

# Chai~Lights



January 2012

6 Tevet - 7 Shevat 5772

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**Keys Jewish Community Center**

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

# January 2012

# 6 Tevet - 7 Shevat

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6 <b>Sisterhood Meeting 9:30 a.m.</b> Ken Atlas <i>Arlene &amp; Jonathan Line</i> <i>Amelia &amp; Steve Kasinof</i>	7
8 <b>KJCC Board Meeting 9:00 a.m.</b> Judy Weber talks about her book	9	10	11	12	13 <b>Stuart Sax Sherry Willner</b> ————— Sisterhood Shabbat Dinner 6:15 p.m., services at 8:00	14
15 <b>Shirley Stein to give talk on Golda Meir at KJCC 5-7 p.m.</b>	16 <b>MLK Holiday</b>	17 <b>Barbara Knowles photography classes begin, 6:30</b>	18	19	20 <b>George Swartz &amp; Yardena Kamely</b>  <i>Patricia &amp; Henry Isenberg</i>	21
22 <b>Sisterhood Tea, 2-5 p.m. at Kluger home</b>	23	24	25	26	27 <b>Beth Hayden &amp; Joyce Peckman</b>  6:30 Service  <i>Carol &amp; Steve Steinbock</i>	28 <b>Torah Learning Service w/ Rabbi Agler 10 a.m.</b>
29 <b>Yardena's Jerusalem lectures conclude, 7 p.m.</b>	30	31 <b>Gloria's musical Trope class at KJCC, 7p.m.</b>	<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <p>Names denote leaders of Friday services. <i>Italicized names are Oneg sponsors.</i></p> </div>			

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## President's Message Stuart Sax



There are lots of things I love about being Jewish. One of them is celebrating New Year's twice each year, once in the fall during High Holy Days and again at midnight on December 31<sup>st</sup>. On Rosh Hashanah we look at our previous year in retrospect and ask that our sins be forgiven and that our "slate be wiped clean" for the year ahead. We vow to do better in the year ahead than in the year completed. A few months later we ask pretty much the same thing but we call them resolutions. Ask yourself how many times you made vows and resolutions and actually kept them for a full year? Do we only make resolutions that are easily attainable or are we prepared to tackle a big one like attending more Shabbat services and KJCC events? Something to think about this New Year.

Now that our major projects list has been wiped clean, we shift our focus to fundraising so that Jim Boruszak can start a new list. Seriously, our windows and doors are now sealed and more storm-resistant. Our entry drive and parking lot are re-sealed and re-stripped and the Temple entrance has a new cover. Leaks in the roof have been repaired and our landscaping has never looked better. Even our sign on the highway can be seen

from a greater distance telling the world that we are here and brighter than ever.

And to brighten our minds and abilities, we will be offering new and continuing programs for our members. Beginning the third Tuesday in January, Barbara Knowles will be teaching digital photography and Alan Beth will revive his computer classes beginning the first Tuesday in February. So mark your calendars for the first and third Tuesdays for computers and photography and every Thursday evening and Friday morning for Hebrew classes. Add to that a monthly Saturday morning Torah study session with Rabbi Agler, game nights, kayaking adventures, dinners, and weekly Shabbat services and what the KJCC has to offer each month rivals the itinerary of the leading cruise lines. And we have the water sports too!

With this writing, I am approaching the completion of my first full year as the president of this congregation. Has it been a piece of cake? Well, actually, it has. And it's because this is not your run of the mill, store bought variety of cake, but one that has been planned and baked by many under watchful eyes and using only the very best ingredients. Delicious. ◇

# Nosh

## **A January Service With Rabbi Agler**

Rabbi Richard Agler has agreed to lead another Torah learning service this month at KJCC, on January's last Saturday morning, the 28<sup>th</sup>. The service – to include, as they all have, special Saturday morning prayers, tallit, a reading from our Holocaust Torah, and a relaxed but spirited discussion and exploration of that week's Parshah – will begin at 10:00 a.m. And, yes, if you come, Sisterhood will feed you afterwards. But ask anyone who's attended previous services here with Rabbi Agler, and they'll surely tell you that the real nourishment provided is of a higher form than donuts, fruit, coffee (even Marc's) and pastries. For those who love to plan ahead, there will also be a service on Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>.

## **More About the Big March Fundraiser**

Please be sure to stop and read the ad on page 20. Sisterhood's Event Committee, co-chaired by Nancy Kluger and Lauren Sax (with an talent scout assist by Gene Silverman), will be bringing to KJCC an amazing performer who goes by the professional name of Sarge. He sings beautifully, he plays concert-quality piano, he does bang-on impersonations, and he's very, very funny. This will be Sisterhood's major fundraiser of the season. It will truly be a memorable evening, so please begin sending in your reservations now.

It's all scheduled for Saturday evening, March 10, 2012. (Since Sarge's mother is Jewish – he uses lots of Jewish *shtick* in his act – maybe, if we ask, he'll also lead Havdalah services before the show begins. Hey, it can't hurt to ask.) The Wine Reception begins at 7:30, the show itself at 8:30. Tickets are \$60 each; they're also being marketed to the general Keys community, so don't wait to order yours. Special donor slots are being reserved for those both able and inclined to contribute more than the ticket price. Rumor has it there might even be a private din-

ner beforehand where angels who contribute at a certain level get to dine and schmooze with Sarge. Contact Nancy or Lauren for details.

## **Judy Weber to Speak at Sunday School**

KJCC member Judy Weber, an accomplished author of numerous children's books, will be at KJCC on Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup> to talk to the KJCC Sunday School Students about her latest novel, "Seeking Safety." It's a fictionalized account of a very real event, when during World War II Eleanor Roosevelt convinced her husband to allow refuge for a number of otherwise doomed European Jews. About 1,000 ended up taken to an old, abandoned fort in upstate New York.

All members of KJCC and their guests are cordially invited to attend. There is no charge.

## **Shirley Stein to Talk About Golda Meir**

KJCC member Shirley Stein will talk about the legendary Golda Meir at KJCC on Sunday evening, January 15<sup>th</sup>, from 5 – 7 p.m. This is a presentation Shirley has given many times, and usually charges admission for. But there will be no charge for this one-time event. No woman, and few men, played a larger role in the success of the young State of Israel than Golda Meir. It should be another fascinating evening at KJCC.

## **Photography Classes by Barbara Knowles**

Beginning on January 17<sup>th</sup>, the third Tuesday in January, and continuing the third Tuesday of each month until spring, Barbara Knowles will be teaching a digital photography course at KJCC. Each evening will begin at 6:30. There is no charge for KJCC members. Barbara will cover every aspect of digital photography, from working with your camera to managing photos on your computer. She has been a professional photographer for many years, has been published by both A.P. and U.P.I., and is accredited with a news media license. (In other words, a real press pass.) Contact Barbara at [iweddu@bellsouth.net](mailto:iweddu@bellsouth.net) with any questions.

## January Birthdays

1st.....Jerry Olsen	15th.....Jill Taksey
1st.....Justin Wade Gilson	16th.....Brieze Levy
1st.....Laura Goodman	16th.....Donald Zinner
2nd.....Sherrie Willner	17th.....Andrea Kluger
3rd.....Crue LaMarche	17th.....Neal Rakov
4th.....Howard Gilson	17th.....Suzi-Sarot Feder
4th.....Randi W. Freundlich	18th.....Barry Alter
6th.....Janice Gorson	18th.....Henry Isenberg
6th.....Stanley Margulies	19th.....Benjamin Friedman
8th.....Jessica Hernstadt	19th.....Mark Kanarek
8th.....Matthew Barrett	19th.....Sandy Seder
8th.....Roger Levy	20th.....Mary Turner
9th.....Cathy Rakov	22nd.....Sheila Olsen
9th.....Deborah Beinfest	24th.....Randy Kominsky
9th.....Sarah Kamely	24th.....Stuart Grossman
10th.....Nancy Yankow	26th.....Carol Ann Steinbock
11th.....Michelle Zinner	27th.....Beth Hudson
12th.....Alex Dutton	27th.....Pat VanArtsdalen
13th.....Amy Nobil	28th.....Yardena Kamely
14th.....Murray Cooper	29th.....Beth Kaminstein
15th.....Charlie Horowitz	29th.....Jeffrey Boruszak
15th.....Heather Gilson	30th.....Kristen M. Schur
15th.....Jamie Goodman	30th.....Mark Feinberg

### More On the January 13<sup>th</sup> Shabbat Dinner

Our Sisterhood-sponsored Shabbat Dinner on January 13<sup>th</sup> will be, even by KJCC potluck standards, a pretty big deal. First of all, it's *fleshik*, where our dinners are usually *milchik*. It's also a sponsored dinner, so there's no charge. We won't be having a specially designated membership dinner this year, so if you know anyone who might like to sample KJCC and see all we have to offer, please invite them to attend the dinner as our guests. (And then remember to tell Erica you're bringing guests. Or else, hoo boy.) The dinner begins at 6:15, with services to follow at 8:00. Stuart would be absolutely delighted to acknowledge and welcome prospective members during his announcements. We will, by the way, also be inviting our Chai-Lights and Directory advertisers to join us that night. As always, contact Erica to let her know that you'll be coming, and what special dishes you can contribute.

### Interested in a KJCC trip to Israel?

It's still in the talking stages, but Rabbi Richard Agler has indicated he'd be willing to lead a KJCC trip to Israel some time in June. The cost of the trip will be approximately \$3,500 per person, airfare not included, for a ten-day trip. The tour package requires a minimum of twenty people. Please contact Stuart, [president@keysjewishcenter.com](mailto:president@keysjewishcenter.com), if such a trip interests you.

*The KJCC extends its deepest condolences to*  
**Carol Field**  
*and her family on the death of*  
**Dr. Alvan Field.**

## January Anniversaries

	<b>Years</b>
1st Thomas & Leslie Dillon.....	16
1st Sanford & Nancy Yankow.....	22
4th Steve & Amelia Kasinof.....	31
12th George & Muriel Swartz.....	32
17th Alan & Elaine Schulberg.....	19
26th David & Pamela Marmar.....	27

### Our Garden Grows

Master-of-the-Garden Steve Steinbock has just accepted a bid, approved unanimously by the KJCC Board, to extend our Meditation Garden's brick walkway all the way to and onto the floor of our beautiful gazebo. This will open up many more opportunities for memorial or celebratory bricks. Thanks to cuttings from Mort and Gene Silverman, we will soon have orchids blooming from trees along the walkway and from the gazebo's corner pillars. Speaking of trees, if a living memorial for a loved one is your preference, we have only three more tree sponsorships available in the Garden's main section, at \$300 each, including a plaque. Been to the Garden lately? The weather's beautiful now, and the Garden has become a treasure. Come. Visit. Sit. Meditate. Enjoy the quiet loveliness.

### Concert Schedule for January

Join in on the excitement, see your friends, and appreciate top quality music in comfortable seats at Island Community Church, MM 83.3, without going off the rock. You can still buy season tickets (five concerts for only \$80 in advance, higher at the door) by calling Joyce Peckman (305-451-0665). Don't miss the first two concerts.

- *Tuesday, January 17: Guy Lombardo's Royal Canadians – 7:30 p.m.*

Its distinctive and recognizable style and grand tradition have made the Lombardo Orchestra one of the most listened to, talked about, and

imitated big bands of all time.

- *Tuesday, January 24: Trio Solisti – 7:30 p.m.*

Hailed “the most exciting piano trio in America” by The New Yorker Magazine, Trio Solisti is comprised of three brilliant instrumentalists – violinist Maria Bachmann, cellist Alexis Pia Gerlach and pianist Jon Klibonoff. They have earned a reputation for soulful and passionate performances marked by soloistic virtuosity, electric energy and thrilling abandon. (This concert is sponsored by David and Toby Goldfinger.)

### Yardena's Jerusalem Series Concludes

The last lecture in Yardena's series on Jerusalem will take place at KJCC Sunday evening, January 29th, at 7:00. It will be part II of Jerusalem under Muslim rule, covering the fascinating period of the Mamelukes, a warrior caste first brought to Egypt as slaves, who then overthrew the Fatimid Dynasty and ruled for 700 years before being defeated by the Ottoman Turks, who themselves ruled for 400 years until their defeat and dissolution at the end of World War I (when the British and French met and invented today's map of the Middle East, then decided which of them would control all the new countries they'd just created. Transjordan was carved out of Palestine by the British in 1922.) This lecture will also explore the history of the division of Jerusalem's Old City into its current four quarters.

### January Onegs

January 6th - Arlene and Jonathan Line in honor of Crue LaMarche's first birthday. Amelia and Steve Kasinof to celebrate their anniversary.

January 13th - Sherry Willner in honor of her birthday.

January 20th - Patricia and Henry Isenberg in honor of Henry's birthday.

January 27th - Carol and Steve Steinbock in honor of Carol's birthday.

## Exciting New Courses From Rabbi Agler...

Our KJCC is truly becoming a House of Lifelong Learning. If the desire is there, a teacher will appear. Here are three upcoming courses intended to deepen our members' knowledge of and comfort with aspects of worship and ritual that might at times have seemed unfathomable, out of reach, irrelevant, or even boring. Here is a chance to get inside what we may take for granted and gloss over.

At KJCC on Thursday, December 29th, at 7 p.m., Rabbi Richard Agler will present *Erev Shabbat Services, Part I*, a one-hour workshop in "Creating a D'var Torah and Making it Interesting." Too many of us are fearful of leading services because we think we can't properly present that week's Parshah, or Torah portion. Find out how to do it. With Rabbi Agler's guidance, anyone can become a Service Leader (or get better at it). Learning with Rabbi Agler is a warm, satisfying experience, even if you never present a D'var Torah yourself. Don't miss this.

At a later date and time to be announced, Rabbi Agler will also present *Erev Shabbat Services, Part II*, a two-part workshop in how to lead a service, understanding the parts, the function of each, and how the parts make a whole.

## ...And A Trope Course Taught by Gloria

In "Intro To Torah Chanting: Learning Trope Through "V'Ahavtah," Gloria demystifies those little musical symbols and squiggles above and below Hebrew words in the Five Books of Moses. You will take apart the words and phrases, and learn to chant the "V'Ahavtah" as it was meant to be chanted, through a system hundreds of years old. Once you have learned to chant the Trope, you will be able to chant from any part of the Torah. If you can read the Hebrew alphabet, you can do this! It will be a three-part class, beginning Tuesday, January 31st at 7 p.m. in the Kamely classroom.

For more information on any of these courses, Rabbi Agler's or Gloria's, call Gloria at 305-619-0216 or e-mail [geetavner@gmail.com](mailto:geetavner@gmail.com). ♦

## Ongoing Projects and Mitzvah Programs of KJCC

**Sunshine Committee** - If you know of any member who should receive a get-well, congratulations or condolence card from KJCC, call Rene Rose, 305-852-3959.

**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, 305-852-0214.

**Picture Postcards** - We have beautiful picture postcards bearing the Millard Wells representation of the KJCC, which was commissioned by Sisterhood. Quantities to fit your needs and can be mailed to you or your gift recipient. The price is \$36 per hundred but we will sell lesser quantities. Contact Joan Boruszak, 305-852-0833.

**Oneg Shabbat Sponsor** - To schedule your special date with Sisterhood, call Joyce Peckman, 305-451-0665.

**Meditation Garden** - Participate in our newest venture. A beautiful garden is in progress and you can be part of this exciting new project by making a donation for an engraved brick, an engraved bench, or for plants in honor or memory of a loved one or event. Call Steve Steinbock for information, 305-394-0143.

**KJCC Tree of Life Leaves and Rocks, Sanctuary Seat Plates, Yahrzeit Memorial Plaques, Bookplates for Siddurim** - Call Carol Steinbock to arrange your donation, 305-852-6152.

**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, 305-852-4353.

**Chai-Lights Mitzvah** - Place a greeting or notice in Chai-Lights. Call Carol Steinbock, 305-852-6152 to make your donation.

**Advertisement In Chai-Lights or Directory** - Your business ad will appear in every issue of Chai-Lights and/or annually in the Directory. Call Gene Silverman 305-664-3316 for 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. Honorarium and memorial cards can also be requested. Donations can be earmarked to our various ongoing funds: e.g. Holocaust Education Fund, Scholarship Fund, Sara Cohen Memorial Tzedukah Fund, or General Fund.*

**KJCC**  
**SISTERHOOD SHABBAT**  
**DINNER**



**FRIDAY, JANUARY 13,**  
**2012**

**6:15 PM**

**COVERED DISH**  
**~FLEYSHIK~**

*Contact Erica @ (305) 853-1003  
hippiejap@hotmail.com to reserve your  
spot and coordinate your covered dish.*

*Sponsored Dinner - no charge*

# *In Memoriam January 2012*

In Memory Of

**Bernice Bernstein**

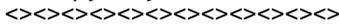
By Paul & Barbara Bernstein



In Memory Of

**Emma Kohlenbrener**

By Jim & Joan Boruszak



In Memory Of

**Yetta Hitzig**

By Wes & Rita Conklin



In Memory Of

**Marcus Weiss**

By Janice Gorson



In Memory Of

**Judy Lombardi**

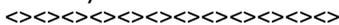
By Marilyn Greenbaum



In Memory Of

**Eileen Hermann**

By Robert Hermann



In Memory Of

**Irving Rosen**

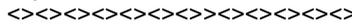
By Harvey & Joan Kay



In Memory Of

**Laurie Beth**

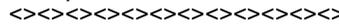
By Alan Beth & Candace Stanlake



In Memory Of

**Betty Weinstein**

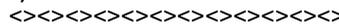
By Dick & Rita Bromwich



In Memory Of

**Henry H. Rubin**

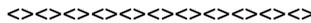
By Foster Davidson & Carol Laskin



In Memory Of

**Betty Weinstein**

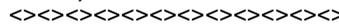
By Eric Grace & Ruth Schrader-Grace



In Memory Of

**Alvin Gross**

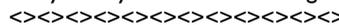
By David & Patti Gross



In Memory Of

**Ernest Isenberg**

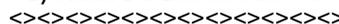
By Henry & Patricia Isenberg



In Memory Of

**Walter Hankin**

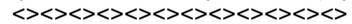
By Richard & Barbara Knowles



In Memory Of

**Annette Bitton**

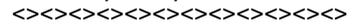
By Michel Bitton & Sylvie Coeurjoly



In Memory Of

**David Cohn**

By Nancy L. Cohn



In Memory Of

**Nathan Weisberg**

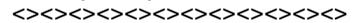
By Frank & Gerri Emkey



In Memory Of

**Marvin Greenbaum**

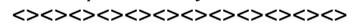
By Marilyn Greenbaum



In Memory Of

**Louis Hartz**

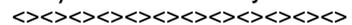
By Steven & Jan Hartz



In Memory Of

**Sylvia Emsig**

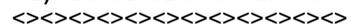
By Lawrence & Pearl Jacobs



In Memory Of

**Goldie Schweitzer**

By Richard & Barbara Knowles



# In Memoriam January 2012

In Memory Of

**Harry Stoler**

By Randy & Eileen Kominsky



In Memory Of

**Samuel Neubauer**

By Jackie LePree



In Memory Of

**John Evans**

By Stanley & Jenny Margulies



In Memory Of

**Betty Weinstein**

By Jerry & Sheila Olsen



In Memory Of

**Anna Savage**

By Marjorie Present



In Memory Of

**Eta Brownstein**

By Pauline Roller



In Memory Of

**Sally Sussman**

By Richard & Sheila Steinberg



In Memory Of

**Abraham Raij**

By Salomon & Mary Turner



In Memory Of

**Sydney Zinner**

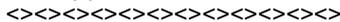
By Donald & Nancy Zinner



In Memory Of

**Joseph Cohen**

By Jules & Nettie Seder



In Memory Of

**Bernard Kaminstein**

By Ron Levy & Beth Kaminstein



In Memory Of

**Sofia Ojeda**

By Mark & Sofy Wasser



In Memory Of

**Sylvan Oser**

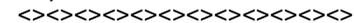
By Marjorie Present



In Memory Of

**Goldie Schweitzer**

By Richard & Barbara Knowles



## Mishebeyrach List

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

## Sisterhood Lauren Sax



Happy New Year to each and everyone one of you! Sisterhood ended on some very high notes. Our Sisterhood Shabbat Service was memorable in many ways. First, it was good to have such a large turnout of members who took part in the service. Gloria was back from her recent surgery and we were all honored that her first big outing was our service. (A line from a familiar song rang in my head all night—"it's so good to have you back where you belong.") Lastly, we all paid homage to outgoing treasurer Nancy Kluger, and I presented her with a gold leaf that will go on KJCC's Tree Of Life. For ten years Nancy has kept Sisterhood afloat and has been the epitome of what the word "volunteer" stands for. She has been an inspiration to others to step forward and become involved. Needless to say, it was a wonderful evening and I thank all those who helped to make it happen - from the service readers to the oneg bakers.

Our Hanukkah Dinner was fun and fabulous. Many thanks go to chairperson Erica Garrett and her amazing team of helpers. Also, a huge thank-you to Linda and Joel Pollack for sponsoring the dinner. It is because of their generosity that Sisterhood did not need to charge for the event.

It's official. Joyce Peckman and her committee of Joan Stark and Carol Steinbock have presented the slate of officers for 2012. We congratulate all and thank them for helping lead Sisterhood this next year. Installation will be at our next meeting on January 6<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. I would like to thank the nominating committee and the Sisterhood for putting their faith in me for another year. I love what I do for Sisterhood and the KJCC because I am surrounded by wonderful women who make me look good!

Very shortly you will be receiving an invitation to the KJCC Sisterhood fundraiser. Please

circle March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012 on your calendars as the evening promises to be one you will not soon forget. We need everyone's help. Remember, the funds we derive help to maintain not only the maintenance of our building and synagogue but also support the many programs we all enjoy at the KJCC. Another reminder: any female member of the congregation is an automatic member of Sisterhood. Event Chairperson Nancy Kluger and her committee of Georgia Landau and Carol Steinbock are working very hard on this. Let's

all show our support, one way or another.

If a nice, relaxing afternoon sipping tea and eating Chinese food overlooking the bay is your thing, then plan on joining your fellow Sisterhood members at an afternoon social. Teresa Kwalick and Kathy Shabathai are whipping up an unusual and tasty event from 2-5 p.m. at the home of Nancy and Kurt Kluger. Please see the ad on page 16 for specifics. And thanks, Nancy and Kurt, for hosting and giving us a peek at your beautiful home.

Erica Garrett is back in the kitchen (along with other Sisterhood members) Friday, January 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:15 p.m. Please join us for another scrumptious Shabbat Dinner. This will be a meat dinner, so check out the Chai-Lights ad and contact Erica to coordinate your dish.

Lastly, I am delighted to welcome Patti Gross as our new gift shop co-chairperson. Make sure next time you are at the KJCC to browse the gift shop and see all the new merchandise. If you don't see what you need, contact Susan Gordon or Patti and hopefully they can get it for you.

Whew. Lots of great things going on. I hope you'll all be there for all of it. ◇

### Sisterhood Executive Board 2012

<i>President</i>	<i>Lauren Sax</i>
<i>Vice President</i>	<i>Kathy Shabathai</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Georgia Landau</i>
<i>Recording/</i>	<i>Carol Steinbock</i>
<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	

# 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.

<i>Chai-Lights</i>		Roy, Medina	Steve Richardson
Peckman, Joyce		Steinbock, Stephen and Carol	Steve Richardson
		Vinicur, Sam	Steve Richardson
<i>General Fund</i>	<i>In Honor of</i>	<i>Scholarship Fund</i>	<i>In Memory of</i>
Rose, Franklin and Rene	Zoe & Joshua Moshe's wedding	Kwalick, Teresa	Bill Kwalick on his birthday
Sax, Stuart and Lauren	Gloria Avner's recovery and return	<i>Tree of Life</i>	
Sax, Stuart and Lauren	Jim Boruszak's special birthday	Pollack, Joel & Linda	David & Roberta Ehrenreich's 50th anniversary
Young, Richard & Ann	Thanks for your High Holiday welcome	Pollack, Joel & Linda	Jim Boruszak birthday
<i>General Fund</i>	<i>In Memory of</i>	<i>Yartzeit Contributions</i>	<i>In Memory of</i>
Pollack, Joel & Linda	Alvan Field	Cooper, Murray and Claire	Edward Sandberg
Sax, Stuart and Lauren	Alvan Field	Gould, Maryon	Jeanne Schneider
		Grossman, Stuart	Sylvia Sarah Grossman
<i>Meditation Garden</i>	<i>In Memory of</i>	Steinberg, Richard and Sheila	Peter Steinberg
Beth, Alan and Candy Stanlake	Steve Richardson	Temkin, Dr. Robert and Susan	Kenny Temkin
Kwalick, Teresa	Esther & Irwin Kwalick	<i>Yiskor Book</i>	
Reese, Stephen	Capt. Len Roberts	Olsen, Gerald and Sheila	

## KEYS JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

# BOOKPLATES

**Bookplates are available for our new siddurim. Donation is \$36 per plate. These can be purchased as honorariums or memorials and as gifts. Place your order now for one or several to support this new project. Be a regular presence at services by having your message permanently inscribed in one or more of our new prayer books.**

We will happily send a notification card to the honoree or giftee at your request. Please contact Carol Steinbock for further information or to receive the forms on which you can provide the text — in honor of or in memory of — you wish us to print. Carol's phone is 852-6152, her e-mail cac147@gmail.com.

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# YEDA VE'TORASHA

Yardena Kamely



## KEHILOT SHAROT – Singing Communities

*Piyyutim — Ancient Poems — Are Kept Alive In Singing Groups Across Modern Israel*

There is a musical genre in Israel that is sung by both religious and secular people. Its words are similar to prayer but are not prayer. It is not sung by professional singers, because it does not belong to the popular and commercial world, nor is it sung by cantors, because it does not belong only to the world of the synagogue. Its text is poetic and uses high Hebrew, but this text does not exist without the melody. And its music, with its complex melodic structure, is meaningless without the words.

It is a beautiful music, a living, creative work that is constantly renewed. Here, it is permissible to adapt a new text to the lovely melody, *Niggun*; various melodies, *Niggunim*, are also often adapted to the same text. (We have long applied this musical creativity to religious songs as well; how many melodies are there for *Adom Olam*?) In this genre there are ancient, thousand-year-old works, as well as new ones. In order to sing them well you have to study for many years. They belong to the audience, whose members learn them from one another, without notes and without recordings. They are important cultural works not because they are sung by expert performers but because the works are known and accepted by the audience. And the experts, who are called *Paytanim*, know how to improvise on the audience's melodies, to adorn them, to trill them freely, but the basic notes are set and precise, and if anyone makes a mistake another singer will correct him.

This interesting genre is the *Piyyut*, or liturgical poem. The *Piyyut* (plural *Piyyutim*) began as sacred poetry adorning the prayers

of the individual and the community, as well as accompanying religious rituals. The *Piyyutim* are usually sung on special occasions, a holiday or Shabbat or a life-cycle ceremony – a birth, a *Brit*, *Bar* and *Bat Mitzvah*, a wedding, or a lamentation on the death of a loved one. The popular Hanukkah song "Maoz Tzur," for example, is a *Piyyut*, as is "Ha Lachma Anya" from the Passover Haggadah, and "Dror Yikra," one of the songs sung at the Shabbat table.

The *Piyyut* "Yedid Nefesh," for example, as Meir Buzaglo explains on the *Hazmanah L'piyyut* website (Invitation to a *Piyyut* - [www.piyut.org.il](http://www.piyut.org.il)), was sung by Jews in India, Morocco, Aleppo (in Syria), Babylon (Iraq), Yemen, Ashkenaz (France-Germany) and Georgia (the one south of Russia, near Armenia), although in each of these places the same words were sung to totally different melodies. And that reflects another important trait of the *Piyyut*: its music is the product of a connection between Jews and their non-Jewish neighbors in the countries where both lived.

In Israel hundreds of people gather every week, in ten groups all over the country, to study *Piyyutim* from experts, as part of a unique movement called *Kehilot Sharot* (Singing Communities). *Piyyut* and *Niggun*, these treasures of poetry and song produced by Jewish culture, offer an emotional and spiritual experience of our Jewish heritage and traditions, Ashkenazi and Sephardi. Each community is lead by a trained facilitator, a professional *Paytan* and singer. These groups sing *piyyutim* and *niggunim*, and learn from

them about the beauty of the culture, language, ideas, and history of the communities where they were composed.

In an article in the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, Noam Ben-Zeev writes about his experience in one of the *Kehilot Sharot* he visited: "Neveh Yisrael neighborhood, Herzliya. A slight sense of panic begins to creep into my heart when *Paytan* Maimon Cohen starts to sing, as he presents the veteran group - who have been in *Kehilot Sharot* for six years - with the *Piyyut* they are about to learn, "Ashir Lach, Eretz Hemda" (I Will Sing to You, Land of Delight). I join the group this evening knowing there is no chance that I will manage to learn such a complex work. The *Piyyut* is composed entirely of irregular rhythms, asymmetrical lines, sharply changing melodic themes and sudden flights to the heights. I'm scared stiff.

"I look around me. If I, with years of experience in choral singing, learning sight reading, developing a musical ear, writing melodies and harmonies, don't manage to learn this *Piyyut*, how will the people around me, not professional musicians, do so? But I'm wrong. Ten minutes, maybe fifteen - that's how long it takes Cohen to teach us the *Piyyut*. And learning with Cohen means an encounter with a teacher who is a real magician, a *Paytan* with a voice of unparalleled beauty, a personality

overflowing with humor and wisdom and knowledge, which illuminate the *Piyyut* with fascinating insights.

"At a more advanced stage of the lesson, Cohen dwells on the proper way to sing the words - softly, flowingly, listening to the music and without insisting on precise pronunciation.

'I'll sing you the origin of this *Piyyut*, in Arabic, so you'll get an impression of the music flow,' he says, and suddenly it seems as though the small room in the Herzliya community center is flying to a Morocco of another time. Cohen, accompanying himself on a drum, sings this *Piyyut* - which was written by Rabbi Yitzhak Rosh, and is about longing for the Land of Israel - in Moroccan Arabic, and it turns out to be the lamentation of a father on the death of his daughter, a song that is very sad and at the same time a musical paradise. Several of those present, themselves natives of Morocco, join in quiet humming."

Israelis love traditions, art, and creativity. They like to find interesting social-cultural activities to share with others; it is, for many of them, almost like a pastime. In *Kehilot Sharot*, the Singing Communities, they seek to learn and teach these treasured traditions. They also want to make their voices and ancient songs heard as part of contemporary Israeli culture. ◇

### **Musicians and Scholars Comment On Piyyutim**

The *Piyyut* decorates the prayers, the life cycle and the yearly cycle, every place where the sigh of the heart overpowers the mind. When words do not suffice and the melody is called for; and where that which is fixed yields its place to that which is renewed. -*Avigdor Shinan*

The *Piyyut* is the form of Jewish creative work that wonderfully combines the art of poetry and exalted music with the commonplace. This form and combination is unlike any other since usually the commonplace (sing-alongs) is separate from the Arts. -*Ofer Shabbat*

*Piyyut* – a musical instrument, where the musician is the poet who strums on the words, and the listeners are drawn with bonds of love and grasp it as though it were a magic wand. -*Aviad Akiva*

The *Piyyut* is where the genius of poetry and the genius of music meet. -*Paul Valery*

The *Piyyut* synthesizes and purifies various components of the Hebrew culture: language, music, mysticism, history, legend, philosophy, prayer, and personal, family and national emotion – into one whole. The sung *Piyyut* makes it possible to fully experience this in its entirety. -*Yair Harel*

The singing of the *Piyyut* has survived as an activity having a social nuance that goes beyond the religious meaning of the text. Thus signifying a direct link between the present and the past, it connects between vast geographical areas, it symbolizes the constant use of the Hebrew language throughout history, and connects ancient creative artists with those of today. -*Edwin Sarusi*

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# World Jewish Report

## Medina Roy



### The Top 10 “Thrones” in Jerusalem

The next time you happen to be in Jerusalem and nature calls, have no fear. The city has somewhere between forty and fifty public restrooms, with thirteen of them located in the Old City alone, spread across the Jewish and Muslim quarters. A random sampling by *Israel21c*, (an online news magazine about 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel) has compiled a list of Jerusalem's top 10 public toilets. There's one at the *Machane Yehuda* marketplace (otherwise know as the *shuk*). This restroom is said to be clean but its location, next to a fish vendor, leaves something to be desired. Another is located on the northern side of the Western Wall plaza. As you exit this restroom, you'll see posted the Jewish blessing, known as *asher yatzar*, traditionally recited after one relieves oneself. (Yes, we Jews seem to have a blessing for everything! Check out the next entry for more details). For a complete list of the top ten public restrooms in Jerusalem, go to [www.israel21c.org/travel/the-top-10-toilets-in-jerusalem](http://www.israel21c.org/travel/the-top-10-toilets-in-jerusalem). ([www.israel21c.org](http://www.israel21c.org), 11-2-11)

### A Little Bit More About *Asher Yatzar*

Composed by Abayei, a fourth-century Babylonian rabbi, the benediction said after one uses the bathroom, *asher yatzar*, is found in the Talmud (Brachot 60b). It may seem odd to recite a *bracha* related to this bodily function, but when you think about it, it makes perfect sense. It expresses gratitude for good health and marvel at G-d's creation of the human body. Translated into English, the prayer reads, “Blessed is He who formed man in wisdom and created in him many orifices and many cavities. It is obvious and known before Your *throne* (emphasis intentionally added!) of glory that if one of them

were to be ruptured or one of them blocked, it would be impossible for a man to survive and stand before You. Blessed are You that heals all flesh and does wonders.” ([www.torah.org/features/firstperson/everythingablessing.html](http://www.torah.org/features/firstperson/everythingablessing.html))

### To Remember the Six Million

The State of Israel is planning to distribute new ID cards to all its citizens, with six Stars of David and symbolic numbering starting with number 6,000,001 - a move to honor the memory of the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust. Baruch Dadon, head of the ID project for Israel's Interior Ministry said, “We haven't forgotten them...they are with us, and they will be with us in the future.” The cards are said to be forgery-resistant and will be encrypted with a chip containing fingerprints and a photo of the bearer. All citizens will be required to carry the card. (*World Jewish Congress, July/August, 2011*)

### “Till a Hundred and Twenty” - She Just Might Make It!

The oldest known Holocaust survivor, Alice Herz-Sommer, recently celebrated her 108<sup>th</sup> birthday. She was a professional pianist by the time she was in her mid-teens. A native of Prague, she, along with her husband and young son, were sent to Terezin in 1943, where she played more than 150 concerts for visitors from the Red Cross at the same time Jews were being sent to their deaths. Her husband, also a musician, did not survive the war. ([www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org), 11-27-11)

### A Boost For *Birthright*

Birthright Israel has sent letters to 2,000 North American young adults telling them

that they will now be able to go on the free, ten-day educational trip to Israel in the coming months thanks to a generous contribution of an additional \$5 million from major philanthropists Sheldon and Miriam Adelson. The 2,000 young applicants were on a waiting list due to lack of funding. The Adelson's foundation has given *Birthright* more than \$100 million since 2007. Adelson made his fortune as a casino developer and is the owner and CEO of the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas. *Forbes Magazine* has ranked him as the 13<sup>th</sup> richest person in America and 73<sup>rd</sup> in the world. Officially known as *Taglit-Birthright Israel*, the organization's mission is to connect Jewish young adults, ages 18-26, to the heritage and history of their religion. Nearly 22,500 applicants had registered for the trips this winter and over 10,000 had been on the waiting list. (*The Forward*, 11-28-11)

### Another "Hebrew Hammer"

Ryan Braun, the Milwaukee Brewers' outfielder, has been named the National League Most Valuable Player, making him the first Jewish ballplayer to win the award in nearly fifty years. The Baseball Writers' Association of America announced that Braun, 28, the son of an Israeli-born Jewish father (who lost much of his family to the Holocaust) and a Catholic mother, received 20 of 32 first-place votes and 388 points. The four-time all-star averaged .332 and hit 33 home runs. Back in September, he hit a 450-foot home run, giving the team their first division title in nearly thirty years. Although Braun is not an observant Jew, his Jewish identity runs deep and he says he is proud to be a role model for young Jewish kids. (He also, by the way, played his college ball at the University of Miami.) In 2007, he became the first Jew ever to be named Rookie of the Year. Braun now becomes the new "Hebrew Hammer," sharing the name with other great Jewish batsmen, notably Hank Greenberg and Al Rosen. Sandy Koufax (a pitcher, considered by some to be the most dominant left-hander of all time) was the last Jewish player to win the MVP award, in 1963 with the Dodgers in Los Angeles, though he'd begun his career in Brook-

lyn. Greenberg (Detroit Tigers - 1940) and Rosen (Cleveland Indians - 1953) were the only other Jewish players who have been named MVP. (*The Forward*, 11-22-11)

### Tops in Russia

For the first time ever, an Israeli-themed book was chosen as one of Russia's top books of the year. Howard Sachar, author of the recently published three-volume "History of Israel," was honored at the Non-Fiction Book Fair at Moscow's Central House of Artists. The book fair's selection committee, which includes some of Russia's most notable authors, stated that they chose Sachar's tome because of "the importance of Israeli history in Russian society, something that has been heightened by the large Russian population in Israel and the relative lack of knowledge in Russia about the country's history and development." Also honored at the book fair was Simms Taback's children's book, "Joseph Had a Little Overcoat," an award-winning book adapted from and based on a Yiddish folk song. ([www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org), 11-28-11)

### 1½ Jews Off to Oxford

Miriam Rosenbaum, 22, a senior at Princeton University, has become the first Orthodox Jewish woman to win a prestigious Rhodes Scholarship. Growing up in the Bronx, Rosenbaum is now studying the "intersection of ethics, genetic research, and public policy." She claims she was inspired to excel by her grandfather, Mordechai Rosenbaum, who was a student at Poland's famed Mir Yeshiva when Hitler's troops moved in. He managed to escape with the help of Chiune Sugihara, the Japanese diplomat who issued travel visas to the students - more than 1,800 of them. (A year before he died in 1986, Sugihara was honored by *Yad Vashem* with the title "Righteous Among Nations.") An essay about her grandfather was part of Rosenbaum's Rhodes application. There were 31 other Rhodes winners this year, including 23-year-old Ronan Farrow, son of Woody Allen and Mia Farrow. Ronan graduated college at 15 and has already finished Yale Law School. He will study international development at Oxford

and is now working as a special advisor to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The Rhodes Scholar Award was created in 1902 by colonialist and noted philanthropist Cecil Rhodes, a South African businessman and founder of DeBeers diamond company. (*The Forward*, 11-21-11)

### **In Memoriam**

- Evelyn Lauder, the woman who created the pink ribbon that became the worldwide symbol for the fight against breast cancer, died in November at the age of 75. Lauder was vice president of the cosmetics empire founded by her mother-in-law, Estee Lauder. She created the pink ribbon symbol in 1992 with former *Self Magazine* editor-in-chief Alexandra Penney. These little pink ribbons were handed out to women at department store make-up counters to remind them to get their annual breast exams. This simple idea led to a multimillion-dollar campaign, and the money that was raised helped found the Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Cancer Center at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York in 2009. Lauder was born Evelyn Hausner in Vienna. She, along with her parents, fled Nazi-occupied Europe and settled in New York City. ([www.israelnationalnews.com](http://www.israelnationalnews.com), 11-13-11)

- Allen Mandelbaum, a scholar of classical and Italian literature, has died at 85. Recognized as the leading translator of Dante's "Divine Comedy," Mandelbaum also wrote a book of poems about the Jewish folklore town of Chelm. He was professor emeritus at Wake Forest University in North Carolina; at his passing, the university noted that "few, if any, faculty members in Wake Forest's history have attained a worldwide status comparable to Mandelbaum's." His three-volume verse translation of the "Divine Comedy" was completed in 1984 and he also translated, among other classical literary works, Homer's "Odyssey" and Ovid's "Metamorphosis." Mandelbaum was well known in Italy, where he received the country's highest award, the Presidential Cross of the Order of the Star of Italian Solidarity, and the National Award for Verse Translation. Over the years, Mandel-

baum received numerous awards and honors. In 2000, he became the first translator to receive the Gold Medal of Honor from the Italian city of Florence. Mandelbaum grew up in New York City, attended Yeshiva University and received his master's degree from Columbia University. ([www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org), 11-8-11)

- Irving H. Franklin died recently at the age of 93. Franklin, a sporting goods manufacturer, became known for developing the first batting glove specifically designed for baseball. He joined forces with Hall-of-Famer Mike Schmidt, then the Philadelphia Phillies third-baseman, to design the glove. Franklin and his brother Sydney started *Franklin Sports*, the company which now custom-fits 150 Major League players with gloves and has been the official batting glove of Major League Baseball since the late 1980s. It is the only company authorized to place the MLB logo on its gloves. Franklin was born in Brockton, Mass. As a young man, he began working in a shoe factory, then followed his grandfather into the scrap leather business. He later took over the business and during the Korean War made trigger-finger mittens for the military. Franklin was a benefactor and developer of several Jewish organizations. He also established the Franklin Fellow Rabbinical School Scholarship Fund at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. He was very pleased with his gloves, particularly because the name of his company was easily seen when TV cameras closed in on the hitter. Not so for his other official major league products - cups and supporters. ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), 11-14-11)

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

- At the end of November, "Deep Junior," the Israeli chess computer program, won the 2011 world computer chess championship held in the Netherlands. It beat out teams from around the world without ever losing a single game. It was the seventh world title that the Israeli team has won. The prestigious event was organized by the International Computer Game Association, which has held the championship annually since 1994. (*The Jerusalem Post*, 11-23-11) ◇

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Happy Chinese  
New Year!

*Keys Jewish Community Center  
Cathy Kaplan Sisterhood*

*CELEBRATE THE CHINESE NEW YEAR  
WITH YOUR KJCC FRIENDS*

*Sunday, January 22, 2012*

*2:00 - 5:00 pm*

*Kluger Home*

*163 Indian Mound Trail  
Tavernier, FL 33070*

*All Ladies who are Members of the KJCC  
are invited to an Open House Chinese New  
Year's Celebration. We encourage you to  
bring along one or some of our shy  
members to join in the festivities.*

*Sweets only will be served  
Please bring one to share.*

*RSOP: Teresa Kwolick  
tkwolick@yahoo.com (305) 852-4652*

*or*

*Kathy Shabathai  
kathyshabathai@hotmail.com*

**2012 Year of the Dragon**

## *-This Month in Jewish History-*

# January

548 C.E. – This is the last year that the Church in Jerusalem observes January 6<sup>th</sup> as the birth date of Jesus. The Western Church began celebrating Christmas on December 25<sup>th</sup> in the late 300s.

1072 – Robert Guiscard of Normandy conquers Sicily. Jews have been living on the island for almost five hundred years; records exist of letters being written to Pope Gregory I, whose papacy ended in 604, about living conditions of the Jews in Sicily. Jewish circumstances would later deteriorate when Crusaders stop at the Island. By the start of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Jews will be living in ghettos.

1449 – Constantine XI is crowned Byzantine Emperor. His reign is short, his throne lost in 1453 when Constantinople falls to the Ottomans under Mehmed II, making Constantine the last Emperor and last Christian ruler of what was once the Roman Empire. Moslem Ottomans will ultimately welcome Jews fleeing from persecution in Christian Europe. Mehmed also works to insure that a significant portion of the population of Istanbul (Constantinople's new name) will be Jewish.

1536 – Catherine of Aragon, dispensed-with wife of English King Henry VIII and daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, the two monarchs who banish the Jews from Spain in 1492, dies. Consent for her to marry Henry, then not yet king, had been contingent on his father promising that no Jews would ever live in England. In one of history's tasty ironies, Catherine's inability to provide Henry with a male heir leads directly to England's break with the Catholic Church and Protestants allowing the return of the Jews to England.

1785 – Haym Salomon dies in Philadelphia at the age of 44. Born in Poland, Salomon comes to the American colonies before the start of the Revolution. He befriends financier

Robert Morris and helps several leaders of the American Revolution, lending money to James Madison, acknowledged architect of the U.S. Constitution and fourth President of the United States. Salomon bankrupts himself in support of American independence.

1865 – The New York Stock Exchange opens its first permanent headquarters at 10-12 Broad, near Wall Street, in New York. Founded in 1791, the NYSE lists three Jews – Benjamin Mendes Seixas, Ephraim Hart and Alexander Zuntz – among its original founders.

1870 – Joseph Strauss is born in Cincinnati. He will become the Chief Construction Engineer for San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.

1895 – Captain Alfred Dreyfus is publicly humiliated and sent to Devil's Island by a French court. Later evidence proves that Major Esterhazy and Colonel Henry, Dreyfus' chief accusers, forged the evidence used to convict him. A new trial, however, is not begun until 1899. The Dreyfus Affair reveals strong currents of French anti-Semitism and provides momentum for the nascent Zionist movement. It is on behalf of Dreyfus that Emile Zola publicly writes his famous "J'accuse" letter to his own government. Amazingly, there are still those in France today who believe in Dreyfus' guilt.

1915 – Democrat Moses Alexander, 62, is sworn in as governor of Idaho, the first elected Jewish governor in the United States. He will serve two terms.

1929 – William S. Paley becomes President of CBS at the age of 27.

1963 – Tel Aviv University opens as a fully independent entity. Today it is the largest University in the country, with over 100 separate departments and more than 75 research facilities. ◇

# Aaron

As the Gregorian calendar turns to January, we complete the Book of Genesis and begin the real story of the formation and molding, replete with both dizzying triumphs and oh-so-human stumbles, of the Jewish people. In Exodus we're introduced to the single most compelling and important figure – certainly of those who walked or walk upon the earth – in Jewish history: Moses. But unlike the central figure in many national legends (there's a reason such figures have always been so successful in Hollywood movies), Moses doesn't stride into the story seasoned, hardened, and alone. In fact, he enters it as a helpless baby, floated precariously downstream into the Nile by his older sister Miriam in the desperate hope that the group of royal Egyptian women bathing nearby will see the baby, be overcome by a woman's instinctive compassion and gather in the child, flaunting, as only a young royal woman could, Pharaoh's decree to kill all male Hebrew newborns. As we know, the gambit succeeded.

Yet Moses – we aren't told what name he had been given at his *brit* – was not the second child of his and sister Miriam's mother Yocheved, but the third. There was a brother, younger than Miriam and three years older than Moses, whose name was Aaron. We're told nothing of Aaron's childhood years, except we know that while Moses was being raised as a prince in Pharaoh's palace, Aaron lived the life, with Miriam, Yocheved and father Amram, of a Hebrew slave.

Aaron now becomes a major character for the remainder of the Torah. He is not on-stage at all times like Moses, but he's involved in all the important nation-building moments and is around until the very end of Deuteronomy, dying just before Moses. Both are told by God that their bad behavior and disobedience during the draw-water-from-the-

rock episode – though it was Moses who angrily struck the rock with his staff instead of talking to it as instructed by God – will disqualify them from entering the Promised Land. They will both die here, in the mountains of Moab overlooking Canaan. This is all well known. Yet there's also a great deal of rich and interesting information about Aaron, both separate from as well as arm-in-arm with Moses, in the Torah itself and also from Midrashic and Talmudic sources.

It was actually Aaron, not Moses, who held out his staff to unleash the first three plagues against Pharaoh and Egypt. It was Aaron, not Moses, involved in the famous contest with Pharaoh's magicians: to show that he was channeling God's power, Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh, which then turned into a serpent. The magicians sneered, then threw down their own staffs, all of which also instantly became snakes. What got their attention, in symbolism too obvious for anyone to miss, was that Aaron's snake then methodically ate all the other snakes. This Hebrew god had powers. (Rabbinic legend, by the way, says that Aaron's staff was made of sapphire and weighed over 400 pounds. And that it was later concealed in the Ark. And that, hundreds of years later, King Josiah, sensing impending catastrophe, had both Ark and rod hidden, doing it so well that no one has seen any evidence of either since.)

Aaron, not quite yet the *Kohane Gadol*, since there was not quite yet a Tabernacle to preside over, was a major figure in the Golden Calf episode on Mt. Sinai. Moses and Joshua climbed Mt. Sinai to worship with God. Aaron was left in charge of the mass of Israelites. Joshua waited while Moses went into God's presence. But he was gone for forty days. The flock, though they'd witnessed amazing things God had done on their behalf, were just weeks removed from slavery

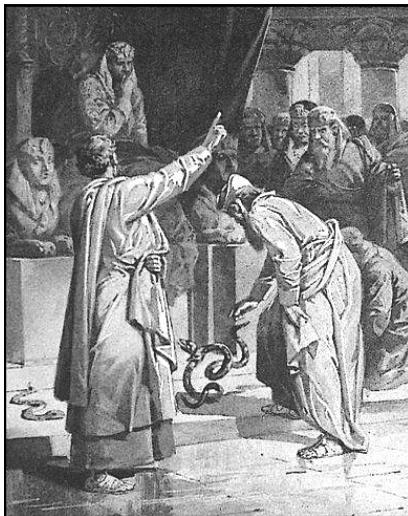
and a terrifying escape from Pharaoh's army. They grew restive. Worried that Moses would not return, and that God had deserted them, they clamored for Aaron to build them an idol they could worship. He complied, collecting their gold jewelry, which he (in the desert? with no smelting or forming tools?) melted down and turned into the infamous golden calf. For this religious commentators have considered him weak, treacherous and sinful ever since.

But not everyone agrees with this harsh view. Many rabbis claim that what Aaron was doing was stalling for time, hoping to placate the mob long enough until, he hoped any minute, Moses would return. Other commentators, perhaps more familiar with frenzied mobs, say it would have been suicide to resist and that Aaron acted wisely. After all, some believe that his nephew Hur, the son of Miriam, had already been killed by the mob. And that in acting as he did Aaron was actually cunning, clever, and diplomatic, properly respectful of a mob's boiling energy and aware that those new to worship could easily falter. Moses, when he did return, forcefully challenged the mob, angrily grinding the golden calf into dust, adding that to a well and forcing its adherents to drink the concoction. He then instructed Aaron's tribe, the Levites, to kill the sinners. We're told that some 3,000 were summarily slain or died in a plague sent by God.

Was Moses justified? Perhaps it depends on just how safe one's remove is from the business end of a righteous sword. Modern commentary has begun to look at Aaron's behavior with more understanding and a little less pious rage. Besides, there's ample evidence that both Moses and Aaron acted completely within their respective characters.

Moses was not beloved by his flock, some say barely tolerated. He was harsh, and often unrelenting. Aaron, on the other hand, *was* beloved. Mourning when he died was far more widespread, and went on far longer, than when Moses died; the Israelites were perhaps fearful of being without Moses, but they didn't really miss him. Aaron was gentler. If someone acted improperly, he would softly and gently counsel the person, not berate him. He was a peacemaker, often reconciling angry neighbors or estranged husbands and wives. Hillel, who (during Herod's reign) saw more than a few corrupt and degenerate priests, wrote: "Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace. Love your fellow creatures and *draw* them nigh unto the law!" According to the Torah, Moses personified truth, but Aaron personified mercy.

God apparently didn't blame Aaron, because shortly thereafter Aaron becomes High Priest and is one of but two allowed into the Holy of Holies. And despite their sharply differing natures, in a Bible that has so far featured nothing but conflict between pairs of brothers, the relationship between Moses and Aaron is dramatically different. They clearly love and respect one another, and have for their lifetimes. One commentator, in fact, sees their relationship as a parallel to that of Hillel and Shammai, one fostering harmony and the other necessary discipline. Aaron's sons are allowed to inherit his high position. The fate of Moses' sons is unmentioned and unknown. Aaron also enjoyed probably the most graceful and appealing death in all of the Bible. At God's instruction, he climbs Mt. Hor with Moses and his son Eleazar, who will succeed him. He enters a well-lit cave, lies down on a carefully prepared bed, closes his eyes, and a sudden gust of wind sweeps through his nostrils and transports his soul to God. Moses weeps. ◇



**In this engraving, Aaron stands before Pharaoh and hurls his staff to the ground, where it instantly turns into a snake.**



# Photo Gallery

The photo top right was taken Nov. 18, at a Guardian Ad Litem event sponsored by Voices of the Florida Keys. Below right, Yardena begins her lecture series on Jerusalem November 20th. Below, Alan Beth captured Joel and Linda Pollack on November 12th at the 3rd annual Jewfish Creek Run/Walk to raise money for Keys charities.



The three photos just above were taken (by Mary Lee) on December 10th at an Angel Bear event sponsored by the I Believe Foundation, where bears are given to children in ambulances and in the hospital. At far left, Linda shows off Pauline's 40,000-hour (!) volunteer pin from Mariners Hospital. Near left, Yardena points ancient Old City locations during Jerusalem lecture no. 2 on December 4th.





*These are photos from our game of old-fashioned stick-ball between teams from the KJCC and the Sons & Daughters of Italy. The game was held at Key Largo Community Park on Sunday morning, December 4th.*

*The game was very close until the bottom of the first inning. Down 4-0, the KJCC team managed one hit and three quick outs. The final score was 16-4, but team KJCC thought it was a close*



*game. Negotiations are in progress for another game in January.*

*(Text and photos courtesy of Stuart Sax.)*



The photos on this page are all from the December 9th Friday evening service led by Sisterhood. As you can see, there was safety in numbers. In the photo at right, Sisterhood president Lauren Sax presents Nancy Kluger, retiring after ten years as Sisterhood Treasurer, a Tree of Life plaque in her honor.



All the photos on this page were taken (sans flash) during the Saturday, December 17th Torah Learning service led by Rabbi Richard Agler.





Our thanks to Barbara Knowles, Marc Bloom and David Gitin for the photos of this event.



It was an extended family affair. The large table, set beautifully by the children, was full, parents sitting with their children, board members and presidents past and present of the Congregation and Sisterhood all well represented. Even more impressive, two former students, tutors and *B'nei Mitzvot*, Max Schrader-Grace and Rachel Bloom, joined us. It was Sunday morning, December 18th. Our holiday display panels showed off all the students' artwork.

This year's emphasis in our Chanukah presentation, prepared by Yardena, was "Jewish Values." Each student lit one candle, with intent to honor our leaders, from Abraham to Moses to King David, the Maccabees, the Prophets, and the founders of Israel, all who have made it possible for us to survive, thrive, and unite as a people. Both children and adults learned some customs about the proper order in which to light the candles. (The first candle is placed at far right, with *chanukiah* facing you. On succeeding nights you insert candles to the left of the previous night's candle. The new candle is the first one lit each night.)

-Gloria

### Chanukah at the KJCC Sunday-School

Chanukah is a blend of *ceremony* and *celebration*. We teachers emphasize the following *values* as we teach about Chanukah:

- Religious Freedom*
- The Right to be Different*
- Courage to Speak Out Against Injustice*
- Dedication to the Jewish Way of Life*
- Faith and Trust in God*

We celebrated Chanukah according to our tradition - lighting the candles, telling the story, singing the songs, talking about the values, playing with *dreidel*, and eating the *latkes* and *suf-ganiot* (jelly doughnuts).

-Yardena



# *My New Insights Into the Mysteries of Healing*

*It isn't one thing. Or a few things. It's everything.*

by Gloria Avner

**I**t is hard to believe that leeches were once respected healers' tools. What did we know in the Middle Ages about how disease was communicated, how germs and bodies worked, about hygiene, or why one person in a family recovered from an illness while another in the same house did not? (It turns out, mysteriously, that Jews actually knew quite a bit, but on a very different level – more about that later.)

I, who had never spent a single night in a hospital, was recently an in-patient for twenty days in a Jewish geriatric facility for short-term rehabilitation. The meals were kosher. The therapists were skilled, patient, kind, and firm. The Friday-night Services were so “early-bird” that they started at 2:00 in the afternoon. (Only the rabbi, volunteer wheelchair pushers, and David, who also was given the honor of opening the ark, stood for the *Amidah*.) Those closest in age to me ranged from 85 to 95 years old. It was the one context in which I could believably be called “the kid.” In the course of witnessing dozens of these disabled elders resist, decline, embrace, and thrive in their journey towards healing, I stumbled upon some insights.

Healing begins with “the first face.” The person who wakes you, whether at midnight to check your vitals or at 6:30 in the morning to help you wash and get to breakfast, sets

the tone for your day. It wasn't the doctor or nurse who saved me after my first miserably nauseous and discouraged sleepless night. It was Gurlene, the smiling Jamaican mother of four, a nurse's aide studying to become a nurse, with her swinging hips, reggae rhythms and laughing voice. She scrubbed my back, tied my shoes, changed my mood, and saved my day.

Can something so simple as a friendly positive face really have anything to do with healing? It does. The Jews knew it way back in those Middle Ages. Let's look at the “Mi Shebayrach” prayer, which has its roots in those “dark” times and whose principles are now recognized and embraced by

more and more 21<sup>st</sup> century physicians. They call it a “new” kind of medicine. Its name is “Integrative.” It has also been called “Holistic.”

“Mi Shebeyrach” takes its name from the first two words of the healing prayer we recite in every service before the *Aleinu* on Erev Shabbat and in the middle of the Torah reading on Shabbat morning. The words mean (and call upon) “the One who Blessed.” The prayer calls on the Creator, the One who blessed our ancestors, to overflow with compassion and to restore the ailing loved ones for whom we pray – to heal, strengthen, and enliven them, to send healing without delay.

But for what kind of healing do we ask? “*Refuah shleimah*” is what we want. We don't

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*I, who had never  
spent a single  
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recently an  
in-patient for  
twenty days.*

---

ask just that the suffering person recover from his or her illness. We ask *complete* healing, wholeness – not just a healing of the body, but a healing of the soul as well – a recognition that body, mind, and spirit are

---

***We ask complete  
healing...  
wholeness...  
not just a  
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body, but of the  
soul as well.***

---

interrelated and inextricable. *Refuah shleimah* advocates for the whole person.

The Jewish concept of wholeness, or “shleimut,” understands that physical illness can

have psychological and spiritual effects as well as causes. Our ancestors knew the connection, and that there could be no real healing without addressing both. Marjorie Sokoll, Director of Greater Boston’s “Jewish Healing Connections,” talks about the distinction that Judaism makes between “cure” and “healing,” tracing it back to Biblical times:

“When Jacob struggled with the angel, he was left with a limp, but it says in the Torah that he was still *schleim*, whole,” says Sokoll. “That’s the difference between curing and healing –the focus of Jewish healing is that we can’t always expect a cure, but we *can* hope to be made whole.”

Just as important, we ask this complete healing not solely for our own loved ones or those who are Jewish. We include in our prayer “the ill of all mankind.” We are doing *tikkun olam*, repairing the world, praying for balance – one imbalanced human being at a time. Then we all say *amen*. (“So may it be.”) The prayer works both vertically and horizontally: the words reach deep into our past, traveling through time to our historical origins as a tribal family. They call on and acknowledge the power of the God with whom we’ve made a covenant; then they reach out through space, geographically embracing all

who are suffering at this moment in time.

Gone are the days (one hopes) when a doctor could blithely refer to one patient as “the elbow,” another as “the spleen.” (I would have been “the hip.”) There is increasing understanding and scientific documentation that attitude plays a part in healing, that positive affirmations and visualizations can both speed and intensify the process of healing, that prayers, even from strangers, even in double blind studies, show distinct positive results.

Kindness in care and recognition of each human being’s worth engages the patient as an active partner in his or her healing, not just as the passive receiver of medicine and medical procedures.

We engage as a congregation in other forms of healing too. I, and every other person who has received a Rene Rose KJCC flower arrangement, fruit basket or lovely card appreciates the feeling of warmth and expansion that comes with knowing we are cared for by our community. As a group and as individuals we encourage visiting the sick (imagine my surprise seeing Jane Friedman walk into my room two days after the operation).

Whether it comes in the form of a smiling visitor, a vase of flowers, or a prayer uttered in community, every act of loving-kindness is medicine.

Remember our *Erev Shabbat* song “*Al Shloshah Divarim?*” The whole world, it asserts, stands on three things: on Torah, on work, and acts of kindness. We don’t have to be doctors to help heal each other. Each kind word and gesture creates ripples. Laughter creates waves. I saw it. I felt it. I passed it on. As all our East European *bubbies* and *zaydehs* would say: “Zai Gesundt.” ♦

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***There is  
scientific  
documentation  
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healing.***

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# Joshua's Bar Mitzvah

## *It Really Does Take a Village (or Shul)...*

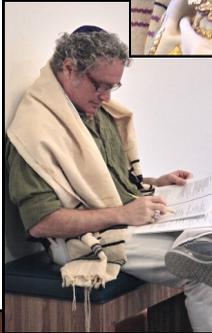
by Gloria Avner

**T**here are people in our shul who remember Paul and Barbara Bernstein standing on the *bimah* 13 years ago, holding their brand new baby boy, Joshua. We may not often have a Rabbi or Cantor to commemorate such special events, but we make the ritual *mitzvahs* in our own way, "*haimishely*." In fact, "warm," "loving," and "*haimische*" finished in a three-way tie for the word used most often by out-of-town guests, friends, and family celebrating Joshua's being called to the Torah for his Bar Mitzvah on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

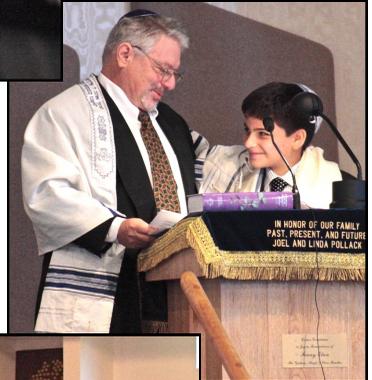
The fabric of the Bernstein family and the KJCC is intricately woven. Barbara was prepared for her adult Bat Mitzvah by one of our

finest teachers, Michal Kamely. For the last

seven years Joshua has been a student of the KJCC Religious School, taught by Yarden Kamely, Michal's daughter. As Joshua's other teacher for these last years, I had the privilege of teaching Joshua to read Torah Trope and see him blossom from quiet, bright, slightly hesitant student to poised service leader



**Saturday, November 5, 2011. The KJCC sanctuary was nearly full. Two of KJCC's most learned members, Dave Feder and Bernie Ginsberg, were there as surrogate rabbis. But it was Joshua's day.**



with a well projected voice, a skilled Torah chanter, and sincere newest member of our community, not just equipped to help make a *minyán*, but willing and eager to partici-



reality of what we say about ourselves every Friday night. We are indeed a "*mishpacha*." Joshua is one of our children, and each of us who has watched this



pate in all of our most important activities. With Dave Feder, Bernie Ginsberg, Susan Gordon, Lauren Sax, and Alan Beth all on the *bimah* to lend



a hand, there was enough *kvelling*, *nachas*, and



student grow into a fine young man is very proud of him and joyous for his parents. *Mazel Tov* to the Bernsteins from their "village." ◇

choked-up, teary voices to warrant the



Our Bar Mitzvah experience encompasses years, months, weeks, days, hours, minutes and seconds, right up to the



moment that we spoke *Shabbat Shalom* to our families, friends and KJCC *mish-pocha*. To use Joshua's word for the day, and we all concur, the experience was and



is...*epic!*

There was an ambience of endearment throughout the congregation. The guests were few. Family and friends were abundant, and the energy that was exuded by all was similar to a tallit made of love that wrapped around us. Nothing could have prepared us for the joy-filled flow of tears and kisses that prayed for a promise of a bright future for our son. On that Sabbath day

of November 5, 2011, our family roots pushed deeper into the soil we call home.

We want to thank everyone involved with orchestrating that monumental experience. ♦

--The Bernsteins, PB&J







*Our great thanks to Barbara and Richard Knowles, who took all the Bar Mitzvah photos and were willing to share these with Chai-Lights. If you'd like to see the rest of their photos, go to their web site, [BarbaraKnowles.com](http://BarbaraKnowles.com), where they've established a link to the entire Joshua Bar Mitzvah album.*

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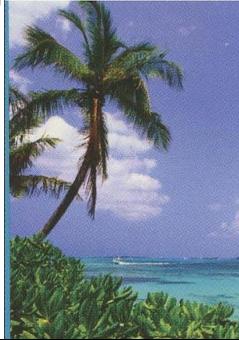
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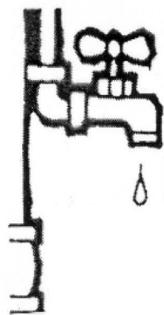
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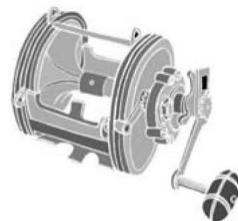
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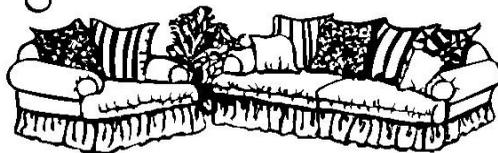


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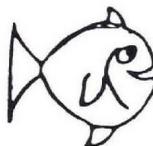
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