen socks. When you buy them please specify that you want Army socks. I would save you all this trouble but we cannot get them on the post.

...Every night when I go to sleep I say *Hamalach Hagoel* (I hope I got it right), and I include a special prayer for you, my sweetest...

I love you, my darling, very deeply, and I am praying and fighting for the day when our love can materialize again, when the world will not stand for war and slaughter but only for the family...and for the pursuit of well-being of mankind.

Yours forever and ever,
Frank

September 20, 1943
Fort Custer

...Three of us Jewish boys spoke to the chaplain again this morning about passes for the holidays and we will still have to see the commanding officer about them. We should not have any trouble getting them, but you can never tell in the Army...

...I was told I was too valuable a man to go to clerical school, on account of my knowledge in languages, and that I would be sent to military government school (right here in Fort Custer) right after my basic training is completed.

When you go out in Battle Creek at night by yourself be careful. The soldiers there, I have noticed, are pretty fresh and try to pick up or talk to any girl they see on the street. (Especially when they are as good looking as you are.)

Your loving husband,
Frank



Once their armor was readily available, the Americans moved rapidly across France in the fall of 1944. Modern tanks would dwarf this one.

October 21, 1944
France

My dearest darling,

Well, we are working and trying to make this place a little more livable. We have two stoves now; but of course they do not throw too much heat in such a long shed. I constructed what may be referred to as a bed. I have some boards and on top of that a bag filled with hay. I tuck my blankets underneath that and there is my sleeping bag...I understand it is possible now to send mail to French civilians and I am going to try again to get in touch with my parents...

Forever your loving husband,
Frank

February 5, 1945
Staff Section HQ 78th Inf. Div.
Ruhr Valley

My dearest one,

...We took a little trip today to "no man's land" and brought back some cows and horses. We also got seven chickens and one rooster, which remain in our personal care. It was raining and muddy and we got pretty wet and dirty.

The Ruhr Valley certainly looks beautiful, but of course we do not have too much time to take in the sights. What we all want most is to get this war over with and then we can go sight-seeing at home.

Forever your loving husband,
Frank

May 12, 1945
Somewhere in Germany

My dearest sweetheart,

It really seems that my little wife thinks I won this war here all by myself. Of course that is not quite true. There were lots of boys who did a lot more than I did.

...According to the point system at present you have to have 85 points to be discharged. I have been figuring and figuring and all I seem to be able to figure out for myself is between 40 and 45. Of course that will

change as the war against Japan continues...

May 18, 1945
Kassel, Germany

My dearest sweetheart,

...Your hubby is now sleeping in a bed formerly occupied by the local ortsgruppenleiter. I am quite a guy getting around with beds. In Koenigswinter on the Rhine I slept in one which was used by Napoleon. But I did not feel any different the next morning.

May 21, 1945
Kassel, Germany

My dearest sweetheart,

...Yesterday, I forgot to tell you I arrested a Russian who with two buddies of his staged a little holdup on the highway. He is now well taken care of behind the bars of the Kassel city jail.

...The radio announces that Marshal Tito is kind of stubborn, so maybe the European war is not over after all. Time will tell.

...Remember, when I come home I do not want to find a skeleton of skin and bones. You should weigh at least 175 lbs., well, 115 to 120 anyway.

Forever loving you,
Your hubby, Frank ♦



Frank took this photo in St. Lo, in France, shortly after D-Day. It's a stark example of the scale of the fighting.

A Month at Sea With Mort, Mah Jongg and Much More

by Gene Silverman

Only after we boarded the 747 and headed to our sleeper seats and got ourselves all comfy and cozy did I let myself get excited about the journey we were about to begin. We were picking up the Regent Seven Seas Voyager in Cape Town, South Africa and heading for some parts of the world we had never visited.

Day 1 - Landing in Cape Town, we were met by Regent personnel and taken to the ship that was to be our home for the next (almost) month. After inspecting our beautiful suite we left the Voyager and hired our own guide to take us to Table Top Mountain and the Mt. Nelson Hotel for High Tea. Table Top is thought to be at least six times older than the Himalayas and five times older than the Rockies, which might make it the world's oldest mountain.



While sailing north from Cape Town up the South African coast, Gene spotted this penguin colony.

Day 2 - From Camps Bay you can see the peaks of the Twelve Apostles. Then onward to Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans meet. Then off to see the African penguin colony and False Bay for the magnificent Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden. It's beautiful, well manicured and spotlessly clean. Everything in the world is in that garden because the temperate climate is perfect.

Day 3 - Off to examine the gym and hopefully work out. Then we're going to explore the Voyager and post a note for a mah-jongg game. Tonight is our first formal night, which we're having with a wonderful couple we met from Palos Verdes, California. The ship has great sugar-free desserts, which I think go perfectly with the glasses of Pinot Noir I have been imbibing.

Day 4 - Swakopmund, Namibia. Wow! It has a distinctly European feel to it, with German colonial buildings, seaside promenades and pavement cafes. And it's very clean. Then back to the ship to change into the proper clothing for our "dinner under the stars." Over 400 people are being taken into the Namib Desert tonight for music, drinks



At the gala desert feast.



and dinner. Unbelievable... fantastic...out of sight...I am at a loss to describe this. There were three huge—and I mean huge—tents set up with carving stations for appetizers, butlers serving champagne,

It was Thanksgiving. We'd never spent that day aboard a ship. First, at noon there was a parade—complete with costumes, music and Santa with elves and, of course, music—that started on Deck 4 and wound its way up the central staircase to Deck 11. A buffet was set up in the center hall and wended its way all the way around the lobby and into the main dining room. We had never seen so much unbelievably displayed food - all of it gourmet and all of it displayed like a painting! Blinis, caviar, fish, veggies, meats, chicken, cold cuts, hot cuts, starches and on and on and on! I almost forgot - desserts - desserts - desserts!

wine and drinks, and servers to take care of you while dining at your table. There were chicken, fish, shrimp and game meats to choose for your entrees with every kind of salad, vegetable, potato, rice and dessert. Then there was music - at least 24 people in the orchestra, an entire dance ensemble and, to top it off - fire throwers!



Gene before a dune in the Namib desert. Vast and desolate, indeed.

Day 5 - The Namib Desert is said to be the world's oldest living desert. It certainly is vast, desolate and spectacular, with dunes that rise to over 1,000 feet. It is known as "The land God Made in Anger." Our guide showed us which cacti plant are able to give more than one glass of water per leaf and can keep you alive if lost in the desert. Out of the four-wheeler it felt, if you can imagine, like being on the Moon. There were huge craters, gigantic dunes and NOTHING else. Namibia is also known as a bountiful gem-bearing country, with many gem crystals like tourmaline, aquamarine, citrine and diamonds.

Day 6 and Day 7 - Cruising the South Atlantic Ocean, heading for St. Helena, Jamestown. We went to listen to "Rap with the Rabbi," with Rabbi Joe Ehrenkranz. It is Friday night, so off to services. Were very surprised that more than 38 people were there. The Rabbi is Orthodox but the Siddurs that Regent supplied were Re-



Mort at Cape Point, near Cape Town, at the bottom of the African continent.



On one of the winding, craggy hills of Jamestown, St. Helena in the Atlantic.

form. After we all looked at them, Rabbi Joe said, "okay, that's enough of that - let's just talk." Regent supplied the yarmulkes, head coverings, challah and wine, so the Kiddush was very nice.

Day 8 - Jamestown, St. Helena was first visited by the Portuguese in 1502. About 2,735 km from Cape Town, in the open Atlantic, this is where Napoleon was exiled for good in 1815 after Waterloo.

Day 8 - We're cruising the International Waters of the South Atlantic on our way to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil and will be at sea for the next 4 1/2 days. We're trying to get ourselves on a schedule -- workout, breakfast, pick up the daily crossword and sudoku puzzles, lectures, lunch, lecture, mah-jongg, tea, Trivial Pursuit, dinner, comedy club, Liars Club, drinks, casino.

Met a very funny comedian last night, Sarge. He's a mixture of white, black and most of all Jewish. Tonight we saw him on stage in the Theater and then to the Liars Club. We've never laughed so hard.

Day 10 - Gym, breakfast, wash clothes in laundromat, and then Rap with the Rabbi - all before 10 a.m. Today there's a Country Fair at the pool. In the Middle Ages, particularly during the 13th and 14th centuries, many fairs were held throughout Europe, so today our ship has also included this tradition in its schedule. OMG- what fun and what a produc-

tion.

Day 12 - Up before dawn to see our arrival in Rio. From a distance it looks just like we had imagined. The skies are crystal clear and the temperature seems perfect. We can see, through our binoculars, Christ The Redeemer on top of the mountain. It's a 120-foot-high statue, completed in 1931, which stands with its arms outstretched in brilliant white. I later learned that this is the only place in all of Rio not de-



A German-looking corner in the very clean Swakopmund, Namibia, very far from Germany.

faced with graffiti; it's kept scrupulously clean. Wended our way past the beaches of Ipanema, Copacabana and Leblon. (And no floss bikinis in sight!) Reaction to Rio is it's filthy dirty, very dangerous and I can't figure out how the graffiti goes all the way up to the fourth floor on buildings.

Day 13 - Dark, gloomy skies and pouring rain. Decided to visit a wholesale gem dealer's office. They wouldn't let us take our own transportation and sent a "hired taxi" to pick us up. We wanted to buy local coffee before returning to the ship. The gem dealers were absolutely determined that we not go by ourselves. This office, mind you, was in the best neighborhood of Ipanema/Copacabana;

it was early afternoon and the grocery store was only two blocks away. They insisted that we be accompanied by a local person who took us, literally, to the store, shopped with us and then put us in a taxi - which they paid for. Our escort said that in twenty years of living there she had been robbed 28 times - all in broad daylight. The last time the only thing she had with her was the dog she was walking. That's why they were robbing her - to take her dog to sell! The next day we decided to stay on-board and go to Shabbat Services with Rabbi Joe.

Day 15 - Great day at sea cruising up the coast of Brazil in brilliant sunshine. Started off with champagne and caviar breakfast in the dining room then off to the gym. Mort

went to listen to a lecture on Gemstones. We all were hysterical laughing at his descriptions. Seems the "lecturer" really didn't know about gemstones and had to read most of his information straight from a book.

Day 18 - Arrived in Fortaleza. It has a population of over 3.4 million with huge skyscrapers dotting the shoreline. It looks like Miami Beach - but with more GRAFFITI! Out to see their version of a "flea market" not far from the Port. This one is four stories high and open-air. It's cash only, so our hand-held calculator came in very handy for the exchange rate. Nice and very friendly people, with interesting, hand-made merchandise. Did some bargaining and buying.

Day 19 - We're cruising the top of the Brazilian Coast on our way to Barbados and will be at sea for the next 3 1/2 days. Starting the day at the gym, then pool, outdoor lunch at the pool. Mah jongg for me, Rap with the Rabbi for Mort.

Day 20 - Tonight is the first night of Chanukah. There were more than 70 and every-

one enjoyed the service, complete with latkes, applesauce, sour cream and, of course, a challah and wine because it is also Friday night.

Day 22 - Arriving in Barbados. Went on an off-road safari to see the elusive green monkey. What a joke! In the Barbados Wildlife Reserve the only monkeys to be found were inside wire cages. But, I must say, that running around were literally a hundred turtles, deer, rabbits and other little wildlife; but no mon-

keys - green or otherwise. We were told that these species were responsible for 70 percent of the world's polio vaccine.

Day 25 - Cruising the gorgeous Atlantic again on our way to Port Everglades. Right

back on schedule: gym, breakfast, lunch at the pool of curry and Tandoori Barbeque, mah, napping, reading. Captain's farewell party - dinner with dessert and cordials in the Horizon Lounge. Then off to watch the Regent singers and dancers with their rendition of Cole Porter.

Day 28 - It's 8 in the morning and we are ready.... but not really. I just loved being aboard this ship, being pampered, having fun, playing Mah, meeting lots of interesting (and some not-so-interesting) people and everything we saw and did. Looking outside, I think the winds have picked up to somewhere about 30 knots and the rains have started, so by the time we are waiting, outside, for our son Mark to pick us up there will probably be a gale outside.◇



At Chanukah services aboard ship. That is not, if you were wondering, a Chanukah bush to the right.



YIDDISHKEIT NIGHT: AN EVENING OF SENTIMENT, NACHAS AND FRESSING. AND A PLAY, EVEN.

Monday, January 25—our last Yiddishkeit Night for a while—was an exciting evening



Gene and Mort as Burns and Allen.

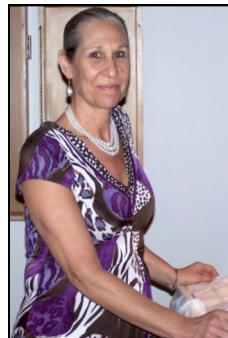
shared by more than 85 people at the KJCC. The delicious dinner made by our *mish pocha*, with contri-

butions by so many, was fantastic and tasty. The evening was also our annual Membership Dinner. All our guests, some of whom are either now or about to become new mem-

bers, were delighted by the warm and open reception and welcoming attitude. I was personally honored and blessed to have my aunts and uncles from Toronto, and Kitchener, Ontario visiting and able to share this wonderful event with me.

Inspired by my grandparents and my motivation to continue to learn and practice Yiddish, I wrote the play we performed after dinner: "My Yiddisha Bubba: A Sentimental Love Story." The story tells of the 68-year marriage of my grandparents, who spent their winters in Miami Beach, leading up to the time 18 years ago when I was visiting and met my husband.

As the narrator, my grandmother tells the



Bernie had the lead as young Moishe, based on Erica's grandfather. (You would cast someone else?)

story of their meeting back in the 1920s, while she was working at the lunch cart outside the factory where my grandfather sewed coats. The story is told at a time when she and her two sisters are older, and reminiscing. Scenes are set in Miami Beach, at the pool playing mah jongg, going to Wolfie's for the Early Bird Special, going to the Fontainebleau to watch the show,



Gloria sings “My Yiddische Mama,” above. Bernie and Gloria in a courtship scene. At right, Jules Seder provided perfect-pitch accompaniment. (A tinkling piano in the next apartment...) Below, the restaurant scene at Wolfie’s.



going to the butcher’s to shop for *Shabbos*, going to the pharmacy at the Woolworth’s on Lincoln Road, and finally preparing and eating *Shabbos* dinner.

I owe thanks to lots of people: to Rabbi Zucker, who



helped me translate my play into Yiddish; to all of the great and tolerant actors—Gloria Avner (as young Billie), Bernie Ginsberg (as young Moishe), Georgia Landau and my friend and savior Hindy Zeifman (who came down from Ft. Lauderdale at the last minute when I needed her) as the two sisters, Steve

Friedman (as the waiter), Jerry Oshinsky (type-cast as the pharmacist), Linda and Joel Pollack (as the butcher and his wife), and to Gene and Mort Silverman (as the performers, the real-life team of George Burns and Gracie Allen)—who

helped me, through rehashing and rehearsing, and, above all, with warmth and patience, to bring my play to life.

My great thanks, also, to Alan Beth, who took old pictures of mine and the English translation of the play (if you weren’t there, it was performed wholly in Yiddish) and created a projection slide show

that so wonderfully helped the audience follow the story and also tied the storyline together.

The beautiful, professional musical accompaniment of Gloria singing "My Yiddisha Bubba" and the finale of "Bei Mir Bist Du Shayne," with Bernie singing and declaring his love, was by the generous piano man Jules Seder.

Thanks also go to Mark Wasser, who captured the whole evening on videotape.

This event probably meant the most to me personally. I felt blessed, proud and honored to have experienced such a wonderful evening of support, love and joy surrounded by my KJCC family as well as my immediate family, who all, by the way, felt so welcomed by and grateful to our won-



The entire cast takes a bow post-curtain, above. Left, Gloria and Bernie opened by walking around the sanctu...er, theater, setting the tone by singing all in Yiddish. At lower left, the mah jongg group scene. (Those old outdoor Miami Beach games were brutal. Does anyone know why only Chinese men and Jewish women play mah jongg?)

Below, the writer, producer and director with the traditional flowers after opening night, given to her by her cast.



derful KJCC community.

Thank you again to all who spent their time and energies to make our Yiddishkeit Night a great success. If my grandparents were still here, they would thank you, too.

Zay Gazeint,
Erica Lieberman-Garrett



You probably know the story: Guy named Moses demands that Egypt hand over all its slave labor so he can take them, en masse, east. God backs him up. But—as usual—Gloria offers us some fresh perspective, delving into the meaning of the message.

Rabbi Danny Young and a Passover Appetizer: Miriam, Music, and Metaphor

by Gloria Avner

We offer sincere thanks to our guest leader of January's early Shabbat service, Rabbi Danny Young, for a number of things. For one thing, he combined all the elements of an excellent service with good teaching stories, including one for Tu B'Shvat. For another, he delivered an excellent "dvar" for the special "Shabbat Shira." This is the *parshah* in which Miriam, the older sister of Moses, delivers in call-and-response the joyous "Song of the Sea."

It was gratifying to see and be part of such a large group coming to celebrate Shabbat with our visiting Rabbi. Along with the delights of an excellent Oneg (compliments of Stuart and Lauren Sax and our Ritual Committee), I enjoyed walking around the social hall to overhear small groups of people enthusiastically discussing the rabbi's talk. Rabbi Young even led us in a "Shehechyanu" blessing of the painting donated to KJCC by Rosie Biskar in memory of her daughter Dale, and the plaque just installed beneath it. As usual, the event lasted long into the night.

Even though it's been over a month since we heard Miriam's song, as Pesach season approaches, now is the time to personally experience and commemorate and pass on to our heirs the story of the Exodus, the moment of escape from slavery to freedom that

inspired the *Shir* ("song," in Hebrew). For those who could not be with us that night, let me tell you a story that the Rabbi shared with us. (For the over 50 of you who were there with me, it's a story well worth reliving.) I had not heard it before, and later overheard many people saying how much it had inspired them.

As Miriam and the women chanted their song, danced, and played timbrels at the shore of the Reed Sea, not all were joyful. The sea had yet to part, and the Egyptian army was not far behind. Many of the escaping Israelites were anxious, even beginning to wonder if leaving Egypt had been the right thing to do. As both the ecstasy of the singers and the anxiety of the doubters reached a peak, the seas did finally part. The people, some more hesitantly than others, began to walk across. The slow ones were encouraged by the others to hasten. Two men, who had been anxious from the beginning, walked across neither joyfully nor quickly. Their eyes were on their shoes. They were uncomfortable. They knew the sea had parted, but were focused on the muddy ground of the seabed. Their feet and clothing were wet and dirty; the going was not easy, and they were not happy.

All around them a miracle was happening. These two men did not see it. They focused instead on the mud and their now wet, dirty shoes, not on the amazing feat of redemption from slavery through divine intervention.

There is always something imperfect on which to focus, no matter what is going on in the world or in our lives. We have a choice of where to look. Miriam chose to look to our Creator and sing a song of praise and gratitude. The point is to not be blinded by focusing downward. As we move ever closer to the season of "freedom from constriction and tight places" (the literal translation of *Mitz-*

raim), let's keep our eyes, minds, and hearts open to and aware of the miracles around us at every moment, and not on the mud caking our shoes. Remember the many miracles, and many lessons for us, in the Pesach story. And thank you again, Rabbi Young.

Yayin and Mayim: Wine and Water in the Cups of Elijah and Miriam

by Gloria Avner

Soon Jews all over the world will be sitting round assorted tables in homes, restaurants, and (if they're very lucky) sandy beaches, surrounded with family by blood and by choice, while recounting the story that never gets stale: Passover. We are commanded to remember and inhabit that story, to tell it in proper order, with all the right ritual foods, ritual questions, ritual songs, and ritual drink. Our survival, both literal and ritualistic, has always depended on two drinks, ubiquitous wine and the desert dweller's highly valued water.

More than just commanded, we rejoice in the telling of our story. Alive with it, knowing that through our ceremony we connect both horizontally, through geography, and vertically, through time, with all who have come before us, we share our commitment to *"tikkun olam*, repair of the world," and to those who will come after. We say our blessings, and hoist, time after time, another brimming cup of wine. We drink four cups, one for each promise of redemption made by God when God spoke to Moses, telling him of the coming Exodus. We dip a finger in the wine

glass as we recount each of the plagues. We set out Elijah's cup, trusting in the coming of *Moshiach*, in our time, in our house.

We cleanse our hands with water twice during the Passover seder. We dip eggs in salt water. Water, not just for cleansing or the healing power of tears, is the key to survival in desert wandering. A *Midrash* teaches us that a miraculous well accompanied the Hebrews throughout their journey in the desert, providing them with water. This well was given by God to Miriam, the prophetess, to honor her bravery and devotion to the Jewish people. Both Miriam and her well were spiritual oases in the desert, sources of sustenance and healing. In the modern Jewish world, more and more, a new cup is appearing as ritual object on the Seder table. It has taken a key place for the past six years at our

KJCC Women's Seder table. We call it *Kos Miriam*, the cup of Miriam. Filled with water, it represents survival, honoring the source of life that followed the Jewish people in their desert wanderings as long as Miriam was alive.

Miriam's cup is filled with water to honor her role in ensuring the survival of the Jewish people. Like Miriam, Jewish women in all generations have been essential for the continuity of our people.

As keepers of traditions in the home, women passed down songs and stories, rituals and recipes, from mother to daughter, from generation to generation. Let Elijah's Cup and the Cup of Miriam stand side by side. Let us each fill the cup of Miriam with water from our own glasses, so that our daughters may continue to draw from the strength and wisdom of our heritage. May this be the year that Elijah walks through our door, drains his cup of wine, and leads us from our narrow straits in *"Mitzraim"* to freedom and redemption in *"Jerusalem."* ◇

***"...a new cup is
appearing as ritual
object on the Seder
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'Kos Miriam,'
the cup of Miriam."***

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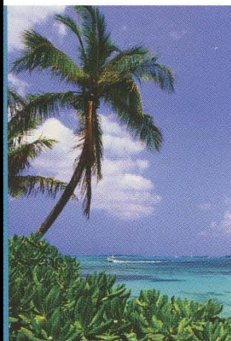
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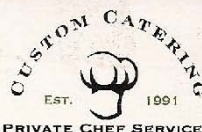
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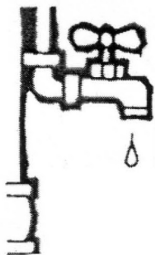
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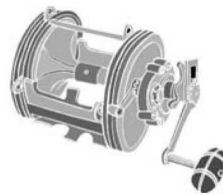
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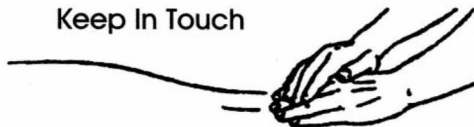
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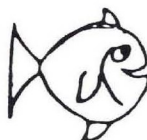
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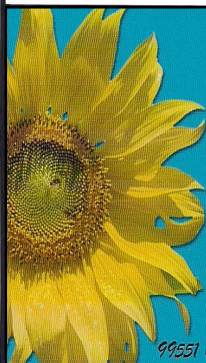


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