

# Chai~Lights



February 2018

16 Shevat - 13 Adar 5778

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**Keys Jewish Community Center**

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

# February 2018

16 Shevat - 13 Adar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Ken Atlas Tu BiSh'vat Oneg <i>Lynn Nobil</i> <i>Marc Bloom</i>	3 Movie <i>The Green Prince</i> 7:00 p.m.
4 Sisterhood Meeting 10:00 a.m.	5	6	7	8	9 Dana Grace <i>Erica Lieberman-Garrett</i> <i>Arthur Plutzer</i>	10 Movie <i>Gett: The Trial of Vivienne Amsalem</i> 7:00 p.m.
11 KJCC Board Meeting 9 a.m. Annual Mtg. 11 a.m.	12	13	14 Mindy Agler post-Irma counseling 6-7 p.m. at KJCC	15 New Moon/ Rosh Chodesh Adar	16 Joyce Peckman <i>Hannah David</i>	17 Rabbi Agler Torah Service 10:00 a.m.
18 Movie <i>The Outrageous Sophie Tucker</i> 7:00 p.m.	19	20	21 Art Discussion Group - Rembrandt 7:00 p.m.	22	23 Barney Coltman <i>Jane Friedman</i> Advertisers' & New Members Dinner 6:00 p.m.	24
25	26	27	28 Purim, Pizza & Movie 6:00 p.m.			

**2017 - 2018  
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# President's Message Beth Hayden



Shalom uvrachah,

This is February, the month in 1943 which marks the arrests and deaths of Die Weiße Rose (the White Rose). Die Weiße Rose was a non-violent resistance organization formed by students at the University of Munich during the rule of the Third Reich. Hans Scholl founded the movement and his sisters, Sophie and later, Inge, also joined when they became students at the University. For nine months the White Rose printed and distributed circulars calling for resistance to Nazi policies and governance. Core members, and their names deserve remembrance for their courage, included Hans and Sophie Scholl, Inge Scholl, Alex Schmorell, Willi Graf, Cristoph Probst and their philosophy professor, Kurt Huber.

The Scholls came from an upper middle class, politically progressive family. At first, taken in by the Reich's bombast, both Sophie and Hans served as leaders in Nazi youth movements. They were shortly disillusioned. In an atmosphere where it was dangerous to even speak or think against the Reich, the Scholl family maintained its intellectual and spiritual integrity. Children were trained to report their parents, neighbors were encouraged to turn in their neighbors. This was an atmosphere of "correct speak"

in which every word uttered and every action taken had to be carefully controlled. One never knew who was watching, listening and reporting to the Gestapo.

Tragedy encountered the Scholls on February 18, 1943. They had been successful in turning out fliers encouraging resistance against the Reich. On February 18, Hans and Sophie decided to distribute more fliers at the University of Munich. They distributed fliers outside the classrooms and then left only to discover they had, in their haste, neglected to distribute a significant number of fliers that remained in the briefcase. They returned and Sophie, for whatever reason, decided to throw the remaining fliers off an upstairs balcony into the courtyard below. They were spotted by a university custodian — an informer — and arrested.

Sophie and Hans were questioned for four days; their trial set for February 22<sup>nd</sup>. They were convicted of treason and sentenced to death, executed by guillotine only hours later. Hans Scholl's last words before his death were "Long live freedom!" Hans and Sophie were 25 and 22, respectively, at the time of their deaths. Three other members of the White Rose were tried and executed; the rest received prison terms.

—B'shalom, Beth

# Nosh

## Rabbi Agler's February Torah Service

Saturday morning Torah learning services with Rabbi Richard Agler have become a highlight of our winter months, both for our ever-present stalwarts and our snowbirds. The engaging discussion happens in a warm, informal atmosphere, Reminders of what is important in our history and heritage feel like gifts while we brush up on Jewish life lessons. (There is never any white-washing of ancestral behavior.) This month's service will take place on February 10<sup>th</sup>. As always, Rabbi Agler's services begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. There will be a Kiddush afterwards, of course. We believe in feeding the body as well as mind, heart and soul.

## KJCC Jewish Film Festival Continues

If you enjoyed "The Women's Balcony" and "A Stranger Among Us" in January, you definitely want to see the films our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Winter Film Fest will show in February (see poster on page 32 for schedule). "The Green Prince" will start off the month on Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>. We are grateful to our anonymous donor sponsoring half of the festival and would welcome anyone else who would like to contribute to this weekly program in season (and its delicious post-movie repasts). Many thanks to Medina Roy and her Adult Education Committee for preparing this thoughtful, entertaining program. All films begin at 7:00 p.m. There is no charge, and we encourage you to bring friends and winter guests. For further information or to become a sponsor, contact Medina at [hiitsmedee@gmail.com](mailto:hiitsmedee@gmail.com).

## A Gift for You on Tu BiSh'vat

We are going to celebrate The New Year of the Trees differently this year. No big sit-down metaphysical family seder with four glasses of wine, stories, blessings on every kind of fruit that flourishes in Israel followed by planting trees on KJCC's property. Instead, we will have a Tu Bish'vat oneg, chant a vigorous *Shehechyanu* in

gratitude for surviving to reach this season, and then we will sample and bless the fruits. We are going small but significant this year. All who come to services on Friday night, February 2<sup>nd</sup> (though Tu Bish'vat actually begins on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January) will, if they wish, get seedlings that look like mini-trees to bring home and care for and bring back to use as living *karpas* when we assemble in March for our Passover Seder.

## Pizza and Purim: Wednesday, February 28

We will hold our annual reading of *Megillah Esther* on Wednesday evening, February 28<sup>th</sup>, starting at 6:00 p.m. Bring masks and costumes or let us transform you with shawls and masks, crowns and beards. This is always a fun evening as well as a chance to perform the important *mitzvah* of hearing the *ganze Megillah*. We'll have healthy food to eat as well as pizza and there will be an uproarious comedy afterwards, "A Matter of Size," about overweight Israelis who decide to become Sumo wrestlers. Among the other *mitzvot* of the holiday (to share a festive meal, to give gifts of food to our neighbors, *mishloach manot*, and to give charity to the needy), there is the commandment to drink until we cannot tell the difference between "cursed be Haman" and "blessed be Mordechai." Yes, there will be adult beverages. (We count on your discretion to make driving home safely your prime directive). Bring on the *groggers*!!! Be prepared to make lots of joyful noise.

## A Pop-Up Program on Wednesdays

There's a new group in town. It's called the Upper Keys Life Enrichment Coalition. Terry Willner-Tainow, Natalie Dorf, Dave Mont and Georgia Landau are some of the key KJCC people who have been working on this project. Every Wednesday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., now through April, J.O.Y. will host activities ranging from body stretching to brain stimulation, computer proficiency to *mah jongg*, art projects, afternoon movies, popcorn, coffee and pot luck lunches. If you are looking for something interesting to do on Wednesdays, drop by the airy facility at 161 Pearl

## February Birthdays

1st.....	Libby Shapiro
1st.....	Roy Pollack
2nd.....	Jaxson Brandon Lebofsky
3rd.....	Beth Horowitz
3rd.....	Dick Bromwich
3rd.....	Leslie Janowitz
5th.....	Rebecca Smith Strasser
6th.....	Evan Harvey
6th.....	Martin Field
7th.....	Erica Lieberman-Garrett
7th.....	Larry Jacobs
9th.....	Linda Pincus
9th.....	Ron Garrett
9th.....	Rosemary Barefoot
12th.....	Johnny Knowles
12th.....	Paul Roberts
13th.....	Hannah David
13th.....	Jerrold Benowitz
14th.....	Debbie Madnick
15th.....	Judith Weber
18th.....	Beth Hayden
18th.....	Evan Daddona
21st.....	David J. Marmar
22nd.....	Harry Friedman
22nd.....	Tomar Gross
23rd.....	Sienna Rose Lebofsky
24th.....	Muriel Swartz
24th.....	Suzie Greenman
25th.....	Rita Conklin
26th.....	Jim Williams
26th.....	John D. Schur

Ave. in Tavernier. The place sounds sweet. All activities are free. For more information, contact Betsy Baste at uklecinc@gmail.com.

### Israel Trip Cancelled

We're sorry to announce the cancellation of the spring 2018 trip to Israel. Our deep appreciation to Rabbi Agler for all his preparation and hard work. Perhaps another year.

### Sisterhood's New Book Club

The first meeting, and discussion of Myla Goldberg's book, "The Bee Season," was such a

## February Anniversaries

	Years
9th	Uri & Liliam Kamely.....26

success (and the lunch so delicious) that a second session is being planned for February. Watch Beth's Tuesday announcements for location and title of the new book to be discussed. Many thanks to Linda Pollack for setting the bar high for an afternoon of stimulating talk and deepening friendships. Again, bring your suggestions with you for future books to discuss so we can choose our next book. For more information, contact Randi Grant at rkgcpa@bellsouth.net or 954-383-4320.

### Art Discussion Tackles Rembrandt

The next meeting of the Jewish Art and Artists Discussion Group will explore "Rembrandt's Jews," the Dutch artist's fascination with and focus on Jewish subjects. This group will be co-facilitated by Gloria Avner and Beth Kaminstein (with input by KJCC Resident Scholar, Rabbi Richard Agler) on Wednesday evening, February 21st, at 7:00 p.m. Links to specific works will be provided in advance. Bring friends who might be interested. Refreshments will be served and there is no charge. It should be another fascinating evening.

### Harry's Garden Needs Support

It's been three years since Harry satisfied his requirements for Eagle Scout by planning, building, and bringing to literal fruition a functioning, organic garden. Filled with nourishing vegetables and herbs, maintained on KJCC property, this eye-and-stomach-pleasing garden has provided healthy additions and alternatives to oneg sweets nearly every Erev Shabbat in growing season. Jane and Harry have taken innumerable boxes overflowing with fresh produce to Burton Memorial Church where it's shared via Burton's Food Bank. This garden has fed us, and now we need to feed it. Irma destroyed most of the white pick-

et fencing that framed the garden and that has to be replaced. The garden needs dirt and compost, seeds and plants.

There is an amazing record of this garden's creation on the table in our foyer. Please peruse the photos and description.

Thank you to Lorena and Michael Kaufman for their generous donation to get the ball rolling and the garden growing. There is a box in the Social Hall where you can deposit your check.

### **Harry Gets Naval Academy Nomination**

This note came in the mail from the Friedman family: "Just a quick update—good news! I just got off the phone with Congressman Curbeo in Washington, D.C. Harry has officially received his Congressional nomination to attend the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis after he graduates later this year! We couldn't be more proud." — *Steve and Jane*

We're proud of Harry and happy for you, too.

### **Advertisers' and New Members' Dinner**

It's appreciation evening for our Chai-Lights and Directory Advertisers as well as our new members on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m. We make our best food and give our supporters and recent additions to our *mishpocha* our sincerest, most welcoming "thank you." We are a small community, a minority that stretches over 136 miles, and we love to support those who support us. Medina Roy will, as usual, chair this upbeat event. Please contact her to tell her you are coming and to co-ordinate your dish. This is always a satisfying evening. RSVP to [hiitsmedee@gmail.com](mailto:hiitsmedee@gmail.com). Also, please see the full-page promo on page 12.

### **Arlo Haskell and *The Jews of Key West***

We have an exciting, informative evening ahead of us on Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m., thanks to Medina Roy and her Adult Education Committee. Arlo Haskell, writer, historian, literary organizer and publisher, will be at KJCC to talk about his newest book, *The Jews of Key West: Smugglers, Cigar Makers, & Revolutionaries*

(1823-1969).

Leading scholars praise *The Jews of Key West* as a groundbreaking addition to the histories of Key West. "Haskell's new book uncovers in fascinating and vivid detail the story of the immense impact the Jewish community has had on the basic culture of Key West," says Bancroft Prize-winning historian Robert D. Richardson.

The book, illustrated with 100 full-color plates, will be available for sale after the talk, and of course inscription by the author. There is no charge to attend, guests are welcome, and there will, of course, be refreshments. Please see the ad on page 18.

### **A Note To All From Adult Education**

On behalf of my committee and all of KJCC, I want to offer heartfelt thanks to our own Rabbi Ed Rosenthal for providing us with a weekend filled with education and inspiration on Judaism's ancient spiritual teachings, the Kabbalah. (We, his students, were very much the vessel being filled.) Many thanks to Michael and Lorena Kaufman for helping fund this event and to Joyce Peckman for sponsoring the Friday night dinner that started the weekend's nourishment.

On a personal note, as chair of the Adult Education Committee, I could not have put this together without the help of some wise and hard-working KJCC friends. I'd like to thank Gloria Avner, our amazing head of Ritual, for her enormous contribution in working with me on the

### **Oneg Sponsors for February 2018**

*February 2nd* - Marc Bloom, in honor of Ellen Bloom. Lynn Nobil, in memory of Sara and Joel Cohen.

*February 9th* - Erica Lieberman-Garrett, in celebration of Erica's 60th birthday. Arthur Plutzer, in honor of Pauline Roller.

*February 16th* - Hannah David, in honor of Hannah's 65th birthday.

*February 23rd* - Jane Friedman, in honor of Harry's and mom Angelina's birthdays.

program, plus making all the arrangements and coordinating with Rabbi Ed. At 11:30 Friday night, amid a small group of tired planners, Jan Price came up with the seating arrangement that created such a warm and intimate atmosphere. Thanks go to bagelmon Marc Bloom, who is always there when you need him without ever having to ask.

Special thanks are due to Sam Vinicur, not only for his guidance but also for his efforts to make the program happen in the first place.

Some time last year when Rabbi Ed and his Scubi Jews were at the KJCC, he and Sam got into a discussion. Rabbi Ed did a short riff about the Kabbalah and its teachings. Sam thought everyone would want to hear what he'd just heard, and asked Rabbi Ed if he might come and do a Kabbalah presentation to our members. Gloria and Ed were put in touch, and the rest, as they say, is history.

I just loved this program. It was so KJCC. I am so grateful to all and we are so grateful to you, Rabbi Ed. *Todah rabah.* — *Medina Roy*

## Ongoing Projects and Mitzvah Programs of KJCC

**BOOKPLATES** for siddurim: Call Linda Pollack, 305-852-8575, for information.

**CEMETERY INFORMATION:** If you wish to plan for the very distant future, you can reserve space at the Kendall Mt. Nebo Cemetery in the KJCC section. Call Beth Hayden, 305-773-0067.

**CHAI-LIGHTS** or **DIRECTORY ADVERTISEMENT:** Your business ad will appear in every issue of Chai-Lights. Call Steve Steinbock, 305-394-0143, for annual rates.

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

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

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

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

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

**SUNSHINE COMMITTEE:** If you know of any member who should receive a get well, congratulations or condolence card from the KJCC, call Hannah David, 305-744-6048.

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

**TREE OF LIFE LEAVES** and **ROCKS, SANCTUARY SEAT PLATES, SOCIAL HALL CHAIR PLATES, YAHRZEIT MEMORIAL PLAQUES:** Send your desired inscription to Linda Pollack at [lindap4000@ymail.com](mailto:lindap4000@ymail.com).

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

# KJCC Annual Community Passover Second Seder



Saturday, March 31, 2018

6:30 pm

## Islamorada Fishing Club

104 Madeira Rd Islamorada, FL 33036

MM 82.1 Bayside behind Lorelei



For information and reservations contact

Susan Gordon

susangordon424@yahoo.com, (305) 766-3585

Mail your check to KJCC Sisterhood at PO Box 116,  
Tavernier, FL 33070.

Your check is your reservation. Reserve early as we will  
be opening this to the public after March 15th.

Vegetarian options are available - please request when  
making your reservation.

# PASSOVER

*Donations: Adults \$54; Children 12 and under are our guests.*

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## Sisterhood Susan Gordon



Welcome to a new month full of wonderful activities and opportunities to become more involved with the KJCC. Early last month, on Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, Sisterhood held our first meeting of the 2018 new year with 13 women attending. Many great ideas were discussed, and exciting events were planned.

I become energized as meeting facilitator when I am greeted with such enthusiasm from all of the dedicated women whom I share the table with at our monthly meetings. The first order of new business was the election and installation of new Sisterhood officers for 2018. We are pleased to announce that all officers from last year will continue in their current positions: President: Susan Gordon; Vice President: Jane Friedman; Treasurer: Erica Lieberman-Garrett; Recording Secretary: Geri Smith; and Corresponding Secretary: Michele Riley. I would like to thank Joyce Peckman for conducting a thoughtful and beautiful installation ceremony.

We spent the remainder of the meeting enthusiastically planning Shabbat and Holiday dinners from January through July. Thank you to Joyce Peckman, who sponsored the Shabbaton Shabbat Dairy Dinner, Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup>. The dinner marked the start of a weekend of learning with Rabbi Ed Rosenthal.

The Sisterhood Book Club, a new activity, held its first meeting in January at Linda Pollack's house (thank you Linda, for hosting a beautiful luncheon and first meet). It will continue to meet monthly to discuss a Jewish themed book at a member's home. The first book discussed was *Bee Season*, a stimulating novel by Myla Goldberg. A new book will be selected at each meeting. For further information please contact Randi Grant at 954-383-4320 or by email: rkgcpa@bellsouth.net

We look forward to preparing a delicious luncheon on Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, following the KJCC's Annual General Membership Meeting with election and installation of new KJCC Officers and Directors. Many thanks to Nettie

Seder for planning the luncheon and taking all reservations. Please contact Nettie to make your reservation and discuss what you would like to contribute to the luncheon. Call 305-852-7283 or email: ngseder@yahoo.com.

All KJCC women: please plan ahead and be sure to save Sunday evening, March 18<sup>th</sup> for the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Women's Seder. This is a wonderful and very sweet tradition, and a special time for women to celebrate Passover together in a meaningful way. Erica Lieberman-Garrett will be the contact person. Please email her at hip-piejap@hotmail.com or call her at 305-393-1162. More details will come next month.

Also, at the end of March, please plan to join your KJCC *Mishpocha* for the Annual KJCC Community Seder. Details about the Seder will be in next month's Chai-Lights.

It's not too soon to put a few other dates for Shabbat dinners on your calendar. All dinners begin at 6:00 p.m. and are followed by Shabbat services at 7:30 p.m. On Friday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, we will celebrate *Yom HaAtzma'ut*, Israel Independence Day, with a Shabbat feast of Israeli foods while we listen to traditional Israeli folk music, and maybe even do some dancing! On Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, we will celebrate Shavuot with a traditional dairy dinner. The KJCC annual Shabbaque and celebration of Pauline Roller's 103<sup>rd</sup> Birthday will be held on Friday, July 6<sup>th</sup>.

We have much to look forward to. I would like to thank all of the women of Sisterhood who have shown their confidence in me by electing me to serve as president for another year. I am excited to be working with such competent women who have been elected to the other Sisterhood officer positions. With the help and involvement of the women who attend our monthly meetings, and those who will choose to become increasingly involved, I am certain we will all have a great year!

Please plan to attend the next Sisterhood meeting, Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m. ◇

# —KJCC's Adult Education Committee Presents—

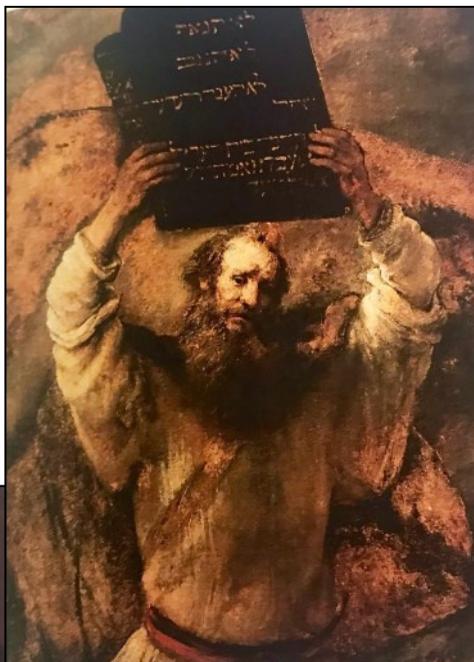
## Jewish Art and Artists Discussion Group, Part II:

### *Rembrandt and the Jews*

One of the most famous artists in western history, the Dutch master Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669), who was not Jewish, had an affinity for painting the Jews of his Amsterdam neighborhood, both his neighbors and poor immigrants. Their faces and dress fascinated him. He often used them as facial models for portraits of famous

figures from the Hebrew Bible and to illustrate Biblical scenes.

This evening's discussion, to be led by artists Gloria Avner and Beth Kaminstein, will focus on Rembrandt's art, subject matter and influences. Rabbi Richard Agler will discuss Judaism in Europe during the time of Rembrandt.



Date:  
Wed., Mar. 21, 2018

Time:  
7:00 p.m.

Place:  
KJCC classroom

No charge. Guests are welcome. Refreshments will be served.

# *In Memoriam February 2018*

In Memory Of

**Sue Steinberg**

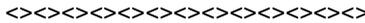
By Richard & Mindy Agler



In Memory Of

**Lou Roazen**

By Sylvia Berman



In Memory Of

**Marvin Galanty**

By Marc Bloom



In Memory Of

**Sarah P. Zalk**

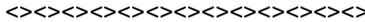
By Meredith A. Cline



In Memory Of

**Reuben L. Zalk**

By Meredith A. Cline



In Memory Of

**Eve Greenstein**

By Barnet O. Coltman



In Memory Of

**Nathan Weisberg**

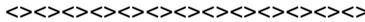
By Gerri & Frank Emkey



In Memory Of

**Robert Kinney**

By Gerri & Frank Emkey



In Memory Of

**Barry Feinberg**

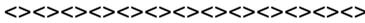
By Arthur Feinberg



In Memory Of

**William Feinberg**

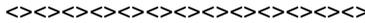
By Arthur Feinberg



In Memory Of

**Dr. Louis Fishman**

By Eina G. Fishman



In Memory Of

**Harry Kaplan**

By Marsha Garrettson



In Memory Of

**Rose Gilson**

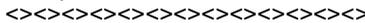
By Michael & Suzanne Gilson



In Memory Of

**Charles Gilson**

By Michael & Suzanne Gilson



In Memory Of

**Nicholas Goldenberg**

By Mrs. Marty Graham



In Memory Of

**Frances Weiser**

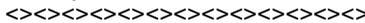
By Andrew & Randi Grant



In Memory Of

**Leila Horne**

By Andrew & Randi Grant



In Memory Of

**Stanley Bush**

By Andrew & Randi Grant



In Memory Of

**Robert Greenbaum**

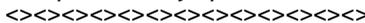
By Marilyn Greenbaum



In Memory Of

**Ilona Ban**

By Franklin & Judy Greenman



In Memory Of

**Nella Gross**

By Tomar Gross &  
Randy Klein-Gross



# *In Memoriam February 2018*

In Memory Of

**Archie Zacks**

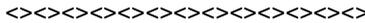
By Jerry & Barbara Herson



In Memory Of

**Ida Ratchik**

By Susan Horn



In Memory Of

**Fannie Phillips**

By Patricia Isenberg



In Memory Of

**Eleanor Sonn**

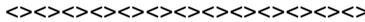
By Sam & Leslie Janowitz



In Memory Of

**Pinchas Kamely**

By Yardena Kamely



In Memory Of

**Monroe (Monty) Kaplan**

By Marshall & Myra Kaplan



In Memory Of

**Luba Tuchman**

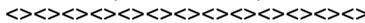
By Marshall & Myra Kaplan



In Memory Of

**Marian Rose Klimpl**

By Michael Klimpl



In Memory Of

**Oscar Margulies**

By Stanley & Jenny Margulies



In Memory Of

**Samuel Marmar**

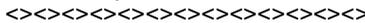
By David & Pamela Marmar



In Memory Of

**Ann Netzman**

By Alan Netzman



In Memory Of

**Sara J. Cohen**

By Lynn Nobil



In Memory Of

**William Pollack**

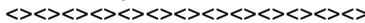
By Linda Pollack



In Memory Of

**Malka Frank**

By Linda Pollack



In Memory Of

**Eta Brownstein**

By Pauline Roller



In Memory Of

**Al Roller**

By Pauline Roller



In Memory Of

**John A. Schur**

By Lee Schur



In Memory Of

**Isadore Seder**

By Jules & Nettie Seder



In Memory Of

**Ida Seder**

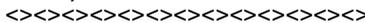
By Jules & Nettie Seder



In Memory Of

**Miriam Blinder**

By Steven & Barbara Smith



In Memory Of

**Sarah Felder**

By Stuart & Geri Smith



# *In Memoriam February 2018*

In Memory Of

**Hedy Kopecky**

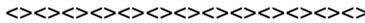
By Adam & Judy Starr



In Memory Of

**Mr. Harry Miller**

By Ira & Shirley Stein



In Memory Of

**Sally Sussman**

By Richard & Sheila Steinberg



In Memory Of

**Sara J. Cohen**

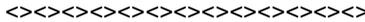
By Richard & Sheila Steinberg



In Memory Of

**Ann R. Kapulskey**

By George & Muriel Swartz



In Memory Of

**Morris Feinberg**

By Larry & Dorothy Wolfe



In Memory Of

**Samuel Wolfe**

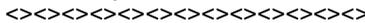
By Larry & Dorothy Wolfe



In Memory Of

**Sydney Zinner**

By Donald Zinner



In Memory Of

**Al Roller**

By Pauline Roller



## ***MISHEBERACH – A PRAYER FOR HEALING***

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

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

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

If you have someone that you wish to add or remove from KJCC's *Misheberach* list, please, call or e-mail and let us know. We'll happily include any name (or names) you tell us about. The main KJCC number is 305-852-5235. The website, which accepts e-mail, is [keysjewishcenter.com](http://keysjewishcenter.com).



**KEYS JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER  
ADVERTISERS & NEW MEMBERS  
SHABBAT DINNER**

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2018**

**6:00 PM**

**SERVICES TO FOLLOW AT 7:30**

**~DAIRY~**

Once again, we are inviting our Chai-Lights and Directory advertisers to join us for dinner to thank them for their support. We are also extending a special invitation to our newest members. And we are encouraging you, our members, to encourage prospective members to join with us also.



Contact:

Medina - [hiitsmedee@gmail.com](mailto:hiitsmedee@gmail.com) - 305-394 -1702  
to reserve your spot and coordinate your covered dish.  
Please reserve by February 15th.

No charge for members in good standing  
Non-advertiser guests: \$10

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# World Jewish Report

## Medina Roy



### Pregnant 14 years of her life

Recently, a *haredi* (ultra-Orthodox) woman, from the *Meah Shearim* neighborhood of Jerusalem, gave birth to her 20th child. It was the 42-year-old's 19th delivery (her 18th was a set of twins). Hadassah University Medical Center reported that the woman has spent a total of 14 years of her life pregnant. (According to the Guinness World Record website, an 18th century Russian peasant woman holds the record for giving birth to 69 children, including 16 pairs of twins, seven sets of triplets and four sets of quadruplets. A textbook example of a record no one would want to break.) ([www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org), 12-21-17)

### Israelis excluded

Seven Israeli chess players were denied visas to participate in an international speed-chess tournament hosted by Saudi Arabia, which was held at the end of December. (Saudi Arabia does not recognize Israel and there are no formal ties between the two countries.) Lior Aizenberg, spokesman for Israel Chess Federation, said, "The event is not a world championship if they prevent chess players from several countries from taking part. Every chess player should have the right to participate in an event on the basis of professional criteria, regardless of their passports, their place of issue or the stamps they bear." As we go to press, the Israeli federation is considering legal action and holding an international competition in Israel for players excluded from the match in Saudi Arabia. ([www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com), 12-24-17)

### Israeli Teen Rewarded by Facebook

While most of his friends are into playing video games, Yuval Shprintz, a high school senior from Tzurit, a town in northern Israel, has been interested in information security, becoming somewhat of an expert in it. Some time ago, he was playing around with Whatsapp, the instant messaging platform

created in Israel and now owned by Facebook, when he stumbled upon a major security breach, part of which could easily crash the application by anyone with just a little bit of coding knowledge. Using a program that allows users to report software malfunctions to developers, Shprintz alerted Facebook to the problem. He heard nothing from them for several weeks. Then, in early December, Facebook sent Shprintz a check for \$1,250, saying "we're grateful that this has been brought to our attention." Shprintz used the money to buy – what else? – a newer and more powerful computer. ([www.tabletmag.com](http://www.tabletmag.com), 12-19-17)

### Space-Age Product Evolves

A super-strong steel substitute that was invented in Israel – and then sent into space by NASA – is now being used for hip replacements. The material, which goes by the name MP-1, was developed by Aliza Buchman of the Nahariya-based startup MMA Tech in, collaboration with Professor Robert Bryant of the University of Virginia. The advanced polymeric material has high resistance to heat, is lightweight but very strong and shows little wear and tear, working well in joint surgery. The first human operation using MP-1 was performed twelve years ago in New Zealand. Since then, 74 surgeries have been done in that country. Another surgery was performed recently at Rambam Health Care Campus in Haifa. "One of the problems with existing implants is wear and tear," explained Dr. Daniel Levin, who performed one of the surgeries. "Over time, patients have to undergo repeat surgery and replace the implant due to loosening and cracking. The expectation of the new material is long-term durability...the possibility for patients to have a better quality of life." The possibilities for MP-1 are expanding: knee replacements and even dental implants are being planned. ([www.israel21c.org](http://www.israel21c.org), 12-27-17)

### “Sherman” Goes on a Diet

Ten overweight Israeli hedgehogs are now on strict diets and an exercise program because they are too fat to curl up into a ball, a necessary trait to fend off predators. Local Israeli animal lovers found them teetering through the streets and brought them to the Ramat Gan Zoo, outside Tel Aviv, where they were placed on the diet and exercise regimens. The staff at the zoo said the critters had probably been eating food left out for pets. “A lot of people put cat food on the streets for the stray cats...the problem is that there is other wildlife that eats it,” said zookeeper Becka Rifkin. One adult male hedgehog named Sherman weighed 3.5 pounds when he arrived at the zoo, almost double the average weight for a hedgehog his age. Zoo staff are hoping to release the slimmed animals by this coming summer. ([www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com), 1-4-18)

### Mysterious “Wheel of Giants”

A mysterious stone formation located in the Golan Heights, and estimated to be about 5,000 years old, was discovered by Israeli archaeologists shortly after the 1967 Six-Day War. It is roughly the same age as Stonehenge. Known in Arabic as Rujm el-Hiri (“stone heap of the wildcat”) and in Hebrew as *Gilgal Refaim* (“wheel of giants”), the formation of stones is so vast that it is best seen from the sky. Unlike the massive rocks of Stonehenge, this circle formation is made up of much smaller stones and, according to Popular Archaeology, has a total diameter of more than 500 feet. The formation consists of five circles; the walls that make up these circles have a height of some 6.6 feet, with outer walls as high as 8 feet. The stones have a combined weight estimated at 37,500 tons. Despite its massive size, it’s hard to see how the whole site is connected from ground level, where it just looks like random rocks and rubble. At the heart of the “Wheel of Giants” is a 15-foot-high burial mound. Who and what was buried there is not known, probably taken by tomb robbers long ago. A 2010 report in Biblical Archaeology Review said the circles may have been used as “an ancient calendri-

cal device that indicated the arrival of the summer solstice and other astronomical events.” The same report said the tomb may have been added as much as 2,000 years after the circles were created. There are many theories explaining the Wheel; none are definitive. To see what this “Wheel of Giants” looks like, go to <https://www.haaretz.com/archaeology>. ([www.haaretz.com](http://www.haaretz.com), 12-24-17)

### In Memoriam

\* Yehoshua Hershkovitz, who began the first kosher “Meals on Wheels” program out of his kitchen in Brooklyn, died at the end of December. He was 92. Hershkovitz founded *Tomche Shabbos* (“Supporters of the Sabbath”) in 1975 because he was concerned that one of his neighbors (and others in the community) could not afford to put food on the table on Friday evenings. Today, the original *Tomche Shabbos* distributes meals to 600 families in Brooklyn. The project has spread to Jewish communities around the world. Born in Hungary, Hershkovitz was deported to Dachau concentration camp in 1944. When liberated he learned that most of his family had perished in the Holocaust. ([www.forward.com](http://www.forward.com), 12-29-17)

\* Kazimierz Piechowski, a non-Jewish political prisoner who led a daring escape from Auschwitz using the stolen car of a Nazi official, has died at the age of 98. Piechowski was one of four men in the escape plan using stolen SS uniforms and weapons. Driving toward the camp gate, Piechowski yelled: “Wake up, you buggers. Open the gate or I’ll open you up.” Piechowski was sent to the camp with a group of Polish Boy Scouts as political prisoners in 1940. Following his escape, he joined the Resistance. One of the other escapees smuggled out what allegedly was the first detailed document detailing the crimes committed at Auschwitz, where 1.1 million people — most of them Jews — were killed. The smuggled material was given to the Resistance. As a result of this escape, the Nazis began tattooing prisoners. After the war, Piechowski was sentenced by the communist authorities to ten years in prison and reportedly served seven of those ten years. The famous escape was documented in the 2007 film, “The Runaway.”

Piechowski went on to become an engineer and has written two books about his experiences. ([www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org), 12-18-17)

\* Jerry Yellin, who flew the last combat mission in World War II, died at the end of December. He was 93. Born in Newark, New Jersey, Yellin enlisted in the military two months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, on his 18th birthday. As a lieutenant in the 78th Fighter Squadron of the U.S. Army Air Corps based on Iwo Jima, Yellin led an attack on Japanese airfields when Emperor Hirohito announced Japan's surrender. When he returned to his base, Yellin belatedly learned of the cease-fire. His squadron had not received the coded signal ordering them to stop their attack. Yellin was upset by what he saw on Iwo Jima saying, "there wasn't a blade of grass and there were 28,000 bodies rotting in the sun." Sixteen members of his squadron were killed on missions. (Some 6,800 American servicemen and over 20,000 Japanese were killed in the battle for this one small Pacific island.) Yellin was discharged with the rank of captain and awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal. For many years after he was discharged, Yellin suffered from what is now known as PTSD – post-traumatic stress disorder. He struggled to hold down jobs and moved around the United States many times, relocating for a time in Israel. After conversations with other veterans who struggled to adapt to civilian life, in 2010 he co-founded "Operation Warrior Wellness," a division of the David Lynch Foundation that helps veterans learn Transcendental Meditation. (Yellin's wife got him to try T.M. – with some success – after she saw the practice's originator, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi on "The Merv Griffin Show.") In recent years, he served as the national spokesman for the Spirit of '45, a nonprofit organization that "promotes the legacy of World War II veterans." ([www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org), 12-26-17)

\* Fred Bass, the man who transformed the Strand, his father's small used-book store, into the largest used-book store in the world (it went by the slogan "18 Miles of Books") died at the beginning of January. He was 89. Bass was thirteen when he began

working at the bookstore founded in 1927 by his father Benjamin, a Lithuanian Jewish immigrant. (Fred's mother Shirley, a Polish Jewish immigrant, died when he was six.) At the time, it was one of nearly 50 used and specialty book stores along Manhattan's Fourth Avenue, known back then as "Book Row." (Today the Strand is located on Broadway at 12th Street, having moved there in 1957 with 70,000 books, growing to a half-million by the mid-1960s and 2.5 million by the 1990s. By then, a storage warehouse in Brooklyn had to be purchased.) In 1997, the Strand had become the world's largest used-book store in the world. During the Depression, the elder Bass was destitute and placed Fred and his sister in foster care. Except for two years in the Army, Fred never left the area until he retired in November 2017, leaving the iconic store in the hands of his daughter Nancy (who's married to Senator Ron Wyden, Democrat of Oregon). Bass created a literary quiz for prospective Strand employees when they filled out their application. Applicants had to match ten authors with ten titles. "I thought it was a quick way to find out if somebody had any knowledge of books," he said. ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), 1-4-18)

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

\* Israeli startups raised over \$5 billion in 2017, surpassing the \$4.8 billion raised the previous year, which was itself a record. ([www.globes-online.com](http://www.globes-online.com), 12-28-17)

\* Rabbi Gayle Pomerantz has been promoted to senior rabbi at the 75-year-old Temple Beth Shalom synagogue in Miami Beach. Pomerantz has served at Beth Shalom since 1994. She will be its first female rabbi. Pomerantz was ordained at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1989. She became the first female president of the Rabbinic Association of Greater Miami in 1998. The recipient of the Jewish Museum of Florida's "Breaking the Glass Ceiling" award, Pomerantz has been honored by the city of Miami Beach as "A Woman to Know" and was named "A Woman of Valor" by the National Council of Jewish Women. ([www.miamiherald.com](http://www.miamiherald.com), 12-26-17) ◇

# 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.*

## Adult Education

Avner, Gloria	<b>In Honor of</b>
Bolton, Donna	Shabbaton
Gross, Patricia	Shabbaton
Hancock, Cleo	Shabbaton
Kaufman, Michael & Lorena	Shabbaton
Klein-Gross, Randy	Shabbaton
Williams, Jim & Rita	Film Festival

## Book Plate

Coltman, Barnet	<b>In Memory of</b>
Robert Coltman & Eva Levine	

## Chai-Lights

Mayk, Israel & Nissan	<b>In honor of</b>
Auld Lane Synagogue feature	

## General Fund

Cole, Ron  
 Margulies, Stanley & Jenny  
 Mayk, Israel & Nissan  
 Sax, Stuart & Lauren

## Meditation Garden

Sax, Stuart & Lauren	<b>In Memory of</b>
Patty Silver Schocket	

## Meditation Garden

Kaufman, Michael & Lorena	<b>In Support of</b>
Harry's garden	

## Oneg Sponsorship

Ellner, Susan	<b>In Honor of</b>
Gordon, Susan	Rhett's 2nd birthday
Peckman, Joyce	Bar Mitzvah of Nonok Yosef
Plutzer, Arthur	Pauline Roller
Seder, Nettie	
Shabathai, Kathy	Joe Shabathai's birthday

## Scholarship

Vanartsdalen, David & Patricia

## Tikkun Olam

David, Hannah	<b>In Honor of</b>
Ecker, Ellen	Puerto Rico aid
Kwalick, Teresa	Puerto Rico aid
Margulies, Stanley	Puerto Rico aid
Riley, Michele	Puerto Rico aid
Roy, Medina	Vegetable & herb garden
Steinbock, Stephen	Vegetable & herb garden

## Tikkun Olam

Mead, Richard & Elizabeth	<b>In Memory of</b>
Patty Silver	

## Yahrzeit

Avner, Gloria	<b>In Memory of</b>
Boruszak, Joan	Beatrice & Alex Avner
Boruszak, Joan	Burton Boruszak
Cohn, Nancy	Emma Kohlenbrener
Margolis, Gary & Blum, Laurie	David Cohn
	Charles Margolis

## Yizkor Book

Mayk, Israel & Nissan

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## Eye on the Arts

### Joyce Peckman



**The Kennedys** – Friday, Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6 p.m. at the Key Largo Library. This singing couple plays a folk-rock blend of country, bluegrass and swing on guitar, ukulele and electric sitar. The free concert is sponsored by the Friends of the Key Largo Library.

**An Evening at the Opera** – Monday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m. at San Pablo Church in Marathon and Tuesday February 6<sup>th</sup> at Island Community Church in Islamorada, MM 83.2 bayside. Four remarkable performers from around the world will perform a selection of opera favorites. Tickets are \$30, available at *Floridakeysconcerts.com*. For further information, contact Joyce at 305-240-1000.

**The Key Players presents “War of the Worlds, the Panic Broadcast”** – Thursday, February 8<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup>; then Thursday the 15<sup>th</sup> and Saturday the 17<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m., all at the Murray Nelson Government Center, MM 102 bayside in Key Largo. Tickets are \$15 online at *thekeyplayers.org*.

**Morada Bay Art Walk** – Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m. at MM 81.5. The third Thursday monthly outdoor festival features artists and craft vendors, live music and food by local restaurants.

**Keys Community Concert Band – All Creatures Great and Small.** Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m., Founders’ Park in Islamorada, MM 86.8 bayside. Bring a folding chair or blanket and your puppy for the annual Puppy Parade at Founders’ Park, featuring animal-themed music. There is no charge for Community Concert Band concerts.

**Joe Cella Birds in Nature Art Show** – February 17<sup>th</sup> through March 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Key Largo Public Library Community Room, presented by the Purple Isles Art Guild. Do stop by. You

never know which KJCC members will be displaying their works. [www.agpi.us](http://www.agpi.us)

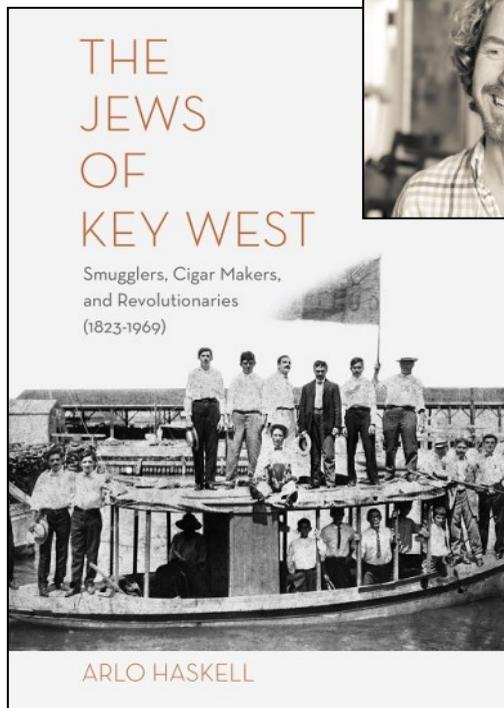
**Watercolor Workshop** – led by nationally acclaimed artist Don Andrews, known for his glowing washes and vibrant color. Offered by The Art Guild of the Purple Isles on February 19-20-21 at the Key Largo Lions Club. Cost for the three-day workshop, which includes lunch each day, is \$300.00 for guild members and \$350.00 for non-members. Inquiries to Marti Waltz at [dirkwaltz@aol.com](mailto:dirkwaltz@aol.com) or 305-853-9177.

**The Attaca Quartet** – This exuberant, internationally acclaimed string quartet will perform at Marathon High School on Monday, February 19<sup>th</sup> and at Island Community Church in Islamorada on Tuesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$30, available at the door or the website: *floridakeysconcerts.com*.

**Fandango Quartet** – Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup> at Marathon High School and Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup> at Island Community Church, 7:30 p.m. You will love this spicy mix of Latin, Sephardic, Balkan and classical sounds played on flute, violin, cello and guitar, by two award-winning married couples from Spain, Bosnia, U.S. and United Kingdom. (This is FLKCA’s final concert of the season.) [www.floridakeysconcerts.com](http://www.floridakeysconcerts.com).

**Joseph And His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat** – February 23<sup>rd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, then March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7 p.m., plus Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup> and March 4<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. at Coral Shores High School in Tavernier. Over seventy kids and teachers have been working an incredible number of hours to bring this fabulous performance to the Keys. It should be almost like a night on Broadway. Don’t miss it! (For Andrew Lloyd Webber fans, this was his first musical, one he wrote in college.) Tickets are \$5 presale and \$10 at the door. ◊

**Smugglers. Secret cells  
of plotting Revolutionaries.  
Overturners of Empires.  
Operators of a clandestine  
human underground.  
Think you know the Jews  
of Key West? Come to KJCC on  
Wednesday, March 7th  
and hear the real stories.**



What happens in almost every era and culture when there are trade and export opportunities? Yes, we see an influx of Jews and then see them rise in prominence. Arlo Haskell, a Keys native and executive director of the Key West Literary

Seminar, has researched and written a riveting book about the Jews of Key West. (They first arrived as peddlers long before the Civil War.) Their story, interwoven with commercial success, political intrigue and an occasional wink at the strictures of law, was never told in full before this book. (For lots of reasons, including work as human smugglers and support for José Martí plus the eventual rise of the local Ku Klux Klan.) Mr. Haskell himself will be at KJCC to regale us with stories and answer questions. It all begins at 7:00 p.m. Please join us. Bring any interested friends. There is no charge, and of course there will be refreshments. Brought to you by KJCC's Adult Education Committee, [hiitsmedee@gmail.com](mailto:hiitsmedee@gmail.com)

# Photo Gallery

On December 21st again this year (on the day with, symbolicaly, the least possible daylight), religious leaders and interested others gathered for the Homeless Memorial Service at Settler's Park in Tavernier. Some 72 homeless, infants to aged, lost in 2017, were honored and remembered. Of the 24 in attendance, ten were KJCC members.





At left, Reverends Terry Hudson, Kerby Avedovech and Phil Underwood offered prayers for each homeless person as their names were called out. A candle was then lit to honor each one.



**Homeless Memorial Service (cont.)...**



Gloria Avner and Steve Steinbock represented KJCC. Gloria read aloud a passage from Isaiah. Steve read the Marcia Hain poem about remembering from the KJCC Yizkor book and then led a group recitation of Kaddish. The program was organized and led by Reverend Pam Feeser.





The three photos at top were all taken at the Homestead holiday celebration and submitted by KJCC members Gunther and Shirley Karger. They're the two older teens in the school picture. In the shot below, Gunther isn't keeping his hands warm, he's playing holiday tunes on his trusty harmonica.



At right, Lee Schur's great-grandson looks exceptionally dapper (and also ready for a quick trip to bed) as he and the Schur family ring in the New Year in Chicago. That's Lee, of course, at far right below, looking better and better after a year of recovery challenges.



In the photo near right, Marcia Kreitman tries in vain to restrain the New Year's Eve enthusiasm of husband (and fellow exceptional Keys artist) John Hawver.



**KJCC  
presents**

# Dave Feder In Concert

Wednesday, March 28th

Showtime: 7:30 pm

**Location:** Keys Jewish Community Center  
MM 93.1 Oceanside, Tavernier, FL

**Tickets: \$25.** Tickets may be purchased at door (cash/checks) or online via [www.DaveFeder.com](http://www.DaveFeder.com) (online add \$3.45 Eventbrite handling fee). Contact Beth Hayden for tickets and additional info at: 305-773-0067 or [hayden.elizabeth@comcast.net](mailto:hayden.elizabeth@comcast.net)

Limited Seating. Reserve Now. CDs on sale at concert.

## LIMITLESS GUITAR

DAVIDFEDER.COM



The photo top right was sent by KJCC friend Bert Jimenez from St. Pete. (The city in Florida, not Russia. Can you read the Hebrew on his tee shirt?) With him in the center is KJCC member Richard Kaufman, psychiatrist emeritus, who is apparently wintering there this year. The other gentleman, dapper and continental with his espresso, is Bert's father's son-in-law, from Iran. At near right are Mary Anne and Scott Pearl at their latest Special Olympics event.



Jules Seder, shown in the photo just below, is deeply involved with Barbershop a cappella competitions around the country. He knew the group that performed in Islamorada on January 16th, and was captured doing this impromptu performance with them.



The photo above shows that the orchids are in bloom in the KJCC Meditation Garden orchid pergola.



In the photo just above we see the new KJCC Sisterhood officers at their January swearing-in: (l-r) Michele Riley, corresponding secretary; Erica Lieberman-Garrett, treasurer; Susan Gordon, president; Geri Felder Smith, recording secretary; and Jane Friedman, vice-president. Joyce Peckman, past-president of Sisterhood (at far left), performed the ceremony.

# Keys Jewish Community Center 15th Annual Women's Seder

Sunday

March 18, 2018

5:00 PM @ KJCC

Homemade Seder Dinner  
w/Wine

Come celebrate the 15th  
KJCC Women's Seder.

Donation: \$18 chai  
+ \$15.00 for 15 years = \$33

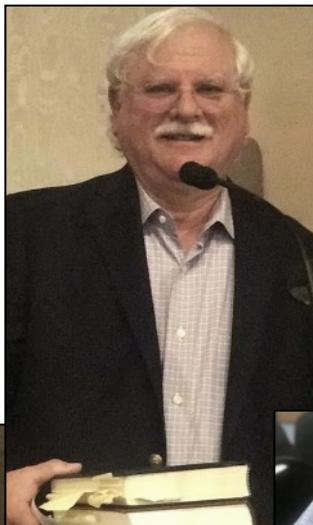
Join us in celebration as  
we continue our efforts of  
Tikkun Olam - repair the  
world.

Limited seating - Please RSVP by  
March 12th

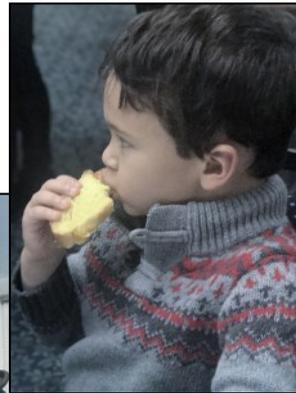
Contact Erica Lieberman-Garrett  
[hippiejap@hotmail.com](mailto:hippiejap@hotmail.com)  
(305) 393-1162



The photos on this page were all taken at the December 29th service and oneg. The former was led by Steve Hartz, top right, and the oneg was sponsored by Beth Hayden. You can see Beth at bottom with Erica doing a wee pre-New Year's eve toast. It was great to be able to welcome Art Itkin back.



The photos on this page were all taken at the January 5th service led by Joyce Peckman, at top, the first service of 2018. As you can see by the long sleeves, hats and jackets, we were undergoing the first significant Upper Keys cold snap of the season. (Yes, we're Florida wimps now.) Honorable photo mention (rare sightings department) goes to Foster Davidson, below, and to Meredith Cline, below left with Pauline.



Some additional photos taken at the January 5th oneg. Again, note the long sleeves and jackets.



# Keys Jewish Community Center, Inc.

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

Dear KJCC member:

The KJCC Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 11, 2018 at 11:00 p.m. in the KJCC's Margulies Family Sanctuary. The February KJCC Board meeting, in the Ruth Richardson Social Hall, is scheduled for the same day at 9:00 a.m. All KJCC members in good standing are cordially invited and encouraged to attend both meetings, however, we particularly request your attendance at the KJCC Annual Meeting.

The primary order of business at the Annual Meeting is the election and installation of KJCC's Board, including officers and directors. This year we will also be revising the Bylaws as they pertain to protecting and growing KJCC fiscal assets. **It is important to note that, per the KJCC Bylaws, nominations from the floor for Board members can and will be accepted at this time.** The Board serves the general membership; therefore your attendance and participation at the Annual Meeting is very important for the KJCC's success and direction forward.

Following the Annual Meeting, KJCC's Sisterhood will provide a full luncheon for all attendees. As we all know, the KJCC eats very well and we extend our thanks and appreciation to Sisterhood for all its contributions and hard work on behalf of the KJCC. Please RSVP your attendance to Nettie Seder at 305-852-7283 or [ngseder@yahoo.com](mailto:ngseder@yahoo.com).

The Nominating Committee has met as required and selected the following slate of 2018-2019 Officers and Board Members. This slate was approved at the January 14, 2018 Board Meeting:

President – Beth Hayden  
Executive Vice President – Susan Gordon  
Vice Presidents – Gloria Avner, Michael Kaufman, Medina Roy  
Recording Secretary – Art Itkin (Erica Lieberman-Garrett, alternate)  
Treasurer – Linda Kaplan  
Financial Secretary – Donna Bolton  
Corresponding Secretary – Joyce Peckman

Directors:

Ken Atlas, Marc Bloom, Jane Friedman, Steve Hartz, Mitch Harvey, Beth Kaminstein, Erica Lieberman-Garrett, Linda Pollack, Skip Rose, Stuart Smith

(Note: Past presidents who maintain regular attendance are automatically voting members of KJCC's Board.)

Respectfully submitted by the 2018 Nominating Committee: Linda Kaplan (Chair), Steve Steinbock, Gloria Avner, Joyce Peckman

# *KJCC's 2nd Annual Chinese Food Xmas Open House & Game Extravaganza*



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*by Gloria Avner*

**T**here is something comforting about tradition, even when the one we're celebrating is a new one, non-religious, concocted impulsively last year via a combination of pure creative energy, generosity, and respect for a prior tradition just ended. A one-off becomes a second annual.

***Tradition- where the heart is at home  
even when it's not a Jewish holiday***

Already there are memories. The Chinese dragon purchased by Linda Perloff and Mitch Harvey last year hangs from the entry to the Social Hall, tickling tall peoples' heads as they enter. Chopsticks and Chinese horoscope placemats decorate the tables. Games are piled high in the school-room, ready for friendly battle. Did we play Monopoly as kids? With





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our parents and relatives and friends? Here's another chance, and how sweet it was to see multiple generations at it again: Dave Mont and his son Jake (who won, of course, owning Park Place and Boardwalk) playing with Barney Coltman, Jules Seder, and Jake's girlfriend, Jessica.

We use the word *mishpocha* at KJCC a lot. It's a wish as well as a description. Days like December 25<sup>th</sup>, as much as or maybe even more than our cyclical ritual Jewish holidays, give weight to the meaning of the Hebrew (and Yiddish) word for family. As much as it is a word for a group of individuals related by blood (or choice and love) *mishpocha* is a word for place, a place where you *feel* at home. It was reminiscent of the many years at the Steinbock home, Carol warmly inviting Steve and all of KJCC to share her joy in Christmas day. As with Carol's open house, people felt free to wander in when they felt like it, to not decide until the last minute, to stay extra long, or for just long enough to fill up some take-out cartons for their loved ones at home.

Donna Bolton did a great job organizing the food and tak-

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ing RSVPs. A number of us, including new member Hannah David, helped with set-up, decorating, food-prep and welcoming. Jane Friedman added her well prepared, delicious and often surprising (oh, those sweet steamed white rice cakes) treats to the mix as a kind of second course, and about an hour into the event, the chat and laughter volume reached a happy kind of crescendo.

Then out came the coins and cards, and poker players gathered round one of the tables. From the look of things, especially where most of the coins ended up, Linda Pollack was a clear winner. The scrabble table contingent was having so much fun they went for a second round and stayed long enough to help with final cleanup.

Even helping with putting the place respectfully to bed sounds like family, doesn't it? KJCC is definitely a *mishpocha* kind of place, where, (not unlike the bar in the TV series, *Cheers*) everybody knows your name. And we're always glad you came.

Next year, 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual? ♦



**KJCC's Adult Education Program**

**Proudly Presents Its**

# **Second Annual KJCC Winter Film Fest**

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



**Sat., Feb. 3, The Green Prince**

**Sat., Feb. 10, Gett: Trial of Vivienne Amsalem**

**Sun., Feb. 18, The Outrageous Sophie Tucker**

**Wed., Feb. 28 A Matter of Size**

**More Coming in March**

**All films begin at 7:00 p.m.**

**GUESTS ARE WELCOME – There is no charge**

**REFRESHMENTS will be served afterwards**

**For More Information, Contact Medina Roy: [hiitsmedee@gmail.com](mailto:hiitsmedee@gmail.com)**

# KJCC's First-Ever *Shabbaton*: *What's in a Name?*

A Weekend with Rabbi Ed Rosenthal and Kabbalah



**W**hat's in a name? Everything, it appears; and that's just one of the concepts we were introduced to by Rabbi Ed Rosenthal as he opened our minds to the spiritual teachings at the core of our heritage. (Lessons none of us had learned in Hebrew School.) The rose ("shoshana" in Hebrew) apparently would not smell as sweet were its name other than rose. There are no mistakes, especially when the name is spelled in Hebrew. Each letter – its shape, its sound and its numerical value (yes, that's how Hebrew works...the letters double as numbers) – adds meaning and context to what is being named (including you). The levels go deep in Jewish spirituality, and they go back in time as far as what our 20<sup>th</sup> century scientists call the Big Bang (in geologic time, over 15 billion years ago). The Kabbalists say that Moses

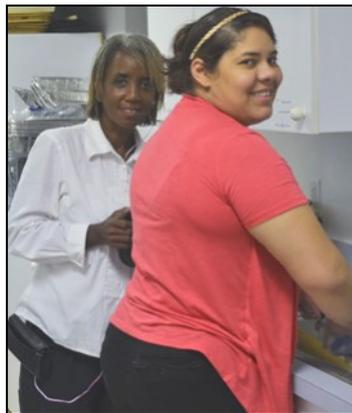





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*knew all about all of it, that he was taking dictation directly from God on Mt. Sinai during those 40 days and 40 nights. This included the Tablets, the Torah and the entirety of the Oral Law, which, little by little, would all be revealed, handed down to us generation by generation and explained by our wisest teachers, at appropriate times. And think about exactly what happened at Mt. Sinai. Divine revelation is typically claimed by individuals; at Mt. Sinai it's said that the entire Jewish people were witness to God's voice, the only recorded group revelation in the history of the world. Time did not exist before Creation. Do we understand it now? It doesn't matter. Time still does not exist. The minute we say the word "now," it becomes the past. So let's go back to the beginning - but not to the moment when our world was made manifest through Light pouring into a Vessel that would shatter from its power. No, not yet. Let's just go back to the beginning of our first-ever KJCC Shabbaton learning weekend, an experience that many who attended said exceeded their wildest expectations.*



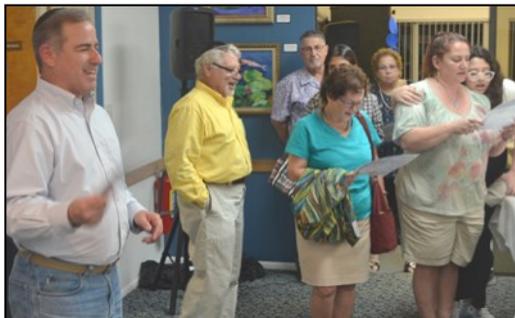


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The Sisterhood dinner came first. After Beth Hayden welcomed our guests and Susan Gordon thanked the Sisterhood cooks and bakers for their creative and healthy contributions to the evening, people filled their plates with a dazzling array of dairy dishes ranging from blintz soufflés, curries, noodle dishes, soup and creative salads to salmon, platters of roasted vegetables, and seemingly endless desserts. Thank you, Joyce Peckman, for sponsoring this dinner, so that the abundance could be experienced by members and visitors alike, without charge. The sight of the laden tables made Rabbi Ed, eyes wide and grin wider, exclaim: "I had no idea you did this!! Once a month?" He now has one more reason to love KJCC, the only synagogue to which he belongs as a member, even though he lives six hours away in Tampa. He calls us his home away from home.

After leisurely dining, excited conversation, circling and schmoozing, we made transition from food to Shabbat services with a rousing intermezzo rendition of *Birkat HaMazon*, the thank-you grace traditionally sung (with grateful gusto) after meals. Minutes later, with a crowd of well over 50 people in the sanctuary, Medina and Gloria, co-chairs of the Shabbaton weekend, and Susan Gordon, president of KJCC Sisterhood, lit and chanted the blessings over candles, accompanied by our youngest members present: Sean Kaufman, Maddie Bloom, and Rachel Levine. And then, as Rabbi Ed began leading the Erev Shabbat service (in his





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own enthusiastic way), the deep part of the weekend began. Enjoyably, small steps at a time, we dipped one toe into a pool of wisdom that would lead us, by late afternoon on Sunday, into total immersion.

After services ended, we meandered back to the Social Hall for one celebration and consumption of more treats, but soon all of us found seats in the classroom and eagerly awaited Rabbi Ed's introduction to his upcoming program.

"DON'T BELIEVE A WORD I SAY," were his opening words, and we were startled. "I don't want you to believe me," he continued. "Jews question. Jews argue, not just with one another, but with God." And so it began. Soon we'd be dealing with Primordial Light and magnificent concepts such as the infinite desire to give, meeting up simultaneously with the primordial vessel, the infinite desire to receive.

If you were not at KJCC on Friday night on January 12<sup>th</sup> or on Saturday morning and Saturday afternoon (the two classes separated by a wonderful luncheon) to hear about *ain sof*, the primordial essence of God, and *tzimtzum*, the principle of withholding, the self-control that leads to action by intention and not by sheer impulsiveness (it was also God's specific and disciplined act of restricting Its own power so that humans could be endowed with the gift and responsibility of free will), I am so sorry. There is so much to share. I know of at least two couples who would have liked to be with us but who could not make it for health reasons. We can tell you only that it was a wonderful weekend, filled with surprises, "aha" moments, science fused with spirituality, and our own tradition of wise teachers who understood large ideas long before they



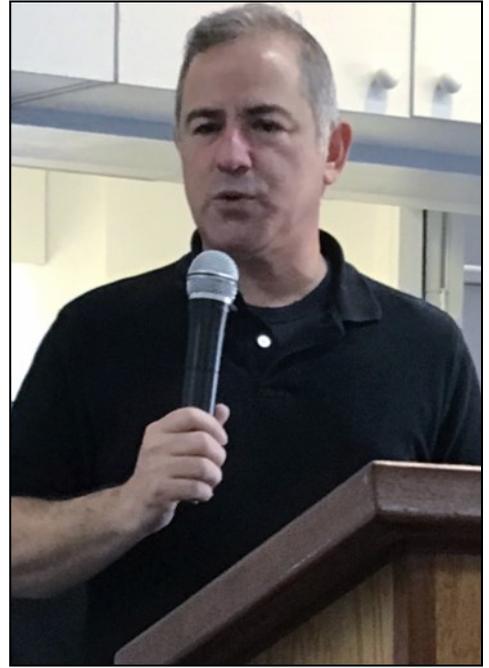


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were proven by 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century scientists. In Judaism, the metaphysical met the physical long before Joseph Chilton wrote "The Crack in the Cosmic Egg," and long before Einstein channeled  $E = mc^2$ . Our Jewish heritage, ever since Sinai, has been holding keys to how and why the universe works the way it does, keys that both pose and explain many difficult puzzles. That the science comes down in so many cases to the importance of sharing, of forethought, of holding back anger, of being a good and thoughtful, loving person, does not sound like science alone.

But we did start to get it, the right, left, and center of all things (that all things have two polar opposites plus a vital area of buffer in



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between), understanding that in order to bring down the light in a humanly useful way we need most of all not to create a short-circuit explosion that would create husks, defined as future difficulties we'd have to deal with later. If this sounds like the beginning of a discussion on reincarnation, that's exactly what it was, and it could have been a whole course in itself. Look at the focus on the faces at the tables in the photos. We are grappling with big ideas, helped by Rabbi Ed's gifted way of presenting these ideas. To those who wish they could have been here, we say with great happiness that Rabbi Ed will return. Watch for it. He will recap for us and take us further into this meaningful way of understanding life and how to live that is intrinsically Jewish. And he will keep encouraging us not-





to believe a word he says.

Though we could have wrapped up the Shabbaton at the end of Saturday's session, with the dousing of the woven many-wicked Havdalah candle in the wine we'd blessed, we did not. A few of us got to smell the subtle essence of *Gan Eden* (the Garden of Eden), present only for a few seconds just as the candle's flame disappears. We did not want the learning to stop. More than a *minyan* of us raised our hands to say we would like to continue on Sunday afternoon.

There were eighteen of us when we gathered around the large table the next day, ever awash in significance (the number 18, of course, being the numerical equivalent of the





Hebrew word “chai,” or life). By the end of the day, as we cleaned and closed and said our goodbyes, we knew our lives were immeasurably richer as a result of this weekend.

*Our enduring appreciation to Medina Roy and her Adult Education Committee, to Gloria Avner, Ritual Chair, to past-president Sam Vinicur for first suggesting the Kabbalah seminar idea to Rabbi Ed, to Jan Price for her help creating a perfect table design for the seminars, to Marc Bloom for his wise guidance as to lunch menus, to all who worked hard to bring this weekend to successful fruition and all who were wise enough to attend and be enriched by it. Mostly, of course, we are grateful to Rabbi Ed Rosenthal for being part of our family and sharing his passions for Kabbalah, Jewish spirituality and the Sea with us. He laughed long and loudly when we asked if he'd be willing to come back and continue. That meant, of course, a hearty “yes.” ◊*



**The photos at top are from the Havdalah that ended the long and memorable Shabbat that saw KJCC’s very first Shabbaton. At left below, Medina, Gloria, Marc and Rabbi Ed take a bow at Sunday’s end. At right, the final session of summation on Sunday afternoon.**

# Nuggets of Wisdom from Kabbalah

## *Via Rabbi Ed's Shabbaton*

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The following phrases and principles are the boullion cubes of meaning that stick with us, but which had the liquid of lots of discussion over our Shabbaton weekend to make them digestible. If they don't make sense or seem simplistic, ask someone who was there to share their take with you. Better yet, next time Rabbi Ed is with us, ask him. (They're his teachings.)

Everything is energy.

Time is the distance between cause and effect.

The Axiom: Infinite Light of Sharing plus Infinite Desire to Receive  
Creates Infinite Oneness (Sh'ma)

What is a Jew: we are high achievers, with the greatest desire to receive of any people. Our role is to draw the most amount of light in the world, for the world. We are the *Am Sigolah*.

Nothing bad can come from the light. The nature of evil comes from people – their actions that conceal the light.

Every difficult or aggravating circumstance is an opportunity to refine (restrict) the soul.

The mouse wasn't responsible for stealing the cheese. It was the hole that was to blame.

"Abracadabra" means "I will create as I speak" in Aramaic.

Within humans there is consciousness of body (desire to receive for oneself alone) and consciousness of soul (desire to receive in order to share). The light of God is the soul of man.

Judaism commands us to be better, to question our desires. Our job is to perfect the world.

You should love your neighbor as yourself because your neighbor IS yourself.

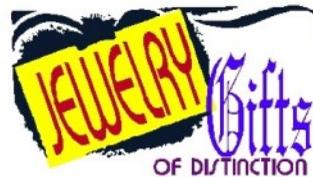
Only one percent of true reality is in this world.

Restriction does not mean doing without. It means asking ourselves the hard questions about why we want (what we want) so much.

Everything in the physical world has a soul. The only difference between anything — rock or tree or human — is the degree of desire to receive the light.



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COMMUNITY CENTER  
GIFT SHOP**



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**TALLITOT, JEWELRY, KIDDUSH CUPS,  
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CANDLES, MORE!!!**



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# - THIS MONTH IN JEWISH HISTORY -

## FEBRUARY

**362** – Roman Emperor Julian issues an edict recognizing equal rights to all the religions in the Roman Empire. Known to Church historians as Julian the Apostate, Julian effectively undoes the edicts of Constantine making Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire. He also brings back old religions tied to Hellenism, the spiritual path he supposedly favors. Julian is sympathetic to the Jewish people and is prepared to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, but is assassinated by a Christian apparently angry at Julian's decision to deny sole religion status to Christianity

**682** – King Erwig of Visigothic Spain presses for the "utter extirpation of the pest of the Jews," and makes it illegal to practice any Jewish rites. This puts pressure on Jews to convert or emigrate.

**1095** – Henry IV of Germany issues a charter to the Jews and a decree against forced baptism. He attempts to protect the Jews even during the Crusades and grants favorable conditions wherever possible. He also permits forcibly baptized Jews to return to Judaism. The Church criticizes his actions.

**1201** – In Worms — an important medieval German city for Jews on the Rhine — the Jews take up arms to fight alongside the city's non-Jewish residents against an attack by the young German king who would become Otto IV of the Holy Roman Empire (and is also the nephew of Richard I—Richard the Lion-Hearted—of England). At this time, Jews are still permitted to bear arms in various cities in Germany, although this privilege is soon to be abolished.

**1258** – Baghdad falls, and under Genghis Khan the Mongol dynasty replaces the Abbasid Moslems in Persia. The Mongols are for the most part tolerant of Judaism. An Arab writer re-

ports 36,000 Jews and 16 synagogues in the Baghdad on the eve of the Mongolian invasion. Most of the city is destroyed during the siege. Some 800,000 civilians are slaughtered. Though defeated and stopped by the Egyptians in Damascus in 1303, the Mongols leave a trail of devastation and destruction in the Middle East that to this day has not been fully overcome.

**1336** – Alfonso X of Castille is persuaded by the apostate Alfonso of Valladolid to ban the prayer *Alenu*, composed by the Amora Abba Arucha c. 247 C.E. (the Tall or, as he was later called, Rav, the founder of the academy of Sura). Alfonso alleges that the prayer is anti-Christian. As a result, many Jewish communities excuse a sentence from the prayer, which has only begun to be printed again in recent years.

**1349** – In Strasbourg, France, a riot begins after corn prices fall. The Jews are accused, despite protests by the city council, of a conspiracy. The entire Jewish population (2,000) is dragged to the cemetery and burned to death. Only those who accept Christianity are allowed to live. A new council is elected, which decrees that Jews cannot return for 100 years; their property and possessions are divided among the burghers. Twenty years later, the Jews are readmitted.

**1413** – The first sitting of a "disputation" begins in which Jews are compelled to listen to the treatise of one Geronimo De Santa, a convert to Christianity, who contends that the Talmud recognizes Jesus as the Messiah. This disputation is ordered by Pope Benedict XIII and will last until November 1414, with a total of 68 sittings.

**1481** – In Seville, Spain, the first *auto da fé* (which translates as "acts of faith," but which

# PURIM & PIZZA

## AND A GOOD MOVIE TOO

Come to the KJCC

Wednesday, February 28, 2018

6:00 p.m. to celebrate our story



**Make Four Mitzvahs in one Night:**  
**Hear Megillat Esther -- The Ganssa Megillah,**  
**Share a Festive Meal (Salads and Pizza),**  
**Share gifts of food with Neighbors and Friends,**  
**Give Charity.**

**Wear masks, don costumes, drown out the name**  
**of Haman.**

**Stamp feet. Spin groggers. Be silly.**

**Drink adult beverages (yes, it's a commandment).**

**Then laugh uproariously at a movie about**  
**overweight Israelis who decide to become Sumo**  
**Wrestlers (A Matter of Size).**

**Eat Hamantaschen.**

**Celebrate Survival at KJCC with Mishpachah !!**

**Contact: Gloria Avner (305) 619-0216, [geetavner@gmail.com](mailto:geetavner@gmail.com)**  
**to let us know you are coming. Remember, it is a Mitzvah to**  
**hear the reading of the entire Megillah.**

**Tzedakah donations will be accepted.**



are in reality merely bonfires) is staged. Six Marrano men and six women are burned for allegedly practicing Judaism. Practices that can lead to accusations and arrests (and then a horrible death by fire) include not eating pig, washing hands before prayer, and changing clothes on the Sabbath. The next year, by Papal order, seven new Inquisitors are nominated, among them Tomas de Torquemada, who will zealously lead the Spanish Inquisition and in 1492 help bring an end to the most advanced, learned and successful Jewish culture since Solomon.

**1697** – In Great Britain, a site is acquired for the first Ashkenazi cemetery.

**1772** – Poland is first partitioned by Russia, Prussia and Austria, effecting the demise of Poland as an independent nation until after World War I. The Russians acquire a large Jewish population as a result of the partition, a population the Russians decidedly do not want.

**1807** – In Paris, Napoleon convenes the first Grand Sanhedrin since Biblical times, under the leadership of The Assembly of Jewish Notables. Modeled on the ancient Tribunal in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin consists of 71 members: 46 Rabbis and 25 laymen. The Court is presented by Napoleon with twelve questions on the positions of Jewry regarding polygamy, divorce, usury, other faiths, and, most important, whether they consider France to be their fatherland.

**1860** – Uriah P. Levy – a descendant of one of the Grandee families, the first 24 Jewish families of New York, dumped on Governor Peter Stuyvesant of New Amsterdam by a Dutch man-o-war who had rescued them from Caribbean pirates – is appointed Commodore of the U.S. Eastern Mediterranean fleet. Levy, the first Jewish officer in the U.S. Navy, surmounts many anti-Semitic obstacles in his career, including seven courts-martial. He is also responsible for the abolition of flogging in the U.S. Navy, and as a private individual purchases, restores and saves for the entire nation

Jefferson's Monticello, which by the 1840s, due to the neglect of Jefferson's legal heirs, is virtually in ruins.

**1876** – The National League of Professional Baseball Clubs of Major League Baseball, known now simply as the National League, the first and oldest of baseball's two Major Leagues, is formed. Lip Pike, already a professional, plays that same year with the National League team in St. Louis. He is the first known Jew to play major league baseball.

**1886** – Ha-Yom ("Today"), the first daily newspaper published in Hebrew, begins publication in St. Petersburg, Russia.

**1901** – Yasha Heifetz is born in Russia. A child prodigy, he solos for the first time at the age of four. He dies in 1987, a performer of worldwide acclaim for eighty-two years. Why, a comedian once asks Heifetz, do so many Jews play the violin? Because, the violinist answers, it is a lot easier to carry than the bass fiddle when you are being chased out of a country.

**1905** – Alissa Rosenbaum is born in St. Petersburg, Russia. Her father is a pharmacist, a middle-class professional, a rare accomplishment in anti-Semitic Czarist Russia. The family loses everything in the Bolshevik Revolution. Despite this, Alissa manages to finish her education in the early days of Lenin's Soviet Union and then emigrates to the United States, where she changes her name to Ayn Rand and eventually manages to publish the two novels that define the ideas and philosophy she calls Objectivism, "The Fountainhead" and "Atlas Shrugged."

**1928** – Russia attempts to set up a Jewish district in Birobijan in Eastern Siberia and to transfer all its Jews there. Ultimately, for many reasons, the project is a failure, in part because most of Birobijan's 14,200 square miles are uninhabitable due to floods and also not arable. This helps fuel the Zionist push for the resettlement of Palestine, an area that had badly languished during 400 years of Ottoman rule. ◊

# Purim

## Our Ears and Haman's: Self-Indulgence, Self-Sacrifice, and Selflessness



by Gloria Avner

**W**hat is the most important *mitzvah* we perform on Purim? And why is it all about ears? We take part in community round-robin-style reading, but it is the commandment to *listen* to the words of *Megillat Esther* that holds the importance. Every single word.

And what is the symbolic food we must eat as we obey the second *mitzvah* (to share a joyous feast)? Hamantaschen! Translated as Haman's "three cornered hat," these triangular desserts, we learn as we get older, really represent Haman's *oznaim*, his ears. Why should ears be so important? Because Haman did not listen to us? And was deaf to the humanity of those who would not bow down to him? Do we symbolically destroy Haman's sense of hearing so that he won't have the privilege and blessing of listening to a reading of the scroll of Esther?

Every year we move a little further along the double-stranded helix of Jewish life. Though the cyclical round of yearly Jewish observance remains constant, new insights into the old celebrations pop up regularly. The *chagim* (the Hebrew plural for holiday) remain the same, but we, the world and the most powerful players in it change regularly. Huge transformations in leadership, politics, and even the weather, make for big changes in context and in hope. Only God, who is never mentioned once in the entire, or *ganze, Megillah* – the Book of Esther – never changes. God's hidden hand is always at work behind the scenes as coincidence piles upon coincidence.

Things work out amazingly well in the end; our nemesis dies as he would have had us die, hanging from the gallows he had



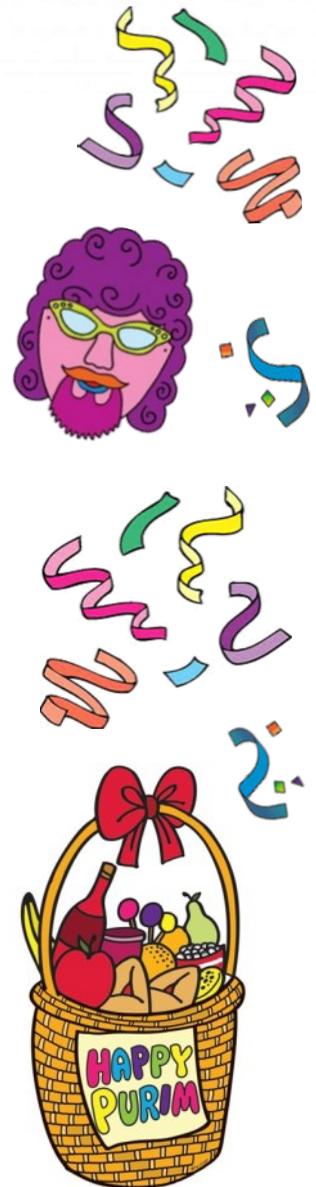


built just for the occasion. Our survival, however, was primarily due to the actions of two brave and intelligent, beautiful and principled young women who spoke truth to power. One suffered. One, strategically and at her own peril, working for a cause much greater than her private self, vanquished all odds and saved her people.

*Mitzvah* three involves sharing, being compassionate, giving gifts to others (*mishloach manot*, baskets of food, drink and treats to our friends and neighbors). Similarly, we are called in the fourth commandment, “*tzedakah*,” to give charity to the forgotten, the downtrodden, the weak and the poor. We have been all of them and we are called to remember what it was like. When we eat our pizza and take up a collection in blue boxes or baskets, we will also do our best to fulfill the unnumbered fifth commandment – to get drunk as skunks. We are told to get so pie-eyed that we cannot tell the difference between “cursed be Haman” and “blessed be Mordechai.” Is this a license for self-indulgence – the other side of the coin of generous selflessness? Is this the one day of the year when we celebrate survival with such exuberance that we lose all sense of compass and judgment? Or do we just want a breather, relief from a life of constant threats, and encouragement to be downright silly. I vote for celebration and silly. (And having a designated driver.)

Let’s come to KJCC on Wednesday night, February 28<sup>th</sup>, be outrageously slapstick on the eve of Purim: read the *Megillah*, eat pizza, drink wine, give gifts, collect money for the poor, and then let’s watch that movie about overweight Israelis who decide to become Sumo wrestlers. Let’s laugh out loud and be positively delighted that we live here, on the side of the road along a skinny spit of land caressed by turquoise waters, where until we showed up some 37 years ago there had never been a Jewish house of worship. That’s a big *mitzvah*, too.

Thank you for saving us, you Jews of Shushan! And special thank you not just to Esther but to the intrepid Vashti, the woman who started this ball rolling by standing up and saying “n.” Our ears are open. We hear you. ◊



# Purim

## Interpretations, Teachings and Arcana



**Y**ou all know the basics, the cast of characters, and the rituals. If nothing else, Purim is the ultimate “they tried to kill us...we survived...let’s eat!” story. But as with everything else in Judaism, scrupulous study of the text by our rabbis has yielded a rich literature, many layers of understanding, and some difference of opinion. We dug into the commentary to give you a representative sample:

.....

Eulogies and fasting are prohibited on Purim, and in a leap year they are prohibited in the first month of Adar as well. A mourner likewise does not mourn publicly on Purim. He does not sit on the ground nor remove his shoes, but observes the private aspects of mourning, as is the case on Shabbat.

.....

The most preferred manner of fulfilling the mitzvah is to read the *Megillah* publicly, and in the synagogue. Even if one could form a *minyan* elsewhere, he should go to the synagogue, since, “in a multitude there is majesty,” and that way the miracle is made known more widely.

.....

Positive Torah commandments (things you should do, as opposed to things you are commanded to eschew) are all deferred for the sake of hearing the *Megillah*. Even the study of Torah is suspended for the *Megillah* reading.

.....

If one hears the *Megillah* read aloud, he fulfills the obligation as if he were to read it himself. It is, however, necessary to hear every single word, for if one has not heard the entire *Megillah*, he has not fulfilled his obligation.

.....

The names of the ten sons of Haman, together with the four preceding words (“500 men and...”), and the word “ten” which follows, are all read in one breath: thereby indicating (and emphasizing) that they were all slain and hung together.

.....

The miracle of Purim occurred through wine. Vashti was removed from her throne because of a wine-feast and Esther replaced her. The downfall of Haman was brought about through the wine feasting which Esther held. The rabbis, therefore, have prescribed the drinking of wine on Purim, and said: “A person is obligated to drink on Purim till he

no longer knows the difference between 'Cursed-is-Haman' and 'Blessed-is-Mordechai.'"

In rabbi-speak, this does not mean excessive drinking of wine so that one might descend to "levity," or forget the required *brachot* or prayer. It is sufficient to drink a little more than is one's usual habit, and to take a nap. In rabbi-think, this fulfills the precept, for one who sleeps does not know the difference between a curse and a blessing. Aware of a strong propensity for alcohol abuse amongst the very observant, modern orthodox rabbis now play down the command to drink. In the words of Rabbi Alexander Ziskind of Grodno, quoted by Rabbi Weinreb of the Orthodox Union, we may become "a bit warm, a bit fragrant," but becoming drunk is absolutely forbidden.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Purim Feast is especially significant in that it elevates the soul as it provides pleasure to the body. The Zohar states that on Purim one may accomplish through bodily pleasure what he can accomplish on Yom Kippur through bodily affliction.

\*\*\*\*\*

It is obligatory to send a gift consisting of at least two "portions" to another person. Both men and women are included in this *mitzvah*. Only what is edible or drinkable without further cooking or preparation is considered a "portion." One may therefore send cooked meats or fish, pastry goods, fruit, sweets, wine and other beverages.

\*\*\*\*\*

A person cannot free himself, through his gifts to the poor on Purim, from the general obligation of *tzedakah* (charity) that the Torah places upon him. Even a poor person is obligated to fulfill this *mitzvah* at least once a year, aside from what he gives to the poor on Purim.

\*\*\*\*\*

A story is told in Chabad of Purim in 1953. The Lubavitcher Rebbe led a Purim gathering and was asked to give a blessing for the Jews of the Soviet Union, known to be in great danger. The Rebbe instead told a cryptic story about a man who was voting in the Soviet

Union and heard people cheering for the candidate, "Hoorah! Hoorah!" The man did not want to cheer, but was afraid to *not* cheer, so he said "hoorah," but in his heart, he meant it in Hebrew: *hu ra*, which means, "he is evil"! The crowd at the Rebbe's 1953 gathering began chanting "hu ra!" regarding Stalin. That night, Stalin suffered the stroke that led to his death a few days later.

\*\*\*\*\*

In leap years, when there are two months of Adar, Purim is celebrated in the second month of Adar, so that it is always one month before Passover. The 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first Adar in a leap year is celebrated as a minor holiday called Purim Katan, which means "little Purim." There are no specific observances for Purim Katan.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Book of Esther, more than anything else, is responsible for the continued celebration of Purim. It also opened the way for the establishment of later holidays that, like Purim, could be instituted without Divine command if they commemorated an important event or served an important function in the life of the Jewish people. (The Purim story, remember, preceded the Chanukah story.)

\*\*\*\*\*

Although Esther and Mordecai are the heroes of the Purim story, some see Vashti, the queen Esther replaced, as a heroine in her own right. She refused to debase herself before the king and his drunken friends, choosing to value her dignity above submitting to her husband's whims. Vashti is seen as a strong character who does not use her beauty or sexuality to advance herself, which some argue is exactly what Esther does later in the text. (In the Talmud, by the way, it is suggested that Vashti was unwilling to appear nude before the king and his guests either because she had leprosy or because she had grown a tail. Paging Dr. Freud...Dr. Freud to the yeshiva writing room, please.)

\*\*\*\*\*

Like Hanukkah, Purim has never been universally considered a religious holy day, in spite of the fact that it is designated by the

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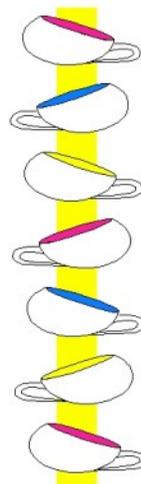
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term "yom-tov." Business transactions and even manual labor are allowed on Purim.

.....

In the *Mishnah* there was a difference of opinion as to how much of the *Megillah* one must read in order to discharge one's duty. According to Rabbi Judah, a portion sufficed; Rabbi Meir demanded the reading of the entire scroll, and his view was accepted in the Talmud.

.....

*In Short, the four mitzvot for celebrating Purim:*

1. We hear the story of Esther as recounted in the Bible;
2. We have a festive meal with more wine than usual;
3. We deliver two different kinds of food to friends and neighbors;
4. We give gifts to the poor.

.....

Purim was an occasion when joyous license was permitted even within the walls of the synagogue, such as the boisterous hissing, stamping, and rattling during the public service, at the mention of Haman or his sons, as well as the whistling at the mention of Mor-

dechai by the reader of the *Megillah*. This practice traces its origin to French and German rabbis of the thirteenth century, who – in accordance with a passage in the *Midrash* where the verse from Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek," is explained to mean "even from wood and stones" – introduced the custom of writing the name of Haman, the offspring of Amalek, on two smooth stones and of knocking or rubbing them constantly until the name was blotted out. Some wrote the name of Haman on the soles of their shoes, and at the mention of the name stamped with their feet as a sign of contempt.

.....

As early as the fifth century, and especially in the Gaonic period (9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries), it was a custom to burn Haman in effigy on Purim. In Italy the Jewish children would arrange themselves in rows and pelt one another with nuts; while the adults rode through the streets with fir-branches in their hands, shouted, or blew trumpets around a doll representing Haman, which was finally burned at the stake with due solemnity. ◇

## Vashti: Feminist Icon

Both Vashti and Esther have a real history as feminist symbols, no matter how much historical truth lies inside the Purim story. In their own ways, each refused to go along with their husband's wishes. Esther may carry the weight of the story . . . but it's Vashti who has become the surprise star.

As early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Vashti's resistance to her husband's demand to use her as a sex object made her an icon for early feminists. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote in 1878 that Vashti's decision was a "first stand for women's rights" and that "we shall stand amazed that there was a woman found at the head of the Persian empire that dared to disobey the command even of a drunken monarch." About 20 years later, the *Woman's Bible Commentary* put together by suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton called Vashti "a sublime representation of self-centered womanhood" who rises "to the heights of self-consciousness and of self-respect."

She'd make a great icon for the "Time's Up" movement: timeless, time-honored and sovereign, even against the demands of a king.



*Excerpted from an article in Time on line*



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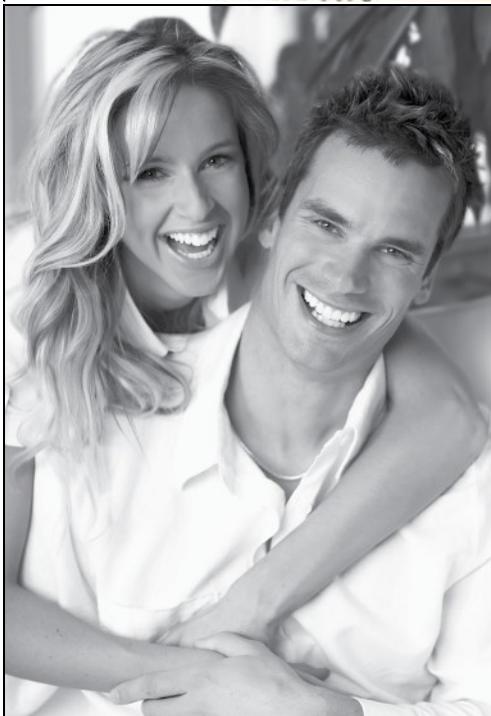
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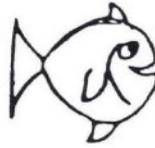
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