

Chai~Lights



March 1 - April 30, 2023

8 Adar - 9 Iyar, 5783

Passover: The Miracle of Survival (by Gloria Avner) — Pages 18-19

Photo Gallery: Lots of Pictures, Good Times — Pages 21-27

What's Up in Israel? (By Beth Hayden) — Pages. 32-33.



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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Services every Friday at 7:30pm Names denote service leaders. Italicized names are Oneg sponsors.			1 MAR	2	3 Gloria Avner, Art Itkin & Barney Coltman <i>Barney Coltman</i> <i>Kathy & Joe</i> <i>Shabathai</i>	4
5 Sisterhood Meeting 10 a.m.	6 Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m. Purim & Pastrami Megillah Reading 6:30 p.m.	7	8	9	10 Joe Shabathai <i>Susan Ellner</i>	11
12 KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom 10 a.m. Spring Forward	13 Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m.	14	15	16	17 Medina Roy & Gloria Avner <i>Jeff & Cheryl</i> <i>Margulies</i>	18
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26 Women's Seder 5 p.m.	27 Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m.	28 Sisterhood Book Club 12:30 p.m.	29	30	31 Mike & Sean Kaufman & Joyce Peckman <i>Jeff & Cheryl</i> <i>Margulies &</i> <i>Jane Friedman</i>	1 APR
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30						

2022 - 2023 KJCC OFFICERS & BOARD

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CHAI-LIGHTS is the
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chailights@keysjewishcenter.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Ken Atlas



I can't believe I've finished my first term and started a second.

When I became president, I knew it would be a lot of work, but didn't realize the full extent of it. It's a very multifaceted position and has led to a very challenging past year. On one hand, I have far less free time now. On the other, life has truly become more interesting.

I want you all to know that it has been a great pleasure serving for the past year. I also really look forward to my second term.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments or concerns. Although the KJCC email will reach me, you can get me quicker with my personal account. That one, I can check even from work.
treken@att.net

In the past year, I've quadrupled the number of services I attend. I believe I've gotten to see all of our service leaders at least once. I'm grateful to everyone who has led a service or contributed in one.

On the non-ritual side, I'm proud of the work members have contributed to our audio/visual systems, and the abundance of issues keeping our building functional. The dinners have been great as well.

Finally, I can't wait for Purim, which will include a pastrami party. I consider that a perfect mix.

Shabbat Service Leaders

March 3 Gloria Avner, Art Itkin & Barney Coltman
March 10 Joe Shabathai
March 17 Medina Roy & Gloria Avner
March 24 Ken Atlas
March 31 Mike & Sean Kaufman & Joyce Peckman
April 7 Randy Klein-Gross
April 14 Donna Bolton
April 21 Joyce Peckman & Rivka Rizzo
April 28 Loni Padden & Erica Lieberman Garrett

WHAT'S UP AT KJCC

March & April 2023

Most of our activities are on-site at the KJCC.
Please check the weekly announcements for details.

Every Monday	2 p.m. Drop-in Zoom chat
Friday, March 3	7:30 p.m. Shabbat service led by Gloria Avner, Art Itkin & Barney Coltman
Sunday, March 5	10 a.m. Sisterhood meeting
Monday, March 6	6:30 p.m. Purim and Pastrami – Megillah reading – RSVP with Joyce
Friday, March 10	7:30 p.m. Shabbat service led by Joe Shabathai
Sunday, March 12	10 a.m. KJCC Board meeting on Zoom– move clocks forward
Friday, March 17	7:30 p.m. Shabbat service led by Medina Roy & Gloria Avner
Friday, March 24	7:30 p.m. Shabbat service led by Ken Atlas
Sunday, March 26	5 p.m. Women's Seder – RSVP Erica – space limited
Tues., March 28	12:30 p.m. Sisterhood Book Club, at the home of Marie DeLuca
Friday, March 31	7:30 p.m. Shabbat service led by Mike & Sean Kaufman & Joyce Peckman
Weds, April 5	5:30 p.m. KJCC Family Seder – RSVP with Erica – space limited
Friday, April 7	7:30 p.m. Shabbat service led by Randy Klein-Gross
Friday, April 14	7:30 p.m. Shabbat service led by Donna Bolton
Friday, April 21	7:30 p.m. Shabbat service led by Joyce Peckman & Rivka Rizzo
Tuesday, April 25	12:30 p.m. Sisterhood book club at the home of Joyce Peckman
Friday, April 28	7:30 p.m. Shabbat service led by Loni Padden & Erica Lieberman Garrett

NOSH

Purim and Pastrami– Monday night March 6th

Thanks to Ken Atlas, Purim and Pizza has been changed this year to Purim and Pastrami! After the 6:30 round-robin reading of the entire megillah in English, fulfilling that important mitzvah, we will dive into the second mitzvah of “party hearty.” For those who prefer to go meatless, there will be plenty of salads and sides. A donation basket will go around so we can also fulfill the mitzvah of giving to charity. RSVP to Joyce at joycepeckman@gmail.com or 732-447-5225.

18th Annual Women’s Seder

The Women’s Seder is always a much-anticipated event, a time when we showcase our food and fellowship with our sisters, and raise money for charities that benefit women and children. This year it will take place on Sunday, March 26th. We are proud to announce that this year’s Women’s Seder honoree will be Marcia Kreitman. She was one of the forces behind the start of our women’s seders. Each year, she lovingly adds another name to our beautiful commemorative tapestry. It is only fitting that now we honor her. For more information and to reserve your spot at the Women’s Seder please contact Erica Lieberman Garrett at hippiejap@hotmail.com. Seating is limited. Donation will be \$36 p/p.

First Night Passover Seder

Wednesday, April 5th is the first night of Passover. We will have a congregational seder, held in the social hall of KJCC Congregation Ohr HaYam, led by our members. All attending will enjoy a delicious chef-catered holiday meal, with sides provided by our own talented cooks. Donation is \$36 for adults, \$18 for children aged 12 and under. Please RSVP to Erica soon, as space is limited. Look for the flyer in this issue of Chai-Lights and in weekly president’s messages.



HOW CERTAIN CONTRIBUTIONS TO KJCC CAN INSTANTLY BECOME PERMANENT, LIVING MEMORIALS

Yahrzeit Plaques: KJCC has six special, Israeli-made boards in the sanctuary for yahrzeit memorial plaques. Each plaque is accompanied by its own light, which is switched on for both yahrzeit dates and on Yom Kippur; names are also read aloud in memory from the bimah each yahrzeit and published annually in our Yizkor Book. The cost for eternal synagogue memory is \$400.

Tree of Life Leaves: We have three beautiful, six-foot Trees of Life — the world’s most enduring spiritual metaphor — adorning the wall at the rear of the KJCC sanctuary. For \$75 an individual, golden leaf can be engraved with your message of memory or love. An example: “To our grandchildren: May they always be in the presence of the Eternal Light.”

Garden Bricks: \$125 buys a single brick and \$200 a double brick in our magnificent Meditation Garden walkway, engraved with your personal message. An example: “You were the best, Aunt Goldie. Well, you and those amazing cheese blintzes.” For \$300 we’ll plant the native tree of your choice as the ultimate living tribute, with an outdoor plaque included in the price.

ONGOING PROJECTS & MITZVAH PROGRAMS OF KJCC

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 Joyce Peckman, 732-447-5225.

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

CHAI-LIGHTS ADVERTISEMENT: Your business ad will appear in every issue of Chai-Lights. Call Linda Pollack, 305-587-7429 or email lindap4000@ymail.com, for rates.

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

MEDITATION GARDEN: Have you visited our beautiful garden? Thank you Jane Friedman. Call Donna Bolton, 305-393-1351, to reserve an orchid, bench, brick or tree plaque for posterity.

ONEG SHABBAT/DINNER SPONSOR: : To schedule your special date with Sisterhood, call Erica Lieberman Garrett, 305-393-1162, or email her at hippiejap@hotmail.com.

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

CARING KEHILAH/SUNSHINE COMMITTEE: If you know of any member who should receive a get well, congratulations or condolence card from the KJCC, call Joyce Peckman, 732-447-5225. The Caring Kehilah Committee is calling and checking in on our socially distant members. Call Lonie Padden, 305-772-2584, or email dr.padden@yahoo.com if you wish to request that someone be contacted.

TREE OF LIFE LEAVES, SANCTUARY SEAT PLATES, YARTZEIT MEMORIAL PLAQUES: Send your desired inscription to Linda Pollack at 305-587-7429 or lindap4000@ymail.com.

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

CONTRIBUTIONS TO KJCC

We appreciate the thoughtfulness of those who support the Keys Jewish Community Center by remembering and honoring friends and loved ones through generous contributions. When you make a donation, please specify the names to be honored and the recipient fund if one is desired.

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2023

Yahrzeit

Jeff & Mary Roth Samuel Roth
Gerri & Frank Emkey Lester Singer
Jimmy Gottesman
Rich & Mindy Agler Talia Agler
Donna Forst Leo Forst
Miriam Frankel &
Nadine Thompson Sheldon Paul Frankel
Larry & Dorothy Wolfe Adele Siegel Bayer
Sam Wolfe
Morris Feinberg
Lillian Tallent Morris I Estrin
Judy & Adam Starr Hedy Kopecky
Randy & Eileen Kominsky Harry Stoler
Patricia Isenberg Fannie Phillips
Karyn Zoren Al Roller
David & Pamela Marmar Samuel Marmar
Gerri & Frank Emkey Robert Kinney
Nathan Weisberg
Gary Margolis & Laurie Blum Linda Sugarman
Stephen Steinbock Karen Hayhurst
Gerri & Frank Emkey Harry Phillips
Adam & Judy Starr Lila McKenzie Henry-Starr
Alexandra Louise Starr
Michael Krissel Joseph H. Krissel
Shirley R. Krissel
Lillian Tallent Ida Tallent
Joan Boruszak Robert Kohlenbrener
Marilyn Rapp Russ Wayne Rolnick
Dorothy & Larry Wolfe Maxine Feinberg

Chai Challenge

Gloria Avner
Susan Gordon
Donna Bolton
Joyce Peckman
Susan & Paul Roberts
Linda Pollack
Beth Horowitz
Adam & Judy Starr
David & Loni Padden
Elaine Schulberg
Maria Cartagena
Marcia Kreitman & John David Hawver

Steve & Jan Hartz
Rifka Rizzo-Trent & Max Trent
Erica Lieberman Garrett
Joe & Kathy Shabathai
Ken Atlas
Linda Perloff
Nancy Kluger
Medina Roy

Meditation Garden

Rich & Mindy Agler George Swartz

Leaf on the Tree of Life

Linda Pollack Toby Goldfinger

Unrestricted

Arthur Plutzer Memory of Al Roller
Memory of Pauline Roller
Memory of Joel Pollack
Honor of Linda Pollack
David & Suzi-Sara Feder
Susan Ellner
Aaron & Ellen Krumbein
Rivka Ruzzo-Trent & Max Trent
Nancy Perlson Memory of Toby Goldfinger
Gloria Avner Memory of Donald Zinner
our most reliable koheyn
Memory of Toby Goldfinger
Joyce Peckman Memory of Toby Goldfinger

Rabbi & Cantor

Marc Grobman &
Elpidio Luis Hidalgo, Jr Open Door Policy

Yizkor

Marc Grobman &
Elpidio Luis Hidalgo, Jr Barbara Joy
Bernard Sheldon Grobman
Francis Grobman
Phillip Grobman
Sophie Silver
Benjamin Silver
Germallia Hidalgo
Elpidio Hidalgo, Sr
Odi Devantes

— SISTERHOOD DONATIONS —

Dinner Sponsorship

Michael & Lorena Kaufman..... New member Dinner

Onegs

Rita Conklin Birthday

Joyce PeckmanHealing & Health of Friends & Family

Joyce PeckmanBirthdays of Grandchildren: Michal, Adara & Isaac Peckman

Roy & Elizabeth Pollack Roy, Madelyn, & Will's Birthdays

Susan Ellner Celebrating being in the Keys with her KJCC Mishpocha

Jane Friedman Her, Her Mother, & Harry's Brithdays

Ken Atlas Spring in the Keys

Jules & Nettie Seder Anniversary

Kathy & Joe Shabathai Anniversary

ONEG SPONSORS

March 3 Barney Coltman
 Celebrating KJCC Fellowship

 Kathy & Joe Shabathai
 Celebrating their anniversary

March 10 Susan Ellner
 Celebrating Being in the Florida
 Keys with her Mishpocha

March 17 Jeff & Cheryl Margulies
 Celebrating Jeff's Birthday

March 24 Ken Atlas
 Celebrating Spring

March 31 Jane Friedman
 Celebrating Her Birthday

 Jeff and Cheryl Margulies
 Celebrating Their Anniversary

April 7 Jules & Nettie Seder
 Celebrating Their Anniversary

April 14 Barbara Knowles
 Celebrating Richard & Eve's Birthday

April 21 Joyce Peckman
 Celebrating the birthdays of her
 Grandchildren: Michal, Adara & Isaac

April 28 Jeff & Cheryl Margulies
 Celebrating Cheryl's Birthday

Anniversaries

March	Years
8th Adam & Judy Starr	
16th Frank & Gerri Emkey	15
22nd David & Patti Gross	26
24th Joel & Toby Bofshever	55
30th Jeff & Cheryl Margulies	55
April	
3rd Jules & Nettie Seder	57
10th Stuart & Geri Smith	58
18th Susan White.....	19
25th William Fusco and Melissa Katz-Fusco	24
25th Murray Rapoport & Barbara Osder.....	27

Birthdays

March

1st..... Sasha Dutton
2nd..... Nadine Thompson
3rd Stephen Steinbock
5th Annie James Brennan
7th Hannah Feig
8th Rita Rzepka
10th Kate Horowitz
10th Thomas Davis Smith
11th Bryan Schur
12th Heath Greenbaum
12th Oceana Gross
13th Ira Stein
14th Jenna Lane
15th Allan Boruszak
15th Johanna Willner
15th Maria Cartagena
16th Jeff Margulies
16th Natalie Hope Markowitz
16th Steven Nobil
17th Daniel Friedman
19th Michelle Palacino
20th Janet Palacino
21st..... James Nobil Jr.
21st..... Joseph Palacino
23rd Ken Atlas
23rd Lynn Dils
25th Stephanie Coeurjoly
25th Sylvia Berman
26th Anna Verity Greenbaum
26th Tamerat M. Duman
27th Sarah Hesterman-Kutz

30th Lee Schur
31st..... Jane Friedman
31st..... Sari Eliz. Goldstein

April

4th Larry Weber
4th Lauren Lane
4th Thomas Brodie
5th Jon Tainow
9th David Feder
12th Richard Knowles
13th Eve Gomez
13th Samantha Lebofsky
15th Rachel Roth
15th Toby Bofshever
17th Susan Ellner
18th Jennifer Garrett
18th Lauren Sax
19th Augie Moss
20th Jonathan Nobil
20th Michael Duman
22nd..... Susan Temkin
24th Lynn Nobil
24th Susan Gordon
25th Shirley Stein
26th Maryann Boruszak
28th Joni Sages Dandrea
29th Linda Pollack
30th Jason Sherman
30th Joel Roth
30th Rachel Barrett

In Memoriam – March 2023

Harvey Roazen

By Sylvia Berman

Audrey Pearlman

By William & Donna Bolton

Leroy Weisberg

By Gerri & Frank Emkey

Maxine Kaplan

By Marsha Garrettson

Harry Phillips

By Patricia Isenberg

Monroe (Monty) Kaplan

By Marshall & Myra Kaplan

Marian Rose Klimpl

By Michael Klimpl

Robert Berman

By Sylvia Berman

Robert Kohlenbrener

By Joan Boruszak

Herbert Frankel

By Miriam Frankel & Nadine Thompson

Arlene R. Brenner

By Marilyn Greenbaum

Pinchas Kaboli

By Yarden Kamely

Luba Tuchman

By Marshall & Myra Kaplan

Joseph Krissel

By Michael Krissel

Mathew Strumor

By Murray Blitzer & Bev Strumor-Blitzer

Eve Greenstein

By Barnet O. Coltman

Harry Kaplan

By Marsha Garrettson

Anna Horn

By Susan Horn & Dot Brooking

Rachamim Levy

By Yarden Kamely

Albert Cohen

By Harvey & Judith Klein

Shirley R. Krissel

By Michael Krissel

Samual Lieberman

By Erica Lieberman Garrett

Joseph Kaufman

By Jeff & Lisa Miller

David Harvey

By Linda Perloff

Bianka Kirschenbaum

By Medina Roy

Esther Schur

By Lee Schur

Lila Mckenzie Henry-Starr

By Adam & Judy Starr

Theresa Steinbock

By Stephen Steinbock &
Rosemary Barefoot

Annie Kleinfeldt Bernstein

By Gary Margolis & Laurie Blum

Irene Nobil

By Lynn Nobil

Denise Moss

By Linda Pollack

Nate Schulberg

By Elaine Schulberg

Isadore Seder

By Jules & Nettie Seder

Alexandra Louise Starr

By Adam & Judy Starr

Ann R. Kapulskey

By Muriel Swartz

Janet Blum

By Gary Margolis & Laurie Blum

Dorothy Ross

By Joyce Peckman

Cissie Rose Lang

By Frank Rose

Sondra Lundy

By Elaine Schulberg

Ida Seder

By Jules & Nettie Seder

Mrs. Anne Miller

By Shirley Stein

Abe M. Reider

By Muriel Swartz

Gilda Tainow

By Jon S. Tainow & Terry Willner-Tainow

Herbert Frankel

By Nadine Thompson & Miriam Frankel

David C. Willner

By Johanna Willner

Ida Tallent

By Lillian Tallent

Alice Weber

By Judith Weber

Maxine Ruby Feinberg

By Larry & Dorothy Wolfe

Anne Temkin

By Robert Temkin

Deborah Eichler

By Judith Weber

In Memoriam – April 2023

Sylvia Agler

By Richard & Mindy Agler

Ellen Coltman

By Barnet O. Coltman

Larry Ira Frankel

By Miriam Frankel & Nadine Thompson

Frances Wolfe

By Michael & Suzanne Gilson

Stella Hartz

By Steven & Jan Hartz

Fred Klimpl

By Michael Klimpl

George Nobil

By Lynn Nobil

Jean Blumenfeld

By Marvin A. Blumenfeld

Mark Hitzig

By Wes & Rita Conklin

Barbara Linda Hayes

By Jane Friedman

Bill Gordon

By Susan Gordon

Gertrude F. Kaplan

By Marshall & Myra Kaplan

Marilyn Janet Barr

By Michael Klimpl

Joseph Lempel

By Linda Pincus

Baruch Epstein

By Joan Boruszak

Becky Kanowsky

By Wes & Rita Conklin

Carmel Catanese

By Jane Friedman

Belle Kirschenbaum

By Marilyn Greenbaum

Nathan Klein

By Harvey & Judith Klein

Arlene Sugarman Margolis

By Gary Margolis & Laurie Blum

Erwin Moss

By Linda Pollack

Dr. Joel Pollack

By Linda Pollack

Mrs. Trudy Roth

By Joel & Mary Roth

Sally Shabathai

By Joseph & Katherine Shabathai

Claire Smith

By Stuart & Geri Smith

Ida S. Reider

By Muriel Swartz

David Dale Regent

By M'Liss Regent-Cunha

Sam Sax

By Stuart & Lauren Sax

Louis S. Smith

By Steven & Barbara Smith

Cantor Alex Chapin

By Steven & Barbara Smith

Larry Ira Frankel

By Nadine Thompson & Miriam Frankel

Rabbi Milton Greenwald

By Paul & Susan Roberts

Richard Schulberg

By Elaine Schulberg

Morris Smith

By Stuart & Geri Smith

Rose Wainer

By Richard & Sheila Steinberg

Dr. Milton A. Wohl

By Joan P. Wohl

Leaf on the tree of life:

To Honor Toby Goldfinger

Always Remembered Lovingly, Linda Pollack

2023



Sisterhood Book Club

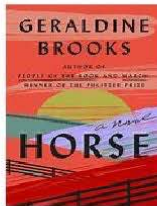


Tuesday, March 28, 2023 ~ *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks

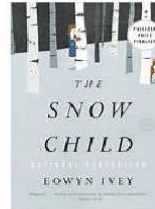
12:30 p.m. Home of Marie DeLuca and Zoom

Tuesday, April 25, 2023 ~ *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey

12:30 p.m. Home of Joyce Peckman and Zoom



Based on the remarkable true story of the record-breaking thoroughbred Lexington, *Horse* is a novel of art and science, love and obsession, and our unfinished reckoning with racism.



The Snow Child is set in the 1920s and follows Jack and Mabel, a childless older couple struggling as homesteaders in the Alaskan wilderness. The sudden emergence of a young girl from the woods changes their lives.

We will always Zoom and sometimes meet in person as well. An invitation to join the Zoom session will be sent prior to each meeting.

Let us know if you would like to host a meeting and/or review a book.

SISTERHOOD PRESIDENTS Susan Gordon & Joyce Peckman



March and April – Purim and Passover: These are two months that feature the special strengths of women, and we at Sisterhood celebrate them wholeheartedly.

Purim begins for us with Jane Friedman's Hamantaschen workshop, open to all, which was held last Sunday. A dozen of us played noisily with dough, enjoyed wine and/or coffee, and brought home our (more or less) gorgeous pastries to cook. Some of them will undoubtedly show up at the "Purim and Pastrami" Megillah reading on Monday night, March 6 th. Thank you, Jane, for guiding us through this baking event. You will find photos on pages 28–29.

Purim is the holiday that truly highlights the strength and bravery that Jewish women have shown for thousands of years. It is only fitting that it is the most joyous of all holidays! This year, come in costume, or wear something fun to the reading and dinner. Please take a look at the flyer for further information and details. RSVP to joycepeckman@gmail.com.

We have set the date for the Women's Seder. It will be on Sunday, March 26th at 5:00pm. We are proud to announce that this year's Women's Seder honoree will be Marcia Kreitman. Marcia has been a quiet behind-the-scenes source of strength for KJCC, and for the arts community of the Keys. She was one of the forces behind the start of our women's seders. Each year, she lovingly adds another name to our beautiful commemorative tapestry. It is only fitting that now we honor her. For more information and to reserve your spot at the Women's Seder please contact Erica Lieberman Garrett at hippiejap@hotmail.com.

Our Congregational Passover Seder is set for Wednesday, April 5th, the first night of Passover,

beginning at 5:30 p.m. The seder will be held at the KJCC, led by our members. All attending will enjoy a delicious chef-catered holiday meal, with sides provided by our own talented cooks. Please RSVP to Erica soon, as space is limited. Look for the flyer in this issue of Chai-Lights and in weekly president's messages.

We are grateful to Lucinda Kurtz for the wonderful Rosh Chodesh New Moon Circles that she has led these past few months. She fostered a calm connection to nature, to holy energy and to each other, as she led us through chants, meditations and guided conversation. Thank you, Lucinda. We wish you safe travels in the coming months.

A big "mazal tov" and "yasher koach" to the ladies who did such a great job leading services on Sisterhood Shabbat. We have a lot to be proud of. The service was saved on Zoom, and can be accessed using this link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81d-SwVL00Af971Emm5O1YnvDj_sDJamV9M70SUhu.Nih0F2mb5OfQTZtY

Then copy and paste this Passcode: **a7p!yy10**

Book Club continues, thanks to the dedication of Linda Pollack. We have had some fascinating discussions, mixing the literary with the personal. Thank you, Rita Rzepka for hosting our January meeting, and Linda Pollack for hosting our February meeting. The March discussion will be at the home of Marie DeLuca, and April's at the home of Joyce Peckman. To be added to the mailing list, contact Linda Pollack at Lindap4000@ymail.com.

The Sisterhood gift shop is a great place to find fun things for Passover.

Join us at our next Sisterhood meeting on Sunday, March 5 th at 10 a.m. at KJCC. ◇

PURIM & PASTRAMI DELI NIGHT



Monday, March 6, 2023 - 6:30 p.m.

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



MAKE FOUR MITZVOT IN ONE NIGHT:

Hear Megillat Esther -- The Ganze Megillah.

Enjoy a Festive Meal.

Share gifts of food with Neighbors and Friends.

Give Charity.



We've often heard this description of Jewish holidays: "They tried to kill us; we survived; let's eat!" . Purim is coming and we want to party! We have a custom when talking about future plans of adding the words "B'eizat HaShem" or B"H - "With the help of G-d. " So, B"H on Monday night, March 6th at 6:30, we will meet at KJCC to read the Purim megillah round-robin style in English and finish with a Pastrami Party! We will eat, drink and celebrate our survival! Wear costumes or something funny or snazzy to enhance the fun.

Contact: Joyce Peckman, joycepeckman@gmail.com, 305-451-0665,
to let her know you are coming.

Remember, it is a Mitzvah to hear the reading of the entire Megillah.

WORLD JEWISH REPORT

Medina Roy



Outrageous! (But Not Surprising)

More than 500 Israelis were dispatched to Turkey to aid in rescue and recovery after the recent horrific earthquakes. One of the Israeli rescue teams – there were three in all – was sent home after receiving “concrete and immediate threats” against them. On February 12th, United Hatzalah told its team of some two dozen personnel in Turkey to end their rescue mission and leave the country. There was a shortage of available planes to evacuate the team and so philanthropist Miriam Adelson donated her private jet to proceed with the evacuation. Dov Maisel, the group’s vice president of operations, said in a statement, “We knew that there was a certain level of risk in sending our team to this area of Turkey which is close to the Syrian border, but we took the necessary steps in order to mitigate the threat for the sake of our lifesaving mission. Unfortunately, ...we have to put the security of our personnel first.” According to Maisel, the Hatzalah team had rescued fifteen people since arriving shortly after the quakes.

The government of Israel was among the earliest to provide rescue teams. Among their personnel’s first steps was to establish a field hospital, erected in less than 24 hours.

Not only did the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) team rescue 19 people from the rubble, it also provided care to more than 180 others. (That information is as of this writing, and the death toll has climbed past 46,000.) This team located the bodies of Saul and Fortuna Cenudioglu, stalwarts of Antakya’s nearly 2,500-year-old Jewish community.

When the Israeli delegations arrived on scene, they received permission from Israel’s Ashkenazi chief rabbi, David Lau, to work through Shabbat as the window for rescues closed. The earthquakes were most destructive in eastern Turkey, close to the Syrian border.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the returning rescuers they “showed the whole world the good and true face of the State of Israel: a small state with a giant soul that works to help people whoever they are, anywhere in the world in crazy conditions – with a supreme level of dedication.” (www.jpost.com, 2/12/23)

New Israeli Technology

Icecure Medical, an Israeli company based in the northern coastal city of Caesarea, has developed a revolutionary minimally invasive technique to freeze cancerous tumors that only requires a local anesthetic. Most patients can be treated within one hour and in some cases between ten to fifteen minutes, allowing them to return home the same or following day. The company is already treating thousands of women with breast cancer worldwide in hospitals and doctors’ offices in Japan, Australia, Germany and Spain. A clinical trial is currently being held in the United States and is showing positive interim results. Elizabeth Sadka, Vice President of the company, said that the technique is meant “to replace the surgery for a specific population that we can offer to treat in a minimal invasive operation.” Here’s how it works: a solution at –274 degrees Fahrenheit is injected into the cancerous tumor to freeze it, making it inactive and enabling the body to discard it as it does with other dead cells naturally within a few weeks. The patient is left with only a minimal scar remaining in the tissue while no other trace is left on the rest of the body or organs. (www.i24news.tv, 7–13–22)

A New Place to Visit

On your next trip to Israel, you might want to check out a new place to visit – the 2,700-year–

old Pool of Siloam – which is being fully excavated and will be opened to the public, allowing visitors to see this site of great historic and religious significance. Located in the City of David National Park in Jerusalem, the Pool of Siloam was built in the First Temple period during the reign of King Hezekiah as a major part of the water system for the ancient city of Jerusalem. The pool was also most likely used as a mikvah (ritual bath) by millions of pilgrims who converged there before ascending through the City of David to the Temple. The pool is mentioned in the Christian Gospels as the place where Jesus healed a blind man. It remained in use until the Byzantine period, around the 6th century CE.

The Israel Antiquities Authority began excavating and restoring the site in 2004. Its team faced many challenges, including the logistical difficulties arising from working in a densely populated urban area. Hezekiah's Tunnel, a water tunnel built in the eighth century BCE, leads to the pool. The Siloam Inscription, written in ancient Hebrew and which records how the Gilhon Spring's water was diverted to the pool during the reign of King Hezekiah, was uncovered in the water tunnel in 1880, just a short distance from the pool. (It is currently located at the Istanbul Archaeology Museum. Why Istanbul? Probably because all of Palestine in 1880 was controlled by the Ottoman Empire.) (www.israel21c.org, 1–17–23)

Most Likely to Set a Record

The oldest complete copy of the Hebrew Bible as we know it today will be sold at auction – and it could possibly become the most expensive book or document ever sold. The Codex Sassoon was written by a single Jewish scribe on 400 pages of parchment about 1,100 years ago. It is expected to go for between \$30–\$50 million when it is sold by Sotheby's auction house in May and is projected to become the most valuable document ever sold at auction (In 2021, the auction house sold a first printing of the U.S. Constitution for \$43 million, setting a record for that category.) The codex is named after David Solomon Sassoon, the book collector who acquired it in 1929 for 350 British pounds (the equivalent today of about \$28,000). If the name is familiar, it belonged to a famous Baghdadi Jewish family, who in the 19th century moved to Mumbai as part of a large Jewish migration. Richard Austin, Sotheby's global head of books and manuscripts, had this to say about the book: "Now that the Codex has been

definitively dated as the earliest, most complete text of its time, it stands as a critical link from the ancient Hebrew oral tradition to the modern, accepted form of the Hebrew Bible that remains the standardized version used today."

Sassoon added his bookplate to the inside cover of the binding, showing a long list of inscriptions detailing the book's Jewish ownership, much of it throughout what is present-day Syria. For the last century, it has been in private collections. Other books of this caliber are owned by major museums and are on display. The Codex Sassoon and the Aleppo Codex are the only two known manuscripts comprising almost the entire Hebrew Bible. (The Aleppo Codex is incomplete. Hundreds of pages went missing during the 20th century. What remains of it is on display at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.)

"Codex Sassoon marks a critical turning point in how we perceive the history of the Divine word across thousands of years," said Sharon Mintz, Sotheby's senior Judaica specialist for books and manuscripts, "and is a transformative witness to how the Hebrew Bible has influenced the pillars of civilization – art, culture, law, politics – for centuries." (www.washingtonpost.com, 2–19–23)

New UNESCO World Heritage Listing

In early February, Germany celebrated the first German-Jewish sites that received UNESCO's World Heritage designation. The sites are in the upper part of the Rhine River Valley and are known as the point of origin of Ashkenazi culture and where the Yiddish language first began to develop over 1,000 years ago. The sites were actually recognized by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), back in July of 2021, almost two years ago, but the coronavirus pandemic delayed Germany's celebration. The sites recognized are the Speyer Jewry-Court, a synagogue and yeshiva complex in the city of Speyer; the Worms Synagogue Compound; the Old Jewish cemetery of Worms, the oldest known Jewish cemetery in Europe, and the Old Jewish Cemetery in Mainz. The UNESCO listing states, "The unique community centres and cemeteries have had a lasting impact on the material Ashkenazi culture and are directly and tangibly associated with the creative achievements of the early Ashkenazi scholars." Before July 2021, there were 49 World Heritage sites in Germany but no Jewish cultural monuments. The cities of Speyer, Mainz and Worms were the sites of large-scale

looting and massacres of thousands of Jews during the Crusades and the 14th century bubonic plague epidemic, but they were also home to some of the greatest leaders of European Jewry, one of whom was Rashi, the famed medieval French Torah commentator who lived, studied and taught in the German cities for many years. (www.jta.org, 2-3-23)

And the 2023 Genesis Prize Goes to...

Known by many as the “Jewish Nobel Prize,” The Genesis Prize Foundation award, which was established to honor the lifetime achievements of a single, inspiring Jew, has been given this year to a nameless group whose work is ongoing: Jewish activists in war-ravaged Ukraine. The Foundation said that the war in Ukraine required a change in the approach it has taken since creating the prize in 2012. “Recognizing the extraordinary nature of events of the past 11 months, The Genesis Prize Selection Committee has decided to depart from their usual custom of awarding the prize to a single Jewish individual,” the group stated. “Instead, the committee has elected to announce a collective award to Jewish activists and NGOs who were inspired by the brave citizens of Ukraine and their courageous president, Volodymyr Zelensky, and chose to act on their Jewish values by standing up for freedom, human dignity, and justice.” In addition, the group is not awarding the traditional \$1 million prize that recipients in the past have donated to a charity. Instead, the committee will continue to provide grants to NGOs to alleviate the suffering in Ukraine as they have done since the beginning of the war. Those groups include the JDC (formerly known as the American Joint Distribution Committee), which is the leading global Jewish humanitarian organization and which has distributed emergency aid across the country; United Hatzalah of Israel, which trained Ukrainians in emergency first aid; and Natal, an Israeli trauma response group. (Those of us that joined Rabbi Agler on KJCC’s trip to Israel in June of 2013 will surely never forget our afternoon at Natal headquarters in Tel Aviv.) The goal of the prize is to stimulate Jewish giving by raising awareness of particular needs. (www.jpost.com, 1-11-23)

A Troubling New Survey

A new survey from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) found belief in anti-Semitic conspiracy theories among 20 percent of Americans, nearly

double the anti-Semitic prejudice the organization found in 2019. Thirty-nine percent believe that Jews are more loyal to Israel than to the U.S., while 20 percent say Jews have “too much power.” Twenty-three percent believe that Israel gets away with anything and controls the media while 18 percent say they are uncomfortable spending time with a pro-Israel person. Three percent believe all of the eleven anti-Jewish statements respondents were asked about, which might seem small but corresponds to eight million Americans – more than the total number of Jews in the U.S. (www.adl.org, 1-12-23)

In Memoriam

–Marianne Mantell, an American writer, editor and producer who helped launch the audiobook industry when she co-founded Caedmon Records, died recently. She was 93. Born in Berlin, her family settled in New York in 1941 after fleeing Hitler’s Nazi Germany. She attended New York’s High School of Music and Art and Hunter College, developing her passion for classic literature and music. Frustrated by the low pay she earned as a freelance liner-note writer for record companies, she became intrigued by the untapped potential of spoken-word recordings. Mantell tried – and failed – to persuade classical music labels to expand their catalogs with recordings of poetry and Shakespearean works. She was convinced of the possible market potential and partnered with college classmate Barbara Cohen Holdridge in 1951. The two launched Caedmon Records, the only female-owned major label of the era and the first to focus on spoken-word recordings of literary works. Realizing they needed some star power to get their creation to move forward, they tracked down Dylan Thomas, at the time the very popular Welsh poet, and persuaded him to sign a recording contract resulting in “A Child’s Christmas in Wales and Five Poems,” which is widely cited as the first audiobook. It was an instant classic, selling 400,000 copies by 1960. Other notable works soon followed – readings of Ernest Hemingway, Langston Hughes, and William Faulkner among others plus plays like Arthur Miller’s “Death of a Salesman.” The company became successful and Mantell sold it in the early 1970s. (www.nbc.com, 2-12-23) ◇

PICTURESQUE LOANNINA

by: Joyce Peckman

I have written about the trip to Greece, led by the Melton School that Yardena and I enjoyed last October. My one complaint was that we spent almost no time in Ioannina. Located Northwestern Greece, the ancient, picturesque city of Ioannina rests along the shore of beautiful Lake Pamvotis.

Unknown to most international tourists, who seek out the Greek islands, Ioannina is a favorite vacation spot of Greeks and Israelis. The city is known for its beauty around the lake and its talented silversmiths, who have been renowned since the time of Turkish rule. Only a few dozen Jews remain in Ioannina, once home to one of the continent's largest populations of Romaniote Jews. That community has been there for over two thousand years, since the Second Temple period. It is distinct from Sephardic Jews, who fled Spain and Portugal in the 15th Century and spoke Ladino.

Tucked just behind the ancient city wall is the Romaniote synagogue we visited. We spent about two hours learning the history and customs

from Allegra, a member of the synagogue. She explained how the rows of seats are divided in half, facing each other, with the ark on the western side of the building and the lectern on the eastern side. Congregants, facing north or south, just turn their head to the west or east. Allegra opened the magnificently decorated ark and showed us the ancient Torahs. One, written on deer skin, was 600 years old. A small "bar mitzvah" Torah was 350 years old. During the Nazi occupa-



Dr. Moses Elisaf



Synagogue interior

tion, the magnificent temple that stood just outside of the ancient city gates since 1530 was destroyed, along with almost all of the genealogy records. On the walls of the shul are 10,852 names of those who were killed during the Shoah. The mayor hid most of the important artifacts, which are now found in

Lake Pamvotis



this small synagogue. Allegra explained that a shul had been on this site since 1100,

but this was not the original, which had been destroyed several times by earthquakes.

Moses (Moshe) Elisaf, the President of the shul, who was also Mayor of Ioannina, then entered, apologizing that he was late because he had been at a meeting with the Prime Minister of Greece.

Moshe Elisaf gave us over half an hour of his time. He was gracious and well-spoken. He described the difficulties of being a physician during Covid. He spoke about the challenges of leading this tiny community of Romaniote Jews. They do not have a Rabbi or Cantor. The highlight of the year is Yom Kippur, when Romaniote Jews from around the world travel to Ioannina. He described the small, struggling, yet proud community.

There is a tragic post-script to this story. From JTA World News this week:

“Moses Elisaf, thought to be the first Jewish mayor of a city in Greece, died at 68 on Friday after a brief battle with cancer. Elisaf, mayor of Ioannina since



The Old City Wall

2019, was hospitalized during a work trip to Athens in December, the Kathimerini newspaper reported.

He extended his hospital stay on Dec. 19, reportedly citing “serious health reasons” in a letter to government colleagues. Elisaf, a pathologist, was head of the city’s Jewish community for two decades and a member of the board of directors of the Central Jewish Council of Greece. He became a professor at Ioannina Medical School, and his 2019 mayoral run was his first foray into politics. While campaigning as a centrist independent, rivals tried to claim he was “connected to the Mossad or the Israeli embassy.” He beat the city’s incumbent in a tight runoff with 50.3% of the

vote. “Despite antisemitism and the rise of racism in our times, the citizens have elected a Jew as their mayor, evaluating my personality, our plan for the city’s future, our candidates, our ethos during the election campaign,” he told Haaretz. Baruch Dayan Haemet. ◇

Synagogue exterior





THE MIRACLE OF SURVIVAL: THE OLD STORY THAT KEEPS US NEW

Historians throw a fishnet backwards to bring forward the recoverable past. They are always re-deciding “History.” After all, most history is written by the winners. A poet’s job on the other hand is “to capture from the air a live tradition and make it new.” That is our job too, individually and as a Jewish community, while we sit around our Passover tables.

I have written many times about *Pesach*. As I cast about, fishing in frustration for something fresh to say, a voice reminds me that rabbis share new insights on old holidays year after year. There is a ceaseless flow of beautiful new *Haggadahs* filled with essays and illuminating interpretations every year as well. Our best and brightest minds want and need to make our story contemporary. Novelist Jonathan Foer, whose new *Haggadah* appeared last year says *Haggadahs* will continue to be written forever, until there are no more Jews to write them, or until Elijah comes and there is no longer a need to say “Next year in Jerusalem.”

Look at the *Haggadah* we use for the Women’s Seder. Many of you have never seen this recent work or how it deals with issues of today. Barely 20 years old, this guide, filled with poetry, new versions of God’s name and models of activist women working for freedom and justice is immediately relevant to our lives: We don’t live as our grandmothers did but we admire and praise their strength, inviting them to join us, the independent women of the 21st century still travelling our tribe’s 5000 year long journey.

Here is one example of how we take from the air a living tradition and make it new. Each verse of the traditional *Dayeinu* lists one of God’s gifts to the Israelites step by step on their journey. The refrain of *Dayeinu* shows how thankful we are for how much was given. Our congregation sings out the gifts of Exodus, Torah, and Shab-

bat. The interpretive *Dayeinu* changes focus from God to people and from past to present. We sing both versions. Here are the final six verses of the “*Ma’yan* Passover *Haggadah*:

If we teach our children to pursue justice with all their strength,

If we care for the earth and its future as responsibly as we care for those we love,

If we create art, music, dance, and literature, dayeinu.

If we realize our power to effect change,

If we bring holiness into our lives, homes and communities,

If we honor our visions more than our fears, dayainu v’lo dayeinu.

Of course there will always be something new to say about Pesach. We must keep it new so that its importance reaches into our brains, hearts and spirits in novel ways, empowering us, meaningful today and memorable enough that our children will be eager to pass it on.

The whole point of the Passover Seder is that all Jews on the planet, the Jews of the Diaspora, are telling and hearing the same story on the same night. As their parents told it to them and ours to us, we need our children to tell it to their children. Let them take pride in reciting the *Feir Kashas* (four questions) and eagerly await the hunt for *afikomen*. The worldwide *Seder* is an artistic process of creation meant to forge one unified people out of far flung folks who, whether or not we observe all the *mitzvot*, *speak the same language*,



or go to *shul*, all want a seat at the table.

Passover is about personal, tribal, and community freedom. As we bless our wine, point out the ritual foods and their meaning, we are talking about the perils faced in order to achieve freedom, the obstacles to keeping it, and the huge problems that stem from viewing and being perceived as people who are “other.”

Freedom has to have a context. The “*Mitzraim*” of each generation wears different clothes. (Hebrew uses the same word, *Mitzraim*, to refer both to Egypt as a country and to “tight narrow places”)

Renewing our covenant is not only done in a sanctuary with a Torah. At Passover we sit in comfortable “*haimische*” surroundings among friends, family and hungry lonely strangers. We hold high and share the “bread of affliction.” Together, in many voices, we review our journey. How did we get here? Children are you listening? Let’s put ourselves in the sandals of escaping slaves. All we own is on our backs. Trust in God is our only currency. We are the cast of thousands, the four types of children, Moses, Pharaoh, and the joyous dancing women singing with Miriam on the far shore of the Reed Sea. We come from brave people. More than half of the Jewish slaves stayed behind, afraid. We listened to Moses, and we left. What was the flight like for our forefathers? What was it like for our grandfathers escaping Europe, Russia, Iran? How do the oppressed in Africa, in Kurdistan, North Korea, and the underclasses in our own country keep hope for a better life alive? How do we work to repair the world?

Games, songs and *afikomen* hunting keep our children present, active and interested. We want them to ask questions beyond the traditional four. They do ask. And we explain. The *Haggadah* is a magnificent teaching tool and keeping the story engaging is why we are always writing new ones.

So what is it we are making new and how do we do it? Some of us will be capturing children’s attention by throwing plastic frogs and cattle and white bits of candy “hail” into the air when we talk



about the ten plagues. Some children will take long scallions and whip their parents and teachers in re-enactment of what it is like to be both slave owner and slave. Mostly though, we talk, encourage questions, take part in the ritual blessings, boom out the gratitude verses of “*Dayeinu*,” laugh breathlessly at the last verse of “*Hod Gadyah*,” We’ll add our own touch to the biblical and *Shtetl* songs by singing new ones to tunes from 20th century musicals. They’ll make us laugh out loud. (Feel free to add “These are a few of my Passover Things” to your own Seder—ask Joyce for a copy with all the verses. Below is a sample).

*Cleaning and cooking and so many dishes
Out with the chametz, no pasta, no knishes
Fish that’s gefilted, horseradish that stings
These are a few of our Passover things*

How could we not celebrate our survival against all odds? We commit to making ourselves more thoughtful people and the world a better place for our children to inherit. They are the ones who will carry on our tradition. It is their story to tell. The dinner table is a classroom to the end. Our bellies full of delicious food, our covenant with God renewed, the *afikomen* found and ransomed, we leave the table with hope that our grandchildren will hold *Seders* for their children and add their own aliveness and significance to the words “next year in Jerusalem.” Survival requires millennia of “next years.”◇





18th Annual Women's Seder

Sunday, March 26, 2023, 5:00 p.m.

at the KJCC

Passover Seder Dinner

**Come celebrate the 18th
KJCC Women's Seder.**

**Donation: \$18 chai
+ \$18.00 for 18 years -
Total cost is \$36.**

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

**Limited seating - Please RSVP by
March 20th.**

**Contact Erica Lieberman Garrett
hippiejap@hotmail.com
(305) 393-1162**

**Mail your check, payable to KJCC Sisterhood, to
PO Box 116, Tavemier, FL 33070.**



PHOTO GALLERY



Meet Marcia Kreitman, intrepid traveler, entrepreneur, fine artist, college professor, costume designer, maker of museum quality exhibits and generous contributor to the best elements of our 18 year old Women's seder. Make your reservation for the event by calling Erica Lieberman Garrett and sending a check for \$36 to KJCC Sisterhood. Come hear her story and celebrate her.

Rabbi Ed Rosenthal presents Congregation Ohr HaYam with a beautiful blue Yad (Torah pointer) for our Holocaust Torah made totally out of recycled plastic water bottles. Susan Gordon, co-leading Sisterhood service that night, accepts gratefully.



Joyce Peckman and Donna Bolton lead Kiddush and HaMotzi after their service Feb 24.



Rabbi Ed leads HaMotzi challah blessing after giving the Torah talk at the KJCC Sisterhood service.



Yardena could not come to us to celebrate her birthday, so a group of us went to visit her in Hollywood.



HAVDALAH SERVICE

One of the ritual beauties we've missed most during Covid has been Havdalah services, the shortest, sweetest, most meaningful of all Jewish rituals. On January 14th we embraced and enhanced all that we had missed with an extraordinary Mediterranean Potluck dinner, traditional seudah shlishi, third meal of Shabbat. Big thank you to Erica Lieberman Garrett for organizing the food, to Linda Pollack for hosting us in her gorgeous home, to Susan Gordon, who found a new service for us to follow, to Gloria Avner for leading the service. and to all who brought great delicacies to share.

Linda Pollack was our host, (her son Roy our great car park jockey) offering her beautiful home with wrap around views of the bay for watching those three medium sized stars come out so we can know shabbat is over.



Max Trent and Stephen Steinbock enjoying the ambiance of the cocktail table.



Loni Padden's presentation was as lovely as the taste. Her secret: marinate the salmon in orange juice for 24 hours.



Thank you Mary. You help everything run smoothly.



Big thanks to Erica, here with Randy Klein-Gross, for coordinating an amazingly beautiful, harmonious and delicious Mediterranean themed meal.

Always a pleasure to hear new member Rivka's voice joining in chanting the prayers.



Great couscous salad Nettie. Jules is lucky to have been with you for 56 years.



Thank you Jacob for bringing these antique spice boxes to join our Havdalah service!



Rabbi Ed leads a beautiful Havdalah service in the Ohr HaYam sanctuary, with ten of our members and thirty young adults from Moshe House joining us for his teaching "Spirituality of the Sea."



Good to have Linda Kaplan back after three weeks exploring Antarctica and Medina back after her summer-fall in N.C. where her shul is lucky enough to have her as ritual chair.



Loni Padden, ready to unveil her Mediterranean salad with Susan and Erica.

NEW MEMBERS AND ADVERTISERS' DINNER

Once a year, Medina Roy chairs an event overflowing with appreciation for those who support us and welcoming new members. She and her Sisterhood helpers, especially Erica, did a beautiful job. The evening was especially joyful and poignant because it was the first in three years, because of Covid, and the Sanctuary was full for President Ken Atlas and Cantor Jody's tuneful service.



See the world's most amazing cake, designed and donated by the fabulous Lorena Kaufman, who, with husband Michael, sponsored the New Members/Advertisers' Dinner. Yes, the kippah, Torah, Tallit and legible copy of Chai-Lights up top are all part of the cake. Thank you Lorena for going above and beyond (we still have the top piece in the freezer.



Good to see Joel and Mary Roth.

Mark and Anthea Avner, usually at services on Zoom, came to visit us (and sister Gloria) in person from Ocala.



We love when Linda Perloff and Sam Goldberg come to visit from West Palm.

Cantor Jodi (her husband on left) and our President Ken Atlas led a terrifically musical and lively service the night of Advertisers/new members dinner. We are so grateful!



Gloria's brother, new member Mark Avner, came to this dinner from Ocala with wife Anthea. Here he sits with "cousin" Susan Gordon (Skolniks in common).



Recent members Lucinda Kurtz and Oran Hesterman, potters and educators from the Renewal movement, show the two pieces Oran has made and is donating to us, a challah plate and Kiddush cup.

Lovely to have David, owner and Chef of Made to Order, join us as an advertiser with his daughter, enjoying the company of Llli Padden.



We value "old" members amid the new. Good to see Barney Coltman, Linda Pollack and Stephen Steinbock .



Nadine Thompson, our recording secretary, points out her mothers painting in the Connections Project grand opening reception. Her mother, at 97, is our oldest member and a very talented artist.

Ellen and her husband, here with Medina, may not be actual members, but they sure felt like mishpocha for the month they were here.



We love Rivka and Max.



Kaufman family, we are delighted to see your dad so grateful for that n to.

Hello Loni and David Padden. Wonderful smiles.



Welcome back from California, Carol Rose. Nice to meet your husband too.

New Officers and Board of Directors are sworn in at Annual Meeting.



If you're on your way to a doctor or the Wellness Center at the Tassell Building in Tavernier, you'll see Gloria's "Island Home" painting on display when you walk out of the elevator.



Joyce, Susan Ellner and Gloria visit Randy Klein-Gross' Lionfish Jewelry booth at Islamorada's Third Thursday famous outdoor art fair. Yes, we have more Cookbooks. Good time to gift one before Pesach.



Happy Birthday Erica Lieberman Garrett and Roy Pollack.



We have so many talented members. Lots of potters. Susan, Joyce and Gloria proudly hold their new mugs handcrafted by Oran.



Purim Unmasked:

Behind & Beneath The Story Of Purim

Take out the costumes, the crowns, the beards and the bottles. It's Purim time. We all know the surface of the story. Let's look beneath the mask for more. It is after all a Jewish Holiday and the only one that will be honored, as the Talmud tells us, in the world to come.

There is something about masks that excite imagination. World cultures have used them spiritually and educationally since the time of ancient Greece. From Native America to deepest Africa to the far reaches of Asia, people have used masks to tell their stories. We tell these stories to ourselves, tales of divinity and heroes, tricksters and fools. Masks make us not ourselves. And yet, in the process of concealing, sometimes something hidden is revealed.

That certainly happens at Purim. Our children dress up. They take on the characters of Esther and Haman, Mordechai, and King Ahashverosh. They get to feel what it is like to be admired or despised, to wield absolute power or to dispense wisdom. I have seen children cry when booed. Identification is

powerful.

The themes of hiding and exposure permeate not just the story but the very title "Megillat Esther." Each word has two meanings. "Megillah," besides referring to a document rolled up as a scroll, means "to expose." "Esther," in addition to being a woman's name, means "concealment." The whole document's meaning then is "revelation of that which is hidden." Take the basic story. The plot is filled with co-incidences, mistaken identity, and happenstance, each of which leads to the unimaginable end.

To recap: Seventy years have transpired since the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem. The Jews are in exile in Persia, under the hand of King Ahashverosh, the ruler of the Middle East. The king throws a large banquet for all his subjects (actually, in honor of the captivity of the Jews). He summons his beautiful wife, Queen Vashti, to appear before him. She rudely refuses and he subsequently has her killed. After that, Esther, a Jewish exile, is taken to the palace as the king's new wife. If the degradation of a Jewish girl abducted to the palace of a wicked despot is not enough, her ward, Mordechai, one of the leaders of that generation, abandons his place among the sages to sit day and night in front of the king's gate in his concern over Esther. The king's vizier, the wicked Haman, is promoted. A personal vendetta against Mordechai develops, and he decides to visit his anger upon the entire Jewish people. A death sentence is issued against all the Jews in the King's provinces, and Haman builds a special gallows upon which to hang Mordechai. Things go from bad to worse. However, on one fateful night, the king awakes from his sleep and learns that Mordechai had once saved his life. He grants him royal honors. Haman is killed. The decree is rescinded. And



Sisterhood bakers wield rolling pins joyously in prep for Purim Hamantaschen making. (We'll be eating wicked Haman's hats-mmm).

the Jews high-handedly defeat their enemies.

Everything in this story is a paradox. Each event that seemed bad for the Jews proved to be for their good. The royal banquet in celebration of Israel's exile provided the very means for Esther to enter the king's palace. The fact that Esther was abducted allowed her to bring about Haman's demise. The fact that Mordechai sat idly by the palace gate allowed him to overhear a conspiracy and save the king's life. Haman's rise to power was the very thing that produced his conflict with the Jews and brought about his downfall. He was even hung on the very gallows he built for Mordechai, and all his wealth, that had made him so influential in the first place, was given to Esther. The very day appointed for the annihilation of the Jews was the day of their greatest victory over their enemies. It is the day on which we celebrate Purim.

Above all, we see that everything that seemed to obscure God's presence, everything of ill-fate, and the worse of human intentions, was actually the very means by which God was manipulating history to bring about the redemption of the Jews. Everything began to change on "that night the king awoke from his sleep" (Esther 6:1). The king, says the Talmud, actually alludes to God, the King of kings. On that night, God awoke from the sleep of concealment, and began to reveal His presence in the world below.

Many scholars have remarked on the total absence of God's name from this Megillah, alone of all books in the Bible. God makes no showy miracles here: no parting of the seas, no manna on the ground. Unlike all previous persecutions, exile from Persia was not even an option. At other times in history those in power did not want to kill us. It was much more profitable to leave us be or to convert us. It was only in the times of Purim and Nazi Germany that Amalek held sway with hatred so total that only annihilation of the race would do.

Those who focus on hidden meanings say that the hand of God is evident everywhere in this Megillah, even though the name is not. For every crisis encountered, God already had

a solution in place. Purim teaches us how to relate to God in a time when seas don't split, when bushes don't burn, when plagues don't befall our enemies, when the workings of God are concealed, beneath the surface appearance of things.

In Purim, we celebrate miraculous reversal of fortune. From assured mass destruction, the tables were turned and in the space of 24 hours the Jews in Iraq[!] (then Persia) were suddenly routing every anti-Semite in the world's most vast and powerful empire.

Ever since that day, Jews celebrate its message: no matter how bleak, how dark and how hopeless a situation can appear, the Almighty has guaranteed our survival and an answer has already been prepared for every difficulty.

Our mode of celebration is one of the most uncharacteristic in the annals of Jewish tradition: the sober, intellectual people of the Book turn to the bottle and are commanded to get drunk! Perhaps we are supposed to attain a state of mind other than the normal, a consciousness more attuned to the illogic of the day. And in our intoxicated state of joy, we clothe ourselves in colorful masks and costumes, deliver gifts of money to the poor, and give treats to our neighbors.

The costumes and masks are vivid reminders that, as in the Purim story, things are not what they seem. Below the visible surface, a mysterious, hidden plan is unfolding every moment, silently steering world history and ourselves. If we are alert, aware, and appreciative of all that comes to us, we can play our parts well. None of us ever knows how the story will end. ◇





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Adar: The Kernel of Sweetness

by: Lucinda Kurtz

Towers tremble
The earth quakes
Buildings implode
Shattering bones and bodies.
Desperate migrants flee across borders and boundaries
Seeking salvation in a drop of water.

Can we dare claim joy in the face of such suffering?
The new moon of Adar invites us to reach across the gap between
What is and what could be
The creation and the Creator
And find the kernel of sweetness to savor and celebrate.

Can I turn my gaze from the division and horror in the daily news
From the exploding missiles and war-torn cities crumbling into dust
And forgive our trespasses
And hope for delivery from evil
Through the unknown mystery
To the other side of the tumultuous sea?

Miriam and the women brought their tambourines
Their dances and sensuous songs to celebrate
Their terrible flight from fear,
To unleash the power of the possible
In search of safety
They knew the world was created for love and joy.

In Adar, we laugh and pierce the veil of falsehoods
That reveal the truth beneath the masquerade
We unmask those who would do harm
Like Queen Esther
Lovely and alluring
Who foiled a plot
And saved a people.

I am pulled by an invisible Hand
Up out of despair
Awakening the joy that heals
My breaking heart
Cushioning the cracked places
Softening the hard edges
With a comforting embrace.

Our soft bodies crave tender touch
The caring caress brings a smile to my face.



WHAT IS HAPPENING IN ISRAEL

by Beth Hayden

Beth Hayden lived in Israel for many years, married to an officer who died during the conflict in Lebanon. She has stayed in close touch. Soon she will be spending a month there with good friends and promises some first hand insights upon her return, with part two of this article.

I suspect there is no one unaware that Israel has the most right-wing government in its history currently in power led by none other than Binyamin Netanyahu. Unlike the US, Israel has many political parties. When I used to vote in Israel, I voted for Shinui (Change) led by Shulamit Aloni, a minor party but one which seemed in tune with how I thought. Israel has 120 Knesset seats and in order to come to power, one must have a majority (at least 61 votes) in order to have a majority. In the “good, old” days, when there were less parties, and Labor or Likud amassed a clear majority, this worked well. For years now, the problem has been that no one party gets a clear majority so whoever is appointed by the Israeli President to form a coalition is forced to make concessions to extreme, smaller parties in order to reach a coalition of 61 votes. The President of Israel picks a party leader who the President thinks has the best chance of cobbling together a coalition – and authorizes him or her to do just that. This has been the case for many years. To make the situation that much more difficult, Netanyahu has become famous for making “deals” to bring parties and votes into his coalition and then backtracking on the deals he agreed to. There is a joke in Hebrew, “Don’t yell at children who believe in Santa Claus, there are still adults who believe Netanyahu.”

The parties with whom Netanyahu has made current deals represent the most right-wing interests ever included in government and include Shas (Sephardi Shomrei Torah – or Sephardi Torah Guardians), of which Aryeh Deri is a leader, Otzma Yehudit (Jewish Strength or Power) led by Itamar Ben-Gvir who is a Kahanist, an Arab-hater and as far right as one can possibly get. The Religious Zionist Party, also right wing and extreme, is home to Bezalel Smotrich and also part of the coalition. In the pictures you will see of Ben Gvir and Smotrich, they both wear knitted kippot. Knitted kippot typically signify that you are

part of the Nationalist Zionist camp, ultra religious and most probably, a settler. Both Smotrich and Ben Gvir live in settlements, Kedumim and Hevron, respectively. Netanyahu has made extreme promises to these right wing religious zealots in order to return to power with a total of 64 Knesset seats/votes.

Thousands of Israelis have protested in the streets against Yariv Levin’s plan to alter the power of Israel’s Supreme Court. Levin is a Likud member. Netanyahu’s government consists of his party, Likud, 2 ultra-Orthodox parties and 3 far-right religious parties. The three most contentious members of Netanyahu’s coalition are: Levin, Ben-Gvir and Smotrich. (Aryeh Deri, leader of SHAS, was ordered to be removed by the same Israeli Supreme Court Levin is trying to “reform.”) The Israeli Supreme Court in a 10-1 ruling revoked the appointment of Aryeh Deri, leader of the ultra-Orthodox Shas party and a key ally of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as a senior minister in the government. This decision could dramatically escalate the constitutional crisis in Israel and accelerate the government’s effort to push forward its plan for weakening Israel’s judicial system. Thousands of Israelis have demonstrated in the streets of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa against the proposed limits on the Israeli Supreme Court.

The most contentious ministers in Netanyahu’s far-right coalition remain:

Interior and Health Minister – Arye Deri (removed by Israeli Supreme Court for previous convictions) (SHAS) However, the ruling coalition is trying to pass a new law that would allow Deri to serve.

Yariv Levin – Justice Minister – (Likud) Mover and Author of the proposed “reforms” to the Israeli Supreme Court. Netanyahu’s former attorney general, Avichai Mandelblit, said in an interview that the reform is “the most dangerous thing that can be.” Numerous Israeli intellectuals have come out in op-



position to the proposed reforms. A poll released by Channel 12 in Israel showed that sixty-two per cent of Israelis wanted to stop or delay the reform, while only twenty-four per cent wanted it to move forward. In a speech on February 12th, the Israeli President, Isaac Herzog, warned, "We are on the verge of constitutional and social collapse." The following day, a hundred thousand protesters marched on the Knesset, chanting "Democracy!" Inside, a legislative committee controlled by the government passed the first of the overhaul's proposals. In fact, the President of Israel, Isaac Herzog, addressed the country recently, in a departure from the largely apolitical status of the Israeli Presidency. A first, and well warranted. Soldiers, who fought Israel's wars, have marched in protest, as have teachers, students, tech workers, scientists - virtually every profession has demonstrated protests against the hobbling of the Israeli Supreme Court.

Bezalel Smotrich (Religious Zionist Party)

Bezalel Smotrich is an Israeli lawyer and far-right politician who serves as the Minister of Finance since 2022. The leader of the Religious Zionist Party, he previously served as a Knesset members for the far right-wing party, Yamina (Right). He is a resident of Kedumim, an Israeli settlement, and lives in a home that was also built illegally outside of the settlement proper.



Smotrich's radical beliefs led to several controversies. He is a supporter of expanding Israeli settlements in the West Bank and opposes Palestinian Statehood. Accused of inciting hate against Arab citizens of Israel, he told Arab Israeli lawmakers in October 2021, that "it's a mistake that Ben-Gurion didn't finish the job and didn't throw you out in 1948. He has called himself a "fascist homophobe."

According to former Shin Bet deputy chief, Yitzhak Ilan, who interrogated Smotrich at the time, on the occasion of protests against the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai, Smotrich was arrested in 2005, while in possession of 700 litres of gasoline, on suspicion of participating in an attempt to blow up the Ayalon

Highway, a major arterial road. He was held in jail for three weeks, but not charged after refusing to speak. In 2006, he helped organize the "Beast Parade" as part of protests against a gay pride parade in Jerusalem.


He is co-founder of the NGO Regavim which monitors and pursues legal action in the Israeli court system against constructions undertaken by Palestinians, Bedouins, and other Arabs in Israel and the West Bank without Israeli permits.

Itamar Ben-Gvir (Otzma Yehudit)

Ben-Gvir, a settler in the West Bank has faced charges of hate and hate speech against Arabs. He was known to have a portrait in his living room of Baruch Goldstein, an American Israeli, who massacred 29 Palestinian Muslim worshippers and wounded 125 in Hebron. He has removed the portrait since entering politics. He has been previously convicted of supporting terrorism terrorist group known as Kach, led by the extremist American Rabbi Meier Kahane. Under his leadership, the Otzma Yehudit (Jewish Power) Party, which espouses Kahanism, and anti-Arabism won six seats in the last 2022 Israeli legislative election and represents the most right-wing and hardline government in Israel's history. He has called for the expulsion of Arab citizens of Israel who are not loyal to Israel and espouses the death penalty for Arabs found guilty of Israeli deaths. (Under current law, only genocide is punishable by death.) As a lawyer, he is known for defending Jewish radicals on trial in Israel.



Ben Gvir had been long accused of being a provocateur, having previously led several visits to the Temple Mount as activist and member of Knesset, contentious marches through Jerusalem's Old City Muslim Quarter, and set up an office in the Sheikh Jarrah (formerly Shimon HaTsaddick) neighborhood which has been the subject of ongoing legal scrutiny by the Israeli Supreme Court. On January 3, 2023, he visited the Temple Mount where the al-Aqsa Mosque is located, spurring an international wave of criticism that labelled his visit provocative. ♦



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