

April 2008

25 Adar II - 25 Nisan

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Keys Jewish Community Center P.O. Box 1332 • Tavernier, FL 33070 • 305-852-5235 • keysjewishcenter.com April 2008

25 Adar II–25 Nisan

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CHAI-LIGHTS is the

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

Prosident⁹s Message

Steve Steinbock

It's spring again! Attendance at services has been wonderful, with lots of our regulars and snowbirds in attendance and vacationers passing through our humble doors.

We have decided that, beginning April, all Friday night services will be at 8 p.m. - no more early services until further notice.

Sisterhood did a wonderful job with the Champagne Bubbles Fundraiser on March 9th. I wish to thank Joan Stark, Nancy Kluger, Joyce Peckman and all others who worked so hard to make it a great event. The mezuzahs designed, painted or otherwise made by local artists were auctioned off and raised needed funds for Sisterhood. The Grand Prize raffle was won by brand-new members who joined that afternoon at the event. Barry and Natalie Dorf! Wow. it pays to belong to the KICC. sometimes quickly. And, of course, many thanks to lerry and Elaine Hirsch for hosting our event at their beautiful home.

April brings Passover. The Women's Seder will be on Monday, April 14th. Carol went last year and raved about it. Beth Kaminstein has opened her studio to our women and helps them make their own seder plates, dishes, soup bowls and wine cups. Carol won't tell me what she is making. I guess I'll have to wait and see.

Sunday, April 20th is the KJCC Second Seder at the Islamorada Fishing Club. As usual, Joel Pollack and Jim Boruszak will lead. Make your reservations early, and I hope to see you all there.

On April 15, 2008, Fanny Kluger will be celebrating her 100th Birthday! I know I speak for everyone in wishing her a most Happy Birthday. She is amazing.

The Men's Club is planning a number of events: On April 16th there will be a casino boat cruise, and on Father's Day, June 15th, a picnic at Bahia Honda State Park.

On Thursday, May 1, 2008, at 7 p.m., Dr. Steve Smith will be our main speaker at KICC as we honor Holocaust Remembrance Day: his topic will be the liberation of Dachau. I hope you can attend. The following day, Friday, Yom Ha'Shoah itself, our Holocaust exhibit will officially open in the KICC lobby. Last. but not least, I would like to thank Jim Boruszak for reaching out to our community and getting a record number of new members. In addition, he is ever diligent in maintaining our shul, inside and out. Thank you, lim! ◊



Nosh

Second Seder Reservations

Planning is near completion for the second Passover seder. The date is Sunday, April 20th, and the place is again the Islamorada Fishing Club. The cost is \$40 for all adults. Children 12 and under are free.

Reservations are limited to the first 100. We will accept reservations for members and their families only until April 10th. Then we will open reservations to visitors. Please make your reservation by mailing your check to the KJCC Sisterhood, P.O. Box 116, Tavernier, FL 33070.

For further information, please call Joan Boruszak at 305-852-0833.

New Members

The KJCC is happy to announce our new members., Barry and Natalie Dorf of Islamorada (who were also the Grand Prize Raffle winners at the annual fundraiser on March 9th), and Lyle Agins and Heather Palmer of Islamorada. A warm KJCC welcome to you all.

Men's Club Outings

Your (co-ed) Men's Club is hard at work planning outings for our members!

Our first adventure is a visit to the SunCruz gambling boat out of Key Largo. The date is Wednesday, April 16th. We will all meet at the Holiday Inn at 6:30 p.m. for the water taxi that takes us to the boat.

Everyone will receive a Fun Book which include the following:

Round trip transportation to the boat and boarding; Two cocktails-beer/wine while not gambling; One a la carte menu item--burgers, sandwiches, etc.; \$10 in Casino cash; One free spin on a \$1 slot machine; A lucky ace as the first card in blackjack; 20% discount on retail merchandise; SunCruz Casino souvenir; Complimentary appetizer buffet, complimentary wine/well drinks/beer while gaming; And, of course - an evening of sociability with your KJCC friends! The cost for all of this is \$25 each to the KJCC. Please make your reservation by sending a check to Joan Boruszak, PO Box 854, Tavernier, 33070. For information call Joan, 305-852-0833.

On Wednesday, April 9, the Men's Club is planning an excursion to the Jewish Museum in Miami Beach. They have a wonderful exhibit called ZAP POW BAM — The Golden Age of Comics 1938 to 1950. For those of us who grew up in the 40s, this should be memorable! We will leave KJCC at 1 p.m. after setting up carpools. From there we can go to supper together in Miami Beach. If you would like to join us, call Joan Boruszak, 305-852-0833, just so we have an idea how many are coming.

BOOK PLATE

In Memory of Ann Kapulskey, sister of Muriel Swartz.

By Linda and Joel Pollack

Dear Members of the KJCC:

Thank you so very much for your prayers, cards, letters and fruit basket during my hip replacement recovery.

All your prayers have been answered. My recovery is better than expected! I hope to be up and dancing in no time. Thanks. —Barbara Knowles

April Anniversaries

		rears
llth	Marlene & Paul Berger	4
3rd	Marcia & Michael Goldberg	
18th	Roberta & Rick McNew	27
3rd	Nettie & Jules Seder	42
30th	Gene & Morton Silverman	53
10th	Geri & Stuart Smith	43
7th	Mary & Salomon Terner	15
6th	Sherry & Edward Turney	32
l 5th	Carole & Sheldon Weiss	57

The following is an excerpt from an article written by Arthur Plutzer, a New Yorker who has spent portions of many years living out of his RV. The original article was run in the newsletter of his organization, Yehudim al Galgalim (Jews on Wheels).

We have been camping in an RV since 1996 and have spent our winters in southern Florida since the winter of 1996-1997. For about eleven years we were based in Key Largo. During that period I discovered the Keys Jewish Community Center and attended their Friday evening services at least once or twice a season. My mother's *yartzeit* is the 19th of *Shevat*, the week of *Tu B'Shevat* (Arbor Day, the New Year of the Trees) and generally in late January or early February.

Their Friday evening services are congregation-led. Volunteers conduct the services, sometimes a couple. At each service the announcements include the statement that the KJCC is the only synagogue between Homestead and Key West, a distance of over 130 miles, and that you are a stranger there but once. They are an unaffiliated congregation, but have tried to gear their services so all will feel comfortable irrespective of Judaic background and experience. They were using a Conservative *siddur* when I was there last, one that had been used by my home synagogue in New York, an unaffiliated Conservative congregation.

I always found a warm welcome there, people genuinely glad to see me return each vear. I still correspond with some of the members, and early in my sojourn at KICC was fortunate to be "adopted" by one of the founding matriarchs. Pauline Roller, and her husband Al. Pauline. now in her 90s. is a peppy woman [ed. note: among other things] who still volunteers at the local hospital. Al passed a few years ago and the memorial service, which I attended, included not only almost the entire congregation but also representatives of the various communities that Al had been involved in - the Navy, the Coast Guard, the Naval Auxiliary, and the fishing and guide industry of the Keys. Al had been one of the guides and friends of the great Ted Williams, who fished regularly in the Keys and lived there for a time.

Ongoing Committees and Activities

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

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

Picture Postcards - We have beautiful picture postcards bearing the Millard Wells representation of the KJCC, which was commissioned by Sisterhood. 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 Joan Boruszak, 852-0833.

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

JNF *Trees in Israel* - A gift of a tree, or two or more, makes a long-remembered way to honor a loved one, a relative, a friend or an occasion. Both Israel and the KJCC benefit. Call Bea Graham, 852-0214. *Chai-Lights Mitzvah* - Place a greeting or notice in Chai-Lights. Call Linda Pollack, 852-8575, to make your donation.

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

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

Breast cancer, Jews and DNA tests

In the United States each year, 200,000 women develop breast cancer and 23,000 develop ovarian cancer. It is believed that 5-10 percent of these cancers may be linked to heredity. Scientists have developed a test to screen the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes, the ones linked to breast and ovarian cancer. To test or not to test has been a subject of debate among medical professionals and their patients, mainly because if the test is positive you then have the question of what to do about it. Dr. Dana Zakalik, a medical oncologist at Royal Oak Beaumont Hospitals in the Detroit area, is intimately involved with the debate. She is an Ashkenazi Jew, among whom the gene mutation is some twenty times more common than it is in the general population (one in 40 vs. one in 800). This means that Jewish women of European descent need to be particularly aware of the issue. Dr. Zakalik's grandmother died in the Holocaust, so her knowledge of part of her family medical history is limited. "I don't think you need to be tested just because you're an Ashkenazi lew," she said. But in a family where there is even one known case of breast or ovarian cancer, genetic testing could offer you the chance of early detection or even prevention. (A Chai-Lights thanks to Lauren Sax for sending this item in.)



One of Our Own

is in the limelight this month. Tiffany McNew, a senior at Coral Shores, daughter of Roberta and Rick McNew, has been accepted at The University of Central Florida's Department of Music. Tiffany plays both flute and piccolo with the C.S. Spirit Band and has been drum

major for the last three years. In addition to all her musical accomplishments, Tiffany serves as Treasurer of her Senior Class and is a member of the National Honor Society. We congratulate her and her parents.

TREE OF LIFE

TO HONOR FANNY KLUGER ON HER100TH BIRTHDAY APRIL 15, 2008 By Linda and Joel Pollack

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE MARRIAGE OF GERRI WEISBERG AND FRANK EMKEY March 16, 2008 from Linda and Joel Pollack

> IN CELEBRATION OF KYLE DAVID SCHULBERG 2-22-86

IN CELEBRATION OF BETHANY PAIGE SCHULBERG 11-23-94

IN CELEBRATION OF NAOMI HANNAH SCHULBERG 12-17-00

IN CELEBRATION OF ALIZA GRACE SCHULBERG 8-27-07

Scholarship Deadline Looms

The deadline for the 2008 KJCC Scholarships is April 15th. Applications can be requested from Kurt Kluger at 305-852-4353 or by email at klugerkeys@bellsouth.net.

With Love to Muriel

KJCC extends its sincere condolences to Muriel Swartz on the passing of her sister, Ann Kapulskey.

Department of Corrections

Last year, the KJCC Religious students performed a play titled "Here's Looking at You, Esther." The author was listed as Larry Klein. But the author's real name is Larry Smith. We're happy to set the record straight, Mr. Smith. And all of us here loved your play. \Diamond

April Memoriam

By Michael Klimpl In Blessed Memory of MARILYN JANET BARR Eternal Rest

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

By Mario & Linda LaGrotte In Blessed Memory of MINNIE BIRNBAUM Eternal Peace

By Steven & Barbara Smith In Blessed Memory of CANTOR ALEX CHAPIN Forever In Our Hearts

> By Meredith A. Cline In Blessed Memory of JOSEPH T. CLINE In Our Heart And Memory

By Donald & Nancy Zinner In Blessed Memory of IRWIN CUTLER Always In My Memory

By James & Joan Boruszak In Blessed Memory of BARUCH EPSTEIN Rest In Peace

By Marc & Ellen Bloom In Blessed Memory of NAT FELDBLUM Rest In Eternal Peace By Jeffrey & Patricia Schocket In Blessed Memory of DOLORES FELDMAN Always In Our Memory

By Paul & Susan Roberts In Blessed Memory of MILTON GREENWALD In Our Memory Always

> By Joan Waldman In Blessed Memory of MARTHA GROSS Long, Blessed Sleep

By Margaret Gross In Blessed Memory of LAWRENCE GROSS We Remember Always

By Steven Hartz In Blessed Memory of STELLA HARTZ With Loving Remembrance

By Richard Karron In Blessed Memory of CHARLES KARRON Sleep In Peace

By Harvey & Judith Klein In Blessed Memory of NATHAN KLEIN Remembered With Love

By Michael Klimpl In Blessed Memory of FRED KLIMPL Forever Remembered With Love By Sandy & Nancy Yankow In Blessed Memory of CHARLES KRAM Always Remembered

By the Blumberg Family In Blessed Memory of HAROLD MARKOWITZ Always Remembered With Love

By Sandy & Nancy Yankow In Blessed Memory of HILDA MAZUR Rest in Blessed Peace

By Joel & Linda Pollack In Blessed Memory of ERWIN MOSS Never Forgotten, Always Loved

By Jim & Lynn Nobil In Blessed Memory of GEORGE NOBIL Always Loved and Missed

By Morris & Evelyn Zalmanovich In Blessed Memory of DONALD RICH Eternal Rest

By Morris & Evelyn Zalmanovich In Blessed Memory of SAMUEL ZALMANOVICH Remembered With Love

> By Marjorie Present In Blessed Memory of BENJAMIN A. SAVAGE Eternal Peace

By Stuart & Lauren Sax In Blessed Memory of SAM SAX Forever In Our Hearts

By David & Shifra Kossman In Blessed Memory of DANIEL SEROTT In Our Heart And Memory

By Miltra Sheinker In Blessed Memory of WARREN J. SHEINKER Always In My Memory

By Steven & Barbara Smith In Blessed Memory of LOUIS S. SMITH Rest In Peace

By Stuart & Geri Smith In Blessed Memory of CLAIRE SMITH Rest In Eternal Peace

By Stuart & Geri Smith In Blessed Memory of MORRIS SMITH Always In Our Memory

By Salomon & Mary Terner In Blessed Memory of BENJAMIN TERNER In Our Memory Always

By Salomon & Mary Terner In Blessed Memory of LUIS TERNER Long, Blessed Sleep By Joan Waldman In Blessed Memory of CHAIM WALDMAN We Remember Always

By Donald & Nancy Zinner In Blessed Memory of DAVID WERNICOFF With Loving Remembrance

By Michael & Suzanne Gilson In Blessed Memory of FRANCES WOLFE Sleep In Peace

By Myron & Myrna Rubin In Blessed Memory of HERMAN RUBIN Forever In Our Hearts And Memory

April Birthdays

Lauren Abrams	3
Franne Alter	17
Rachel Barrett	30
David M. Cohn	6
Claire Cooper	3
Robin S. Denker	22
David Feder	9
Ethel Foster	7
Jennifer Garrett	18
Jared Scott Gershowitz	25
Max Logan Gershowitz	11
Ella Gilderman	16
Larry Gilderman	20
David Goldfinger	29
Susan Gordon	24
Faychesca Graham	6
Randolph Green	24
Katie Greenman	17
Samantha Grossinger	13
Elinor Grossman	
Fanny Kluger	15

Moira KnowlesI	3
Richard KnowlesI	2
Murray Kossman	
Nicole Kossman	
Linda LaGrotte	
Lauren Lane	.4
Tiffany McNew2	
Jordan Neidenberg2	
Jonathan Nobil	20
Lynn Nobil	
Jessica Pollack2	25
Linda Pollack2	9
Beverly Robins	27
Lauren SaxI	
Aaron Schmidt	27
Harvey Schwaid	.7
Jason Sherman3	
Gene Silverman	9
Susan Temkin	21
Edward Turney	4
Dave VanArtsdalen	6
Ilese Vorcheimer	0
Larry Weber	

- Goddesses -Save The Date

To those KICC women who have supported the women's wellness fun(d) raising event known as "Goddesses in the Garden Party": we are letting it lie fallow in this seventh year. Instead we will host a "Day for Dannagaye," one of our most lighful healers. She is in medical crisis: 100% of the monies earned will help pay her treatment expenses. Mark April 13th on your calendar. It will be from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Coconut Cove, MM 95. Tickets are \$28 and include lunch. live music (Micah will open for Dave Feder) and much more. For info and tickets, call Gloria Avner at 619-0216.

YEDA - Knowledge Yardena Kamely



The Mitzvah of Freedom: Cherut

From the time of Moses to the present day, *Cherut*, or the *mitzvah* of seeking freedom, has been a driving force in Jewish life. Think of the best-known story celebrating freedom in Judaism, the *Passover Haggadah*. In Hebrew, Passover is also called *Chag Ha'cherut*, the festival of freedom.

The story of Anatoly (Natan) Sharansky is about the fight for freedom, both political and religious, in the Soviet Union during the years 1977 – 1986. When Sharansky was a young man in Russia in the early 1970s, Jews could not freely practice Judaism; neither could they leave the Soviet Union for freedom in Israel or the West. Yet ever since Golda Meir's visit to Moscow, and more than ever after Israel's dramatic victory in the Six Day War of 1967, tens of thousands of Soviet Jews reawakened to their religion and to a desire to emigrate.

Anatoly Sharansky was one of these Jews. He became active in the movement to gain freedom, a *refusnik*. He was arrested by the KGB in March. 1977 and held in various prisons for nine years. For 16 months he was interrogated on the charge of treason, during which time the KGB compiled more than 50 volumes of "evidence" that he was an American spy. At the end of his trial, Sharansky spoke in stirring words of the lewish longing for freedom. In his autobiography, "Fear No Evil," Sharansky recalls a seder he attended with Natalia (Avital), his wife. shortly before he was arrested. He writes: "The special relevance of the Passover story to a group of *refusniks* in Moscow was so obvious that nobody had to point it out. We sat there enthralled as we discussed the

story of our ancestors, enslaved and oppressed in Egypt, a powerful land where they were unable to practice their religion or learn about their heritage. That night I came across a moving line in the Passover liturgy that would stay with me forever: *In every generation, a person should feel as though he, personally, went out of Egypt.*"

The verse cited above may be the most emotionally moving in the entire *Haggadah*. Judaism insists that we never forget our origins. To cherish freedom, we must remember - spiritually and physically - that once we were slaves. The *Torah* itself repeatedly goes back to that experience with the refrain "For you were slaves in the land of Egypt."

"Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof." These words from Leviticus (25:10) are inscribed on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. (It is not a coincidence that the famous words inscribed on the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor— "... give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free..." — were penned by a Jewish poet, Emma Lazarus.)

For more than a decade Avital Sharansky devoted her life to winning her husband's freedom. She enlisted the support of the Jewish world and reached out to the leaders of the free world, including Presidents Carter and Reagan. When Anatoly Sharansky was finally released, the world applauded as this small man strode across the border to freedom, taking only his prison clothes and a small Book of Psalms in Hebrew (given to him by his wife).

Today Natan Sharansky lives in Jerusalem with his wife and their daughter. ◊



World Jewish Report Medina Roy



Entebbe Raid Commander Dies

Dan Shomron, 70, former Israel Defense Forces (IDF) chief of staff from 1987-1991, died February in Tel Aviv. In 1976, Shomron headed the daring Entebbe rescue operation, when his commandos flew into the Ugandan capital's airport under cover of darkness and rescued more than 100 (mostly Jewish) hostages held by Palestinian and German hijackers on an Air France jet. The successful raid became the subject of several Hollywood movies, including *"Raid on Entebbe,"* in which Shomron was played by Charles Bronson. (*www.haaretz.com, 2-26-08*)

Pesach without Tam-Tams?

Manischewitz will not be producing Tam-Tams and other kosher-for-Passover products this year because of engineering and construction delays at its new facility in Newark, New Jersey. The company closed its Jersey City plant after Passover 2007 and built a \$15 million facility in Newark with state-of-the-art, computer-controlled production ovens. The Manischewitz Company started in Cincinnati in 1888 and moved to Jersey City in 1932. Tam-Tams were introduced in 1940. (*New Jersey Jewish News, 2-28-08*)

The Next Red Auerbach?

At the end of February, the University of Tennessee men's basketball team, the Volunteers, led by Jewish coach Bruce Pearl, received its first number one national ranking after defeating the previously top-ranked and undefeated University of Memphis. In November, Pearl had addressed the opening plenary at the General Assembly of the United Jewish Communities, introducing himself as Mordechai Shmuel and saying, "I am Jewish and I am proud." He described how he often found it difficult growing up as a Jewish athlete, especially when his teams would pray before games. "I wanted to be a part of that prayer, so when half my friends would cross themselves ...I made the Star of David." Pearl will be inducted into the National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in June. (www.jta.org, 2-26-08)

Holocaust Memoir a Fraud

A best-selling book, "Misha: A Memoir of the Holocaust Years," has been revealed as a work of fiction. Written by 71 year-old Belgian Misha Defonseca and translated into 18 languages, the book was also adapted for the French feature film, "Surviving with Wolves." Defonseca claimed that after her parents were abducted by the Nazis. she lived with a pack of wolves. She also claimed to have murdered a German soldier. In a statement to the Associated Press, Defonseca said, "The story is mine. It is not actually reality, but my reality, my way of surviving. I ask forgiveness to all who felt betrayed. I beg you to put yourself in my place, a four-year-old girl who was very lost." Defonseca now says her parents were killed by Nazis for Belgian resistance activities when she was four but was cared for by her grandfather and uncle. (World Jewish Congress, 3-3-08)

World's Most Secure Airline

El Al, Israel's national airline, has been voted "Best Airline Security" by *Global Traveler* Magazine and was presented with one of the most sought-after and respected awards in the business and luxury travel industry. In its annual survey, *Global Traveler* readers selected El Al as the number one airline for security, providing a safe and comfortable travel experience. Offer Gat, El Al CEO, recently accepted the honor at an official awards luncheon in New York City, attended by over 300 travel industry professionals. (*The Jewish Press, 2-6-08*)

Anne Frank's Crush

A British newspaper has published what it calls the first known photograph of Peter Schiff, the boy 11-year-old Anne Frank fell in love with and wrote about in her famous diary. She met him at school in 1940, his family also having fled from Germany to Amsterdam, Ernst Michaelis, 81, of London, found the photo of Schiff in a family collection after realizing that Frank was writing about a boy he (Michaelis) had known as a fellow student in Berlin. Michaelis, who moved from Germany to Britain many years ago, said he has had the photo authenticated and that it will be displayed on the Anne Frank House web site. Schiff is also believed to have died in a Nazi prison camp. (www.haaretz.com, 2-24-08)

Operation Magic Carpet

The Yemenite lewish Federation of America has honored Warren Metzger. 87. a former Alaska Airlines pilot who took part in Operation Magic Carpet, the secret mission that successfully rescued almost 50.000 Yemenite (and other) Jews from June 1949 to September 1950, spiriting them from the hostile Arabian peninsula to a new and still fragile Israel. Metzger flew ten roundtrip missions between Israel and Yemen during a three-month period. The U.S. government had contracted with Alaska Airlines in the operation, using 28 pilots who flew a total of 380 flights. The airlift began immediately after hostilities abated in the War of Independence. No word of the mission leaked to the world until all the besieged and refugee Jews were safely in Israel. (Dateline World Jewry, Dec.2007 / Jan.2008)

Preserving History

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, together with several groups in

Israel, is working on a project to find surviving passengers and crew members of what has been called the "Exodus 1947." The voyage had 4,500 passengers and crew crammed onto a dilapidated boat originally named the SS President Warfield. Although there was never an official passenger manifest, the museum has the names of about 2,300 people who were on the ship and has already contacted 270 passengers and four crew members. Most of the known survivors live in the U.S. and Israel. The failed mission was an attempt to carry European Holocaust survivors, who had nowhere else to go, to Palestine, then under the authority of the British Mandate. The mission (with a slightly altered outcome) has been portraved in novels and movies, most notably the 1960 epic book "Exodus," by Leon Uris and movie by Otto Preminger. Eventually the passengers were sent to displaced-person camps near Hamburg, Germany and it wasn't until 1948 that the refugees were allowed to enter Israel. (Washington Times, 1-27-08)

The Greenest Synagogue in America

The lewish Reconstructionist Congregation in Evanston, IL, outside of Chicago, received the highest rating from the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design program. The rating was awarded as a result of a \$10 million proiect which featured the use of recycled concrete, sensor-controlled lighting and a parking space reserved for a hybrid car. The synagogue's energy costs are expected to be about 45 percent less than a typical synagogue of the same size. In a related story, two New York City congregations have connected their nerot tamidot (eternal lights that hang over the ark) to solar power. The firstknown solar ner tamid was installed at Temple Emanuel in Lowell, Mass., in 1978. (www.jta.org, 2-10-08)

Spielberg Opts Out

Steven Spielberg won't be serving as an artistic consultant to the 2008 Beijing Olympics. He recently withdrew because of China's role in the genocide taking place in the Darfur region of Sudan. China arms and funds Sudan's Arab-dominated government, which supports and actively abets the ongoing atrocities against black non-Arabs in Darfur. Other celebrities are considering dropping out as well. (*The Week, 2-29-08*)

The Righteous Birch Tree

The hollow tree trunk that provided shelter for lakob Silberstein during the Holocaust was recently brought to the Garden of the Righteous Among the Nations at Yad Vashem. While on a death march in 1945. Silberstein, along with three others, managed to escape. They found refuge in the attic of Jana Sudova's house. Sudova made sure the four escapees had everything they needed. Silberstein discovered a birch tree with a hollow trunk in Sudova's backvard and he widened the entrance to the tree in order to use it as an emergency hiding place. Whenever the Germans came to search the farm. Silberstein would hide inside the tree. Sudova, who died in 1993, was recognized as Righteous Among the Nations in 2006. (www.yadvashem.org, 2-2-08)

Sinatra Smuggled Guns to Israel

At a recent Washington fund-raising dinner for the Rabin Center, Brian Greenspun related how Frank Sinatra reportedly played a role in smuggling guns to Israel in 1948. Greenspun's father Hank, the Las Vegas media and real estate magnate, helped lead the gun smuggling effort. Teddy Kollek, the late Jerusalem mayor, confirmed the story. Kollek in 1948 was Israel's point man in the arms-smuggling effort in New York. He got to know Sinatra while staying in a hotel above the famed Copacabana nightclub where Sinatra often appeared. Kollek needed to pay the captain of a ship a cash bribe to smuggle weapons out of New York harbor, but he knew he was being watched by the FBI. Kollek left the hotel carrying an empty satchel and was followed by the agents. At the same time. Sinatra left through another entrance carrying the money in a paper bag and he paid the captain. Sinatra and Kollek remained friends long after, with the singer

contributing to a number of Jerusalem building projects. (*www.jta.org, 2-14-08*)

Citizenship Reinstated for Polish Jews

Poland's government has announced that lews who were stripped of their Polish citizenship 40 years ago, after the start of massive expulsions by the Communist regime, are to be reinstated as citizens. Some 15.000 Polish lews were deprived of their citizenship following an anti-Semitic campaign of Soviet anti-Israel policies. Jews who fled Poland between 1968 and 1970 "can go to a Polish consulate in their new home country and 'reconfirm their citizenship' as if they had never lost it." said Piotr Kadicik, president of the Union of Religious lewish Communities in Poland. The decision follows recently increased pressure from Kadicik and other Jewish advocacy groups in Poland. (World Jewish Congress, 3-5-08)

Uniting World Jewry

A handful of Israeli entrepreneurs are working on a giant digital family tree that they hope will eventually link every lew, their non-lewish relatives and, quite possibly, all of humanity. The Famillion Company is the brainchild of Danny Rolls. The idea was born in 2000, "when my wife, a researcher at the Weizmann Institute [of Science in Rechovot] dragged me to get genetic tests," Rolls said. "I had to create my family tree for the geneticist. and I suddenly had a vision that my tree was sitting in the geneticist's drawer with all these other trees, and if they linked up, they would eventually connect the whole world." It took five years for the vision of networked family trees to become something usable, resulting in a web site in both English and Hebrew versions--(iworld.famillion.com). There already are plenty of family tree programs, but what's new about Famillion is a technology that can recognize similarities in trees and merge corresponding sections of completely independent trees. The program currently has some 45,000 family trees, mostly in Israel, and already has started integrating existing databases. (Jerusalem Post, 2-23-08) ◊

Keys Jewish Community Center 5th Annual Women's Secler

MONDAY APRIL 14, 2008 6PM @ KJCC Homemade Seder Dinner w/Wine

Limited seating - Contact Meredith at 451-3664 or maccline2@aol.com Donation \$18

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



Shalom! The season is flying by with Passover soon approaching and many wonderful events behind us. The annual fundraiser "Champagne Bubbles and Nova Dreams" was a great success and a great time for all. Jerry and Elaine Hirsch generously offered their oceanfront property, the weather improved from a cold, blustery morning to a warm, sunny day and lots of mingling ensued. Mangrove Mikes set up an omlette and pancake station, Lots of Lox sent some super "nova" trays with all the works, there was an open bar and then the unforgettable

tunes sung by Kathy Buchanan with Yanna on the keyboards. Did you hear about the raffle? We were all hoping to win the grand prize of a 37" flat screen TV and who should win it but our very newest mem-



bers (just announced that day), Barry and Natalie Dorf! I think the most special part was the silent auction for the mezzuzahs. We had 13 beautiful pieces, crafted by local artists which were certainly one of a kind. (Can I tell you that our own Gloria Avner had the highest amount bid on her beautiful "tree" mezzuzah)! The purim shabbat dinner

Sisterhood Joan Stark



on March 21 will have been a treat for all, with Joyce Peckman conducting the Megillah reading, and the Gilsens' sponsoring the dinner... This month we have the upcoming womens seder on April 14 at the KJCC. Our theme is always "Tikkun Olam", repair the world, and a homemade seder meal is served and a handcrafted service conducted.

The Annual Second Seder will be on April 20 at the Islamorada Fishing Club. This event

Barry and Natalie Dorf, the grand prize winners of the HD TV.

is alwavs sold out. with a super service conducted bv our members. and food enough to feed an armv ! Contact loan Boruszak about tickets. loan also keeps a wonderful stock of Iudaica

items at the Gift Shop,

so let her know whatever your Passover or other needs may be. Stay tuned for the Sisterhood end of season luncheon on Sunday , May 4 (instead of the meeting). A special welcome to all the new members this year! Please come and join us at any of the meetings and events. All are welcome! See you in May! \diamond

COLLEGE DIARY

<u>Andrea</u>

Hi all. Well, everything is going great here in Nashville! I recently became assistant recruitment chair for my sorority, and classes are going well. I am particularly enjoying my political science classes and am pretty positive I will pick it up as a second major.



I thought long and hard about what I want to do this summer and decided that I want to be a counselor at the camp I used to attend, for two months. I am SO excited. I will be working on the waterfront teaching kids how to water ski and wakeboard. Over spring break I brought three friends down to the Keys,

which was a lot of fun. It was a nice opportunity to unwind while still being in a beautiful spring break area. We took a trip down to Key West, and visited some fellow Vandy students who were staying at the University of Miami. When we were in Key West we actually bumped into a girl who goes to Vanderbilt and is a sophomore in our sorority. Small World!

Although we have had some warmer days recently, Nashville seems to be awfully cold for the middle of March. I want my Keys weather back!! It is funny to think that this school year is practically over and that I am almost 1/4th of the way done with college. In realizing that, I have been thinking a lot about the things I want to accomplish before I graduate.

There are a few truly amazing clubs at Vanderbilt that I want to join next year. including one called Manna that raises money for children in Kenya. I also want to play either club soccer or tennis next year and still graduate with a double major. Wish there were more hours in the day! I am also trying to plan it out so that I have time to study abroad. I don't think I want to go abroad during the school year because that would be sacrificing holding an officer position in my sorority, but I am fairly positive that I want to study abroad next summer, probably somewhere in South/Central America or in Cape Town. There are sooo many options. I just have to find time in my life to work it all in.

On a more positive note my parents are coming to visit next weekend for parents weekend and I could not be more excited!!! They will get to meet everyone in my sorority as well as their parents and even get to come to a Vandy baseball game with me! But it's

time for me to go now....oh wait, I almost forgot: GO VANDERBILT BASKET-BALL!!!!!



<u>Joe</u>

Hello everyone.

This month was full of surprises. First off, only a week ago, I received a notice from the PHI THETA KAPPA inviting me to join their National Honors Society on Thursday. I was astounded by how well renowned their program really was. Over \$35 million in transfer scholarships were offered to Phi Theta Kappa members by more than 600 fouryear colleges and universities. You will receive letters of recommendation as well as inclusion in The National Dean's List of outstanding college scholars along with financial and many career opportunities. Phi Theta Kappa also reaches out to the

community and helps with fundraisers, athletic events and partners with children's activities as well.

Besides that, all my classes are going great. I'm currently involved again with helping the National Park Service remove exotic invasive plants from the Anhinga Trail.

Well, until next time, keep reaching for the stars.

<u>Suzie</u>

So, since last I wrote, spring semester has gotten into full swing. Two rounds of midterms have come and gone and today is the first day of a long-overdue spring break. My past few weeks have been so busy. In accordance with MIT time habits. I rarely make it home before 2 a.m. most weeknights, having spent time in other dorms PSetting and working. My days are nonstop. I have a full schedule taking all of my classes, which I absolutely love. Intro to Psych is probably to the most amazing class I have ever taken. We've done case studies on split-brain patients and amnesiacs, learned about sleep and the evolution of it and so many other things. Out of all of my classes, it is by far my favorite.

Besides classes, I have recently stumbled upon the most amazing opportunity. In my last Diary, I was participating in a cancer research UROP which consisted of going over medical trials and entering the information into a database. It was particularly exciting. But through a theater friend I just recently got a new UROP. I now work in a Picower Lab in the Brain and Cognitive Science Department (get ready for it......) training monkeys. That's right, I get to work with monkeys. :) The friend who hooked me up is working on a project but she has just graduated and is off to grad school, so I am being trained to take over her job....and her mon-

> key. His name is Sparky and he is a macague. A gorgeous creature. We are training them to complete tasks on pretty much a monkey computer game and then, once he is trained, we will lower electrodes into his brain and listen as he completes the tasks. mapping which part of the brain completes which functions. It is absolutely amazing. My UROP instructor is so nice and is even teaching me how to write the computer program which the monkeys

play. I will have the opportunity to watch monkey surgeries and listen as researchers measure what goes on in the brain. I am super excited. :)

Besides that wonderful news, I am still doing theater with the Musical Theater Guild. Our spring show is The Full Monty. I have really become so grateful to be a part of that organization and meet so many amazing people. It has opened up a whole new circle of friends whom I probably would not have met otherwise. Each show brings new members, new friends, and new experiences. Last night, I went with an MTG friend to go watch another member perform in a stage version of Pride of Prejudice (absolutely amazing, by the way). We had so much fun.

So basically, I have been filling my life with new experiences and new people. School is really enjoyable, even if it is extremely challenging. Every morning brings new things, and I am so grateful to be blessed so thoroughly. I hope everyone had a happy Purim. I'm looking forward to spring break. ◊



The Native Tourist

The Native Tourist *is Chai-Lights' series* of articles featuring off-beat activities or attractions in South Florida.

This Month's stop: Everglades Alligator Farm 40351 SW 192 Avenue Homestead, FL (305) 247-2628 www.everglades.com

Most visitors to Florida look forward to seeing an alligator while they are here; it's one of the most exotic and exciting native species and one of the things Florida is famous for. They aren't too hard to find. If you're local, you can usually spot them on your commute up and down the stretch or Card Sound Road. If you cross the state, you'll probably see a few from your car along the banks of the canals that run along I-75 (Alligator Alley). If you take one of the Everglades tours, you'll probably spot at least the top of an alligator's head as you go by. But

none of these options are very closeup. If you want a really good look at the prehistoric beasties, upclose, personal and **Re** even in **me** their



Regulating heat through the mouth, or laughing at the tourists?



Another newcomer to the Everglades Alligator Farm.

natural surroundings, head up to Homestead and the Everglades Alligator Farm.

The farm is a privately owned, real, working gator farm. It all started in 1982, originally as an airboat attraction. Then in 1985 the state started issuing permits for alligator farming, to ease some of the stress poaching for hides had put on the already endangered reptiles. The owner of the Everglades Alligator Farm got a permit and started commercially farming the animals. The alligator had been hunted almost to extinction, and was on the Endangered Species List. Commercial farming was also seen as a way to guarantee the survival of the species. Since then, the alligator has become one of the true success stories of the Endangered Species Act. There are now more than one million alligators in the wild in Florida alone. It is still a protected species, but is no longer considered endangered.

The farm has about 2,000 gators at any one time, ranging from hatchlings to the enormous, awe-inspiring breeders. You can see the babies in their grow-out pens and the adults are in a natural environment breeding pond. None of the alligators are shy at all, and will be right up on the bank by the fences, offering you a great up-close view. Along with the gators, and some native North American crocodiles (which are much more difficult to see in the wild), the farm also has a display of native and exotic snakes and a wildlife exhibit, which includes a pair of Florida Panthers.

The park has an outdoor amphitheater where they offer alligator, snake and wildlife shows several times a day. The shows



Our view from the airboat, skimming over the Everglades. Quite a horizon, isn't it?

are entertaining and informative, and after each show the public is invited to stick around to get some "hands-on" experience with the stars of the show. Yes, it's a true photo-op. Visitors are allowed to hold baby gators and snakes, and photos are always encouraged. But probably the biggest thrill (and my favorite part) of any visit to the farm is the airboat ride through the Everglades. The farm has several airboats, and they schedule trips throughout the day. The rides last about half an hour, and you get a full range of experiences. You start with a slow motor through the mangrove canal, where vou'll see all kinds of birds, turtles and wild gators. Then, once you've cleared the canal. you'll be flying through the River of Grass. You're guaranteed to see a lot of wildlife and



The large capacity airboats, waiting at the dock.

lessen the thrill when they open the engine and take flight. You will see wildlife, you will

get a great view, and, oh yeah, you WILL get wet. The seats in the front of the boat are obviously the wettest, but even the back row has the poten-



A group of the baby gators in

tial for spray, especially during a 360° speed turn. So just make sure to dress accordingly, including shoes that will dry quickly. It is absolutely worth it. \diamond

IF YOU GO: The Everglades Alligator Farm is open daily 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., except for Christmas Day. Shows and tours run several times throughout the day. Admission is \$19.for adults, \$12 for kids 4-11, and kids under 4 are free. Prices include all shows and the airboat ride. Group rates are available. And the website has a printable coupon. Beverages and snacks (including alligator meat) are available at the snack bar.

over the damage to the environment, and staying on a trail doesn't he thrill when they open the engine

their grow-out pond.

bird species in their

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the trip, and you'll

unobstructed view of

noise of the airboat

would scare away all

they must be used to

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the Everglades. You'd think the

Photo Gallery

Jerry and Elaine Hirsch, major supporters of arts programs in the Upper Keys, pose with Dixieland jazz performers at the February 26th concert at Coral Shores sponsored by South Florida Center for the Arts, right. Below, Marcus and Joan pose with some of the other KJCC members who attended.





Jeff and Patty Schocket pose with the lads touring in a tribute to The Beatles, at SFCA's fundraiser, right. As you can see, the dress code was flower-child formal. A moment at the Sunday, March 16th seaside wedding of KJCC member Gerri Weisberg to Frank Emkey, below left. The

Pollacks and Swartzes join in the *simcha*. The entire congregation wishes the newlyweds health and happiness and a ringing Mazel Tov.



Photo Gallery













More from the Fundraiser. Above, Nancy Kluger and Joan Stark, the main organizers.





Photo Gallery







The 5th Annual Women's Seder will be Monday, April 14. Beth Kaminstein opened her pottery workshop for all to make their own plates



Above, KJCC's Sunday school class comes together (quietly, a blessing unto itself) to practice all the Shabbat blessings, candlelighting to Kiddish to *hamotzih* to the blessing over all else. Right, for those who missed it, the tree in front of KJCC after its recent confrontation with lightning. and goblets. Above left, Beth works with Candy Stanlake. Linda Perloff and Pauline Roller get wet clay on their hands, above. Last year's finished products await the seder, center. (Our thanks to Meredith Cline and Gloria Avner for the photos.)



Pesach

Some Things You've Always Wanted to Know But Were Afraid (or didn't know) to Ask.

By Gloria Avner

L's almost time to take out our Haggadahs and tell that same old story. It's a wonderful story, the most important story we have to tell, the story of our freedom and survival against the greatest of odds, which by the way included our own intransigence. The acceptance of the commandments at Mt. Sinai is the Jews' most important defining event. It is also the event by which God selfdefines. God does not say "I am the God who created everything that is." God says "I am the Lord that brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God."

Still, though we all know the basic story, we love new learning. You might want to share some of the following little-known facts, side stories, and metaphysical insights about Passover at your own seder table.

"And the daughters you shall let live" (*Exodus 1:16*)

When the Egyptians decided to kill the Jewish male babies, women played a huge role in God's plan for Jewish redemption, setting the stage by saving Moses, by keeping our names, our customs, and our family strengths and beliefs intact. It should not be surprising that the most popular haggadah in the United States in the first quarter of the 20th century was arranged, edited and translated by a woman. Before feminism, before Maxwell House, there was Lillie Goldsmith Cowen.

Mrs. Philip Cowen, as she preferred to be called, was the wife of the first publisher of the Jewish weekly newspaper "American Hebrew." She worked side by side with him, editing and typesetting until his retirement in 1906. In 1904, she published the Cowen Haggadah, the first mass-produced adaptation of the haggadah in modern American vernacular. Hundreds of thousands of copies were sold all over the world and were distributed to American Jewish servicemen in both World Wars.

The grape debate

"I will free you from the hard labor of the Egyptians, rescue you from their bondage, I will redeem you with an outstretched arm ... I will gather you in to be my people." (*Exodus* 6:6-7) Wine at the Passover seder is associated with freedom. Slaves, after all, were not permitted to drink wine. In fact, the four cups of wine are associated with four expressions of freedom and redemption.

Ironically, when the 18th Amendment went into effect in January, 1920, Prohibition threatened to eliminate this important symbol of religious freedom from Jewish ritual life. Jews found themselves embroiled in a battle both with the U.S. government and with each other.

While wine would be permitted for Jews during Passover, the new law required obtaining special government permits to make and, in some cases, import wine. These permits became a major target for organized crime. Congregations that existed only on paper applied for permits; once this came to light it generated a lot of negative press and became a source of concern for the entire Jewish community.

Reform and Conservative rabbis volunteered to give up their wine-making permits, saying that grape juice could be substituted without violating Jewish law. This made Orthodox rabbis irate. With the end of the experiment of Prohibition and the rise of Nazism in the 1930s, the rift was healed and American Jews once again banded together to face a common enemy.

Passover in the (New Mexican) desert

"Therefore it is our duty to thank, praise. pay tribute, glorify, exalt, honor, extol, bless and acclaim the one who has performed all these miracles for our ancestors and for us." In February, 1918, 25-year-old lacob "lack" Yellen found himself far from his New York City home, in the high desert of southern New Mexico. Born in Poland and brought to America as a boy, Yellen's aspirations as a vaudeville producer and lyricist were cut short by World War I. He became a field representative of the lewish Welfare Board for Work and was part of a group of dedicated voung men and women around the country providing for the religious and personal needs of tens of thousands of American Jewish men being trained to fight the Kaiser's armv.

When possible, Yellen held Friday evening services, produced and sang in camp shows, and generally acted as chaplain, counselor and older brother. (He was, remember, 25 at the time.) His devotion and enthusiasm earned him the respect of the camp's non-Jewish officer corps.

When Passover arrived on March 28, Yellen organized and led a seder for the camp's Jewish soldiers. About 60 enlisted men were present, along with many distinguished guests. Yellen managed to procure candlesticks, matzah, bitter herbs and paschal lamb, all served in the mess hall decorated in blue and white. Grape juice was substituted for wine.

Officers called upon to speak not only praised the contribution of the Jews to America, but wished the Jewish people well as they worked toward creating a Jewish state. The seder ended with Yellen singing "Hatikvah" and the "Star-Spangled Banner."

Yellen, in collaboration with longtime partner Morton Ager, went on to write such American classics as "Ain't She Sweet" and "Happy Days Are Here Again." His Jewish classic "Yiddishe Mama" sold more than one million copies in 1925.

"Those Jews, they take care of their own"

"It is because of what the Lord did for me when I went out of Egypt' (*Exodus 13:8*). For me but not for him — had he been there, he would not have been redeemed."

When in the haggadah the wicked son asks "What is the purpose of this work to *you*?" it is clear that he excludes himself from the community.

Involvement in the needs of the community is one of the most powerful defining ideas of what it means to be a Jew, and it's one of the lessons taught annually at *Pesach*. A century ago, the non-Jewish world was in awe of Jewish philanthropic organizations as well as wealthy families and individuals dedicated to improving the lives of impoverished and uneducated Jews. This spirit of giving was best exemplified by the Baron and Baroness de Hirsch.

In 1888, the German Jewish industrialist gave a gift of \$10 million to aid in the education of poor Russian Jews. The world was amazed. Headlines all over America reported the Baron's gift, which was deposited for safekeeping in a London bank. It was called "the second-largest private act of charity in the history of the world."

After Baron Hirsch died, his wife Clara continued his legacy. In 1896, she came to another place of dire poverty and gave an equally generous gift of \$10 million to help another group of desperate Jews. That place was New York's Lower East Side.

It's the Real Thing [TM]

The Wise Son, what does he say? According to the famous French medieval scholar, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki (Rashi), "the wise son is wise because he is one who knows how to ask wisely." In the spirit of the wise son, Rabbi Tobias Geffen of Atlanta was a man who knew how to ask wisely.

The formula for Coca-Cola ranks up there among such great American secrets as Area

51 and the Manhattan Project. Geffen, an Orthodox rabbi who served Atlanta Jewry from 1910 until his death in 1970 at the age of 99, is responsible for Coke being kosher.

Born in Kovno, Lithuania, in 1870 he immigrated to America and in 1903 became rabbi of a congregation in Canton, Ohio. Seven years later he became rabbi of congregation Shearith Israel in Atlanta.

Being a respected rabbi in Atlanta, headquarters of the Coca-Cola Bottling Co., he was asked by rabbis from around the country whether or not Coca-Cola was kosher. In the 1930s, it seems, tastes among Jewish youth were changing. The seltzer that pleased the parents no longer satisfied the children. So the rabbi contacted the company to ask for a list of Coke's ingredients.

The year was 1935. At that time, Geffen did not know that Coca-Cola's formula was such a closely guarded secret. Only a few highly placed individuals in the company knew the list of ingredients. After learning more about Geffen, Coca-Cola made a corporate decision to allow him access to the list. He was required to give them his word to never reveal the secret to anyone else. The rabbi agreed.

After investigating a list of ingredients, Geffen determined that one, glycerin, made from animal tallow, was not kosher. Eventually, the company found a vegetable-based substitute.

The formula, however, still included traces of grain alcohol. Since anything derived from grains is potentially *chametz*, Coca-Cola could not be certified kosher for Passover even after the formula was changed to include vegetable glycerin. Eventually, Coke's chemists experimented and found that, during the Passover season, they could substitute sweeteners produced from beet and cane sugar without compromising Coke's taste. They agreed to start manufacturing Coke with the new sugars several weeks before Passover each year. This comes to us as Coke in bottles with vellow caps, which are often treated as collectors' items. (And some consider to be the only true remnant of the original Coke taste.) ◊

The New Year of Freedom

In the mystical realm, there are also a few things our rabbis never told us, things that all Jews may have taken for granted hundreds of years ago, but which may well have been diluted in the Americanization and Reformation of 20th Century Judaism.

Our calendar is unique, the only one to combine both lunar and solar elements as well as incorporating a "leap" factor. Our calendar is a spiral, calculated so that each year the same energies are manifested at the same time. *Pesach*, it is written, has to be in spring, the time in which the energy of growth, change, and freedom is manifest. If we can tune into that energy of freedom, it is available to us today just as it was in the time of the Exodus.

Pesach, another of the (four) lewish New Years, this time for reinforcing access to the energy of freedom, has been described in a midrash from the Talmud Pesachim as "a night of watching for all the children of Israel." Watching, Paving attention, Imagine that you are in a forest in the middle of the night. It is so dark you cannot see your hand in front of your face. You have no way of finding your way out of the forest. And vet, if you are paying attention the whole first night of *Pesach*, there may be one moment in which the whole sky will be illuminated in a flash of lightning and you can see just enough landmarks to find your way home.

How can we see clearly enough to free ourselves from that which stands in the way of true freedom? Here comes another symbolic aspect of *Pesach*. Metaphysically speaking, *chametz*—leavening—is analagous to ego. Like leaven it is puffy, it inflates, an artificial thing. We don't want to destroy our egos. They help us to function. Still, while cleaning leaven out of our houses, let's think of putting our egos on the shelf for eight days so we can look within.

-Gloria

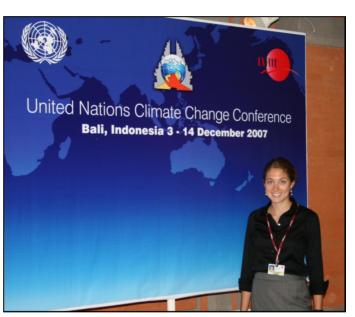
The Greening of Kelley Greenman

The hard and politically charged work on worldwide climate change has enlisted one of KJCC's own.

hen I tell people about attending the UN Conference on Climate Change this past December, the first thing I mention is sitting in the front row, star-struck and inspired, as Al Gore addressed the assembly in one of his most motivating speeches. I walked away on cloud nine, wanting to take on the world. But the conference was more than just watching proceedings: it was participating and influencing them, whether through our policy proposals that we handed out, or by the enormous youth presence at the conference.

As a member of a twenty-twoperson youth delegation, I began preparing for the 14-day conference last June, researching and writing policy proposals and familiarizing myself

with the issues. The delegation that I was a part of was entirely youth-run. It was with an organization called SustainUS, to which I had been accepted after a national application process. The youth delegation had the status of a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) at the negotiations; we were not connected to the U.S. government. This gave us freedom to express our personal beliefs and work for our own goals. Once we were in Bali, our U.S. delegation connected with other international youth to form an International Youth Caucus totaling over 130 of my peers from around the world. As a caucus, we met privately to



It was quite an honor to be chosen to attend the U.N.'s Bali Conference. Kelley poses before the media backdrop on day one.

plan our policy and communication strategies for the public negotiations, in an effort to have a more powerful, united position in front of the official delegates.

During the proceedings, I followed the issue of adaptation, which deals with the impacts of climate change that are already, or soon to be, occurring. Essentially, the challenge is how to provide the funding and technology for developing countries so they're able to face impending threats like intensifying weather events, rising sea levels, and shifting agricultural patterns. I was shocked to learn that there are already small Pacific islands that are relocating entire populations due to rising sea levels. A woman I spoke with lived in Kiribati, a small island that is already being inundated. She spoke tearfully of the strength she drew from the youth movement, just to know that there were people dedicated to this issue. Despite all the evidence, some still deny the existence of the On the U.S. delegation alone, there were young consultants, activists, undergraduates, aspiring lawyers, a city councilman, and graduate students. Everyone was sharing what they know and listening to what you could tell them. One member of my delegation took me under his wing and showed me how to navigate the adaptation meetings. During the first few days, I would lean over and whisper questions to him every few minutes; without his guidance I would never have become as acquainted with the issue as I did. I remember watching him cry when they an-

changes, but the problem is very real to the millions of people around the world already being affected. For this reason. the UN Conference in Bali was a chance for me to put faces



entire U.S. out money to developing countries for adaptation. He had been working on this issue for years, and had been against the

nounced the decision that an organization-one that had received several complaints from developing countries about its bureaucracv and inaccessibility-would be responsible for handing

to the names and nationalities of affected populations, and a chance to re-inspire myself for a career in climate change policy.

It wasn't just the proceedings, and meet-

countries that would be impacted by climate

rounded by 129 other youth who are as pas-

change, that inspired me. It was being sur-

sionate about the environment, and saving

delegate had a different area of expertise

within this overarching passion.

our planet for the future, as I am. And, each

ing the international delegates from the

The obligatory photo with the entire U.S. Youth Delegation at Bali, December 2007. To spare you the search, Kelley's on the far left.

Kelley's on the this issue for years, and had been against the decision that was made. Watching his passion about the decision, while disheartening on some levels, inspired me. There is so much room in this process,

and with this gigantic issue of climate change, for youth involvement, and everywhere we are standing to fill in that space.

On the final day of the conference, the youth caucus had an opportunity to address the general assembly in the large conference hall. We prepared a speech as an international delegation, and gave it to three youth to deliver: one from the U.S., one from Australia, and one from Indonesia. The rest of us



Hey, Kelley. Turn around and smile! This photo was taken in downtown Denpasar at the International Day of Climate Action march.

had all painted our fingers green and agreed to stand up as a unit during the part of the speech where our speakers asked for the official delegates to "join us" in our quest for effective climate mitigation. When I stood up I knew what was supposed to happen, but was shocked to see nearly the entire conference hall crowded with green fingers and hopeful youth. I had been to every strategy meeting, but to see us all standing together in front of our leaders, at an international conference, imploring them to take action...if for no other reason than for our generation and our kids... was staggering. It made me gasp at the reality that we are making our own future. and not in any small way. It's just a matter, now, of someone listening.

The politics of this upcoming election are so important. Our next leader will play a crucial role in determining the U.S.'s involvement in international mitigation efforts. I believe it's time for the U.S. to take responsibility for the 25 percent of global emissions that we release every year. Regardless of the actions of the rest of the world, the next U.S. president needs to be prepared to clean up our own mess.

> After the conference was over, a few other delegates and I set off to explore the island. Under the influence of our Lonely Planet guidebook, we ended up hiking the tallest volcano on the island at midnight. to make it to the top for sunrise. This obstacle was the hardest one I've ever overcome. After three hours of hiking in the dark, I was cold, tired and already sore. It was another three hours to the top, and by the time I made it. I wanted a helicopter to save me from the way down. Despite my incoherence, exhaustion and constant stumbles. I made it back to the bottom. in one piece, ten hours after we had

started. I had never felt more proud of myself for finishing something, all because it was so difficult. Somehow, despite the miserable nature of the hike, when I returned to the bottom, I decided to see those ten hours as a learning experience, almost an accomplishment, although I would NEVER do it again.

The next step for me is another United Nations Conference. In May I will be a delegation leader for a new delegation of youth to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in New York. I am being guided in this process by five co-leaders who were with me in Bali, some of whom have been to CSDs in the past. I've found a niche in international environmental policy meetings. They feed my own hunger to know more about the process, and prepare me for a career in environmental policy, but they also satiate my desire to have more youth involved in the process. It's our world to inherit, so it's important that we speak up to defend it. ◊

Kelley Greenman, a KJCC religious school alumna and bat mitzvah, is an environmental studies major at Washington University. She's to graduate in 2009. She wrote this article especially for Chai-Lights.

A Righteous Gentile: The Irena Sendler Story.

Our thanks to Jim Boruszak for introducing us to this story.

which is the project on the project

In 1999 Norm Conard handed a short news clipping to four of his students who were looking for a subject for their National History Day project. Mr. Conard wanted his students to focus on the concept that one person can make a difference in the world. The clipping told of Irena Sendler, a Roman Catholic woman who smuggled 2,500 Jewish children out of the Warsaw ghetto in the months before it was liquidated. Mr. Conard cautioned his students to double check the facts, since 2,500 seemed like a large number for someone he had never even heard of. The students were able to find only one mention of Irena on one website, but continued to

A young Irena.



research. They started aoina through burial records to see if they could find where she was buried. and discovered instead that she was still alive and living in Warsaw. They were able to put together her incredible story, and through their project help bring international recognition to Irena.

Irena Sendler was born in 1910 in a small town near Warsaw. Her father was the only doctor who would treat the poor, mostly Jewish victims of the 1917 typhus epidemic. He contracted and died of the disease, but not before instilling in his daughter the belief that you must do all you can to help people in need, even if you put yourself at risk.

> Irena knew that she was unlikely to save any adults, but she did have a chance with the children.

Irena was a social worker in Warsaw in 1939 when the Nazis invaded Poland. She started helping the Jews by forging documents and registering lews under Christian names so they could receive services and financial assistance. She listed them all as typhus or tuberculosis victims so that there would be no investigation. In 1942 she was recruited by ZEGOTA, a cryptonym of the Council for Aid to Jews in Occupied Poland, a group with amazingly broad contacts and secret helpers throughout Warsaw and among the highest strata of wartime Polish society. As a social worker, Irena was able to obtain a pass from the Epidemic Department to enter the Warsaw ghetto. Working with a team of 20 to 30 others, mostly women, they would enter the ghetto and try to convince the Jewish parents to give up their children to them, so they could be smuggled out and

placed with foster families. Irena knew that she was unlikely to save any adults, but she did have a chance with the children.

Irena kept meticulous records of the names and families of the children, in the hope that after the war, the children could be reunited with their families or at least their Jewish identities. All the information was recorded on thin tissue paper and buried in jars in a friend's back yard.

Children would be smuggled out in burlap sacks, boxes and coffins; sometimes the younger ones would be sedated to keep them quiet. Older children were snuck out through sewers or secret openings in walls. churches or the courthouse. Irena's group was able to smuggle 2,500 of the children out of the ghetto and into safe foster homes before she was discovered and arrested in 1943. She was questioned and tortured before being sentenced to death by firing squad. She never gave up her lists. Before the sentence could be carried out. ZEGOTA was able to bribe a guard to free her and falsify her execution report. Irena went into hiding and never spoke of her involvement in order to protect her own children from reprisals. When the war ended she dug up her jars and began trying to find the children and any living relatives. Unfortunately, of the 2,500 she rescued, almost all of their families had perished at Treblinka. But because of Irena and her meticulous record keeping, the children survived and retained their Jewish identities.

> All the information was recorded on thin tissue paper and buried in a friend's back yard.

Irena was not known, because she remained quiet, and because the communist Polish government that followed suppressed any record of anti-Nazi nationalists, as many were also anti-communist. Irena remained largely unknown, even in her own country.

Until the Kansas students went to their National History Day competition with a play about Irena called *Life In A Jar.* It sparked



Irena, at her home in Warsaw, on her 97th birthday.

interest, which has spread world-wide. When the students started their research, a web search turned up only one site that mentioned Irena Sendler. A search now will bring up about 80.000. The students have since visited Irena in Poland, and she is said to have been stunned and surprised by the efforts of the students and the attention she has received. Irena has also since been recognized by the Polish government, which now considers her a national hero. Additionally, in 2007 she was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. There is now a biography, Irena Sendler: The Mother of the Holocaust Children. by Anna Mieszkowska. And as of 2007. there was a screenplay in the works. Irena, now 98 years old, is the only survivor of the group of rescuers. When contacted on last year's birthday, she said, "I have to share all credit with the 30-odd people who worked with me. Alone, I couldn't have done it." ◊

Purim 2008

KJCC celebrates The Feast of Lots, and once again Queen Esther saves her people.

urim at the KICC was once again a gleeful highlight of our year. Over 40 people came to help read the Megillah-the story of Purim. We read round-robin in English, supplemented with wonderful Hebrew reading by our students Max and loshua.



accompanied by Harry in the garb of King Achashverus. (One particular word, though, an arch-villain's name, was loudly and enthusiastically drowned out by the sound of spinning groggers with each mention.) After the reading, the children passed out bags of *Mishloach manot*, and then collected for Pu-



Joyce begins the Megillah reading, above. Herb Grossman and Michal Kamely follow along (in different languages), above right. Yardena with Harry, Joshua and Max, left. Alan Beth and Paul Bernstein await their turns to read, right.

rim *Tzadakah*. Our intrepid Megillah readers donated \$86, which will be sent to Matzah Mitzvah Fund of South Florida, helping those in need to buy food for Passover.

While we were reading, Sisterhood members were bringing platters laden

with food. Led by Sofy and Roberta, Zoe and Linda, they set up a marvelous buffet dinner in the newly tiled social hall. Shabbat candles were lit,

Jim Boruszak and the children led



us in Kiddush and *Hamotze*, and we feasted! I am always amazed at the way our KJCC family comes together to make wonderful things happen! The children of the religious school decorated bags for the *mishloach*

manot, which I filled with juice, pretzels, chocolate chip granola bars and tangerines, helped by Linda Rutkin, Gloria, and Carol





special *thank you* to Bill and Freda Ferns, owners of La Cuccina and Gyros King.



Steinbock's mom Marianne. Wonderful food was prepared and brought in abundance, along





with several bottles of wine (consumed, in no small measure, by yours truly) and Slivovitz! The salads, frittatas, egg dishes, Jell-o molds, kugels and so much more...all were delicious. Congratulations and thanks to the cooks! A

Above: they tried to kill us; we survived; let's eat! Yardena with Moira and Jeri, middle right. Cory and Gloria surely earned their supper tonight. Harry Friedman says the Kiddush prayer, below left. At right, the bags of *Mishloach Manot*, decorated by the students, await. Although they were unable to attend, they donated platters of delicious hummous, tabouli, fresh-made pita bread and the honeyed baklava (to the great joy of Yardena, who was spied carrying several of them home after the event.) All tables were filled with people eating, drinking and enjoying this year's Purim celebration!

After dinner we were treated to an original musical event written by Gloria and performed by our religious school; services were led by Jim, and then we returned to the social hall for an Oneg of coffee, cake, ice cream and fruit. It was truly a happy Purim!

-Joyce Peckman





are the richer for it.

Tutor Cory Wasser was, as usual, an upbeat Narrator for this year's telling of the story: "Purim, the Musical." A good part of the fun was the combination of silly songs composed just for this event, and the traditional songs that both tell the story and celebrate our survival as a people. Purim is, after all, a very serious holiday (though apparently little known by the outside world; every non-Jewish adult I mentioned it to this week returned only the blankest of stares), even

As you can see from the pictures, the KJCC Religious School's Purim play (an original by, um, me) was a happy, silly, and exuberant success. A good time was had by all, even if the high-kicking chorus of evil Hamans did flub a few lines and improvise their choreography. Could there be a better night to be foolish?

We owe Sofy Wasser,



though it is a time in which we have total license. almost a mandate. to act foolishlv. leri made a lovely Esther, Zach excelled as the jumpup Haman. loshua was



Roberta McNew and Zoe huge bouquets of gratitude for appearing in front of their peers in beards and masks, willing to be both booed and laughed at. Every time our adults join our children in creative activity, we all a wishful, gun-toting Mordechai, Harry stunned as the well-dressed King Ahasueros, Max presented a delectable Hamantaschen, and Nyan, Lili, Moira and Cammie rounded out the cast as energetic cheer (boo) leaders. The mix of music, dance, and laughter, followed by our first all-musical service, preceded by the wonderful Megillah reading and dinner, made this Purim a night to remember.

Apart from all the laughter, though, the last chant by the "Boo-leaders" still echoes in my mind:

Three, five, seven, nine, Who will save us all next time? Who will be OUR Mordechai? All our kids. And you. And I.

-Gloria

Zoe Berk, Roberta McNew and Sofy Wasser, below, portray the villain Haman in his various tenses. Inset, Zach awaits his cue.

FUTURE



The ensemble, top right, reminds the audi-

ence, through flash cards, exactly what's going on. Center left, a break in the action before Act II. Joyce, below, mandatory drinking accomplished, wonders where she left her car.

On behalf of all of KJCC, we offer a special thanks to Joyce Peckman for the magnificent job she did organizing and leading our Megillah reading. This is Joyce's project, one of her many gifts to KJCC. In addition, as Vice-President of Sisterhood, Joyce is always here, giving of her time and energy and being one of the most important reasons why KJCC works. You're a wonder, Joyce.

We'd also like to thank the irreplaceable Gloria Avner, our multi-talented teacher and choir master and playwright and director, for the loving gift of our Purim play. And Michael and Suzanne Gilson for sponsoring the Purim dinner.

-Steve and Carol







Dmitry Sandler, DPM, FACFAS

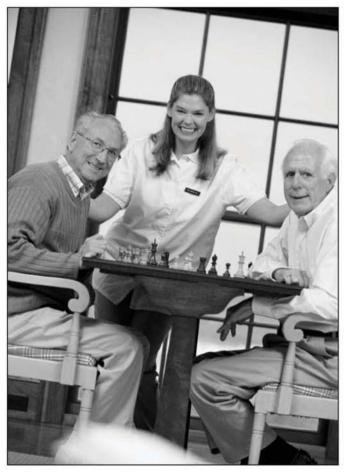
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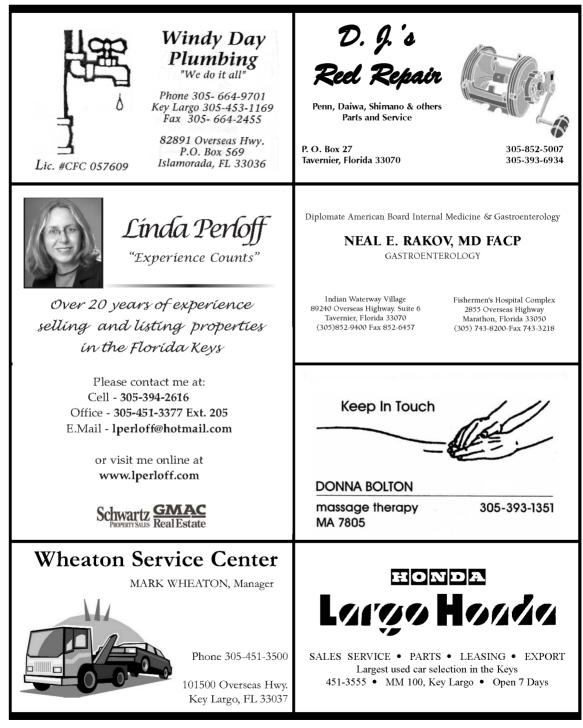
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