

Chai~Lights



May 1 - June 30, 2026 | 14 Iyar-15 Tammuz, 5786

Jan Price's Beautiful Piano Recital — Page 18

Lily Salomon's Bat Mitzvah — Pages 20-21

A Look Back at Purim and Passover — Pages 22-23

Woman's Seder Returns -- 21 Years Old! — Pages 24-26



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 MAY Gloria Avner <i>Jeff & Cheryl Margulies, Roy & Elizabeth Pollack</i>	2
3 Sisterhood Luncheon 10 a.m.	4	5 Lag B'Omer	6	7	8 Joe Shabathai <i>Bill & Michelle Voorhies</i>	9
10 Mother's Day KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom 10 a.m.	11	12	13	14	15 Jerusalem Day Medina Roy & Gloria Avner <i>Roy & Elizabeth Pollack, Medina Roy</i>	16
17 Rosh Chodesh Sivan	18	19	20	21 Erev Shavuot	22 Shavuot Dinner 6 p.m. Judy Starr, Ken Atlas & Gloria Avner <i>Beth Horowitz, Richard & Mimi Bentolila</i>	23
24	25 Memorial Day	26	27	28 Sisterhood Book Club 12:30 p.m.	29 Michael Kaufman & Joyce Peckman <i>Joyce Peckman</i>	30
31	1 JUN	2	3	4	5 M'liss Regent Cunha & Joyce Peckman <i>Roy & Elizabeth Pollack, Rivka Rizzo Trent</i>	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 Erica Lieberman Garrett <i>Gloria Avner, Nadine Thompson</i>	13
14 KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom 10 a.m.	15	16 Rosh Chodesh Tammuz	17	18	19 Rivka & Max Trent <i>Sandra St Germain</i>	20
21	22	23	24	25 Sisterhood Book Club 12:30 p.m.	26 Donna Bolton <i>Sisterhood</i>	27
28	29	30	Services are every Friday at 7:30pm Names denote service leaders Italicized names are Oneg sponsors			

2026 - 2027 KJCC OFFICERS & BOARD

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Editor
Gloria Avner

CHAI-LIGHTS is the
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chailights@keysjewishcenter.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Ken Atlas



As we approach mid spring, and then summer, things will start to slow down at KJCC. However, the year so far has been packed.

Among our great ritual, activities have been the Purim and Passover events. It's always great to see the large numbers of people who show up and those events seem to get better with each passing year. I'm also pleased that our Saturday Torah services have gone so well.

On the social front, we had a great concert with Jan and a great show from Lil Rev. We've also had several great movie nights.

But more than anything as of late, I have been happy to have been able to witness multiple bat mitzvahs.

I still remember my own as one of the three most significant events of my life. It is frankly what fostered and kept my interest in Judaism and participation in services as well as

the board. It's not just a right of passage, it's a life-changing event.

I'm also very pleased to announce that we have secured the same clergy to help us with the high holidays. The Cantor and Rabbi worked really well together last year and I look forward to seeing them again this year.

Israel continues to be in danger on a daily basis. I find I am glued to the news, and praying that the situation will end soon and correctly. What I mean by correctly is that the people of Israel will be in less danger. As I've said before, issues of anti-Zionism do occasionally touch us here in America. The board continues to take security very seriously, and we are still making upgrades in that regard.

In closing, I want to reiterate how thrilled I am about all the various types of activities we've had lately. ◊

Shabbat Service Leaders

Friday, May 1	Gloria Avner
Friday, May 8	Joe Shabathai
Friday, May 15	Medina Roy & Gloria Avner
Friday, May 22	Judy Starr, Ken Atlas & Gloria Avner
Friday, May 29	Michael Kaufman & Joyce Peckman
Friday, Jun 5	M'liss Regent Cunha & Joyce Peckman
Friday, June 12.....	Erica Lieberman Garrett
Friday, June 19.....	Rivka & Max Trent
Friday, June 26.....	Donna Bolton

WHAT'S UP AT KJCC

Friday, May 1	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Gloria Avner
Sunday, May 3	10 a.m. Sisterhood Luncheon RSVP to Loni
Friday, May 8	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Joe Shabathai
Sunday, May 10	10 a.m. KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom
Friday, May 15	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Medina Roy & Gloria Avner
Friday, May 22	6 p.m. Shavuot Dinner 7:30 p.m. Yizkor Service led by Judy Starr, Ken Atlas & Gloria Avner Bernie Ginsberg Memorial
Thursday, May 28	12:30 p.m. Sisterhood Book Club
Friday, May 29	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Michael Kaufman & Joyce Peckman
Friday, Jun 5	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by M'liss Regent Cunha & Joyce Peckman
Friday, June 12	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Erica Lieberman Garrett
Sunday, June 14	10 a.m. KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom
Friday, June 19	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Rivka & Max Trent
Thursday, June 25	12:30 p.m. Sisterhood Book Club
Friday, June 26	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Donna Bolton

ONEG SPONSORS

We are grateful to all of our members who choose to honor or remember a loved one with a gift of funds that will share food--a small after services party.

May 1	..... Jeff & Cheryl Margulies • Celebrating Cheryl's Birthday
May 1	..... Roy & Elizabeth Pollack • Celebrating Linda Pollack's Birthday
May 8	..... Bill & Michelle Voorhies • Celebrating KJCC Hospitality
May 15	..... Roy & Elizabeth Pollack • Celebrating Madelyn Pollack's Birthday
May 15	..... Medina Roy • Celebrating Medina's Birthday
May 22	..... Beth Horowitz • Celebrating KJCC Sisterhood & Fellowship
May 22	..... Richard & Mimi Bentolila • Sponsoring Shavuot Dinner in Honor of Mimi's Birthday
May 29	..... Joyce Peckman • In Memory of Leslie Peckman
June 5	..... Roy & Elizabeth Pollack • Celebrating Elizabeth's Birthday
June 5	..... Rivka Rizzo Trent • Celebrating Grandmother Hilda DaCosta's Birthday
June 12	..... Gloria Avner • Celebrating Marc Avner's Birthday
June 12	..... Nadine Thompson • Celebrating Sara's Birthday
June 19	..... Sandra St Germain
June 26	..... Sisterhood



Happy Birthday!



May

1st	Cheryl Margulies
2nd	Barney Coltman
4th	Laura Leigh Tallent
7th	Murray Rapoport
8th	Aaron Krumbein
11th	Richard Agler
12th	Madelyn Ruby Pollack
12th	Nyan Feder
13th	Marc Grobman
13th	Rose Marie Casey
14th	Bernie Ginsberg
14th	John Temkin
14th	Medina Roy
16th	Ellen Krumbein
18th	Aron Gregory Zakharin
23rd	Jenny Margulies
23rd	Jules Seder
23rd	Nettie Seder
24th	Mimi Bentolila
25th	Matthew Birnbaum
26th	Aaron Bressler
27th	Alan Beth
28th	Laura Duman
28th	Mary Roth
29th	Abby Ceclia Zakharin
29th	Robin Forman
30th	Sandra St Germain
31st	Judy Starr
31st	Wes Conklin

June

2nd	Barbara Osder
2nd	Myra Kaplan
3rd	Abraham Rakov
3rd	Elanor Forbes
3rd	Shanti Cope
4th	Alex Kaufman
5th	Dorothy Wolfe
5th	Sam Weis
5th	Tonya Salomon
6th	Donna Bolton
6th	Suzanne Gilson
7th	Joan P. Wohl
9th	Renee Brodie
12th	Mark Avner
13th	Jeff Miller
13th	Maya Zakharin
14th	Rochelle Hollander
15th	William Bolton
19th	Gregory Zakharin
20th	Harvey Klein
21st	Aaron Quesada
21st	Nancy Hershoff
23rd	Dale Chasteen
23rd	Steve Levine
24th	Delaney Rohde
24th	Sandy Traugott
25th	Jake Benjamin Markowitz
26th	Arthur Plutzer
27th	Frank Emkey
30th	Bob Friedman
30th	Milo Tainow
30th	Tyler Cope



Happy Anniversary

May

14th	Alan & Chely Markowitz	25
21st	Marshall & Myra Kaplan	54
30th	Aaron & Ellen Krumbein	38

June

1st	Joel Bernard & Joan Stark	40
8th	Stephan & Jane Friedman	30
12th	William & Donna Bolton	33
12th	Steven & Jan Hartz	50
19th	Richard & Mindy Agler	50
21st	Alan L. Beth & Candace J. Stanlake	39
23rd	Stuart & Lauren Sax	52
28th	Wes & Rita Conklin	56
29th	Oran Hesterman & Lucinda Kurtz	
29th	Jerry & Betty Small	57

ONGOING PROJECTS AND 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? Contact Shari Carlquist, 305-962-0000 or shari@directflowers.biz to reserve an orchid, bench, brick or tree plaque for posterity.

ONEG SHABBAT/DINNER SPONSOR: An oneg costs only \$72; a dinner is \$360. To schedule your special date with Sisterhood, call Joyce Peckman, 732-447-5225.

CARING KEHILAH/SUNSHINE COMMITTEE: If you know of any member who should receive a get well, congratulations or condolence card from the KJCC, call Loni Ochs, 305-772-2584, or email Dr.LMOCHS@gmail.com or Barbara Knowles, 305-772-0503.

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

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

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 are 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 and Benches: \$125 buys a single brick and \$200 a double brick in our magnificent Meditation Garden walkway, engraved with your personal message. Purchase a beautifully engraved Garden Bench for \$1,000, as your ultimate tribute.

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.

MARCH & APRIL 2026

Yahrzeit

Linda Pollack
Dr. Robert Temkin
Myra & Marshall Kaplan
Kathy & Joe Shabathai
Don & Margo Walker
Mindy & Richard Agler
Pam Friedman
Dottie & Larry Wolfe
Gerri & Frank Emkey
Mimi & Richard Bentolila
Joyce Peckman
Melissa Katz

Donation to March 8 Concert

Dr. Sam Goldberg
Steve & Joan Jacobs
Michael & Lorena Kaufman
Michelle & David Voorheis
Marcia Kreitman

General Donations

Elaine Schulberg Purim Raffle
Jan & Steve Hartz
Donna Kemper & Ron Zlotoff KJCC fellowship

— SISTERHOOD DONATIONS —

Women's Seder Tikkun Olam

Stuart & Gerri Smith
Pat & David Vanartsdalen
Steve & Jan Hartz
Medina Roy
Rita Rzepka
Beth Horowitz
Adam & Judy Starr

In Honor/Memory of

Arnold & Tina Klein
Linda Perloff
Martin Kaufman
Rochelle Hollander
Terry Willner Tainow
Elaine Schulberg
Barney Coltman
Mindy Agler
Michelle Diener
Chely Markowitz

Women's Seder Raffle Item Donations

Gloria Avner
Marcia Kreitman
John David Hawver
Erica Lieberman Garrett
Samantha Simpson
Loni Ochs
Joyce Peckman
Randy Klein Gross

Dinner Sponsorships

Mimi & Richard Bentolila Shavuot Dinner

Oneg Sponsorships

Ken & Tonya Salomon Lily's Bat Mitzvah
Jules & Nettie Seder 60th anniversary
Marc Grobman & Lu Hildalgo In honor of their
parents & grandparents
Michelle & Bill Voorheis KJCC Fellowship
Nadine Thompson Sara's Birthday &
Mother Mickey's 101st Birthday

General Donations

Anonymous
Judy & Adam Starr Lily Salomon's Bat Mitzvah



In Memoriam – May 2026

Carol Steinberg

by Richard Agler & Mindy Agler

Virginia Schuessler

by Richard Bentolila
& Mimi Bentolila

Rose Roazen

by Sylvia Berman

Leo Blitzer

by Murray Blitzer & Bev Blitzer

Carlos Cartagena

by Maria Cartagena

Becky Kanowsky

by Wes Conklin & Rita Conklin

Sam Hitzig

by Wes Conklin & Rita Conklin

Joseph Huppert

by Craig Cope & Shanti Cope

Alex Perl

by Gerri Emkey & Frank Emkey

Gertrude Weisberg

by Gerri Emkey & Frank Emkey

Carmel Catanese

by Jane Friedman

Violet Itkin Rosenberg

by Arthur Itkin

Judith Rita Kaminstein

by Beth Kaminstein

Max Tuchman

by Marshall Kaplan & Myra Kaplan

Harold Kaufman

by Martin Kaufman

Leo Wolynetz

by Erica Lieberman Garrett

Morris Kornbloom

by Erica Lieberman Garrett

Bernard Plutzer

by Arthur Plutzer

Brian Sheridan

by Carol Rose

Moshe Sages

by Joni Sages & Robert Dandrea

Lilyan Sax

by Stuart Sax & Lauren Sax

Robert W. Singer

by Mary Lee Singer

Susan Cimkowski

by Stephen Steinbock
& Rosemary Barefoot

Ida S. Reider

by Muriel Swartz

Phillip Temkin

by Robert Temkin


Benjamin Weber

by Judith Weber

Martha Greenberg

by Larry Wolfe & Dorothy Wolfe





In Memoriam – June 2026

David Gitin

by Gloria Avner

Samuel Segal

by Paul Bernstein
& Barbara Bernstein

Louis R. Coltman

by Barnet O. Coltman

Bea Ginsberg

by Bernard Ginsberg

Sara Pittler Kurtz

by Oran Hesterman
& Lucinda Kurtz

Samuel Horn

by Susan Horn & Dot Brooking

Dorothy Kaufman

by Martin Kaufman

Celestina Bravo-Mendez

by Michael S. Kaufman &
Lorena I. Kaufman

Emilia Mendez

by Michael S. Kaufman
& Lorena I. Kaufman

Lucy Kaufman

by Michael S. Kaufman
& Lorena I. Kaufman

Ruth Rosen

by Michael S. Kaufman
& Lorena I. Kaufman

Tina Silverstein

by Randy Klein-Gross

Jacob Maxwell Klimpl

by Michael Klimpl

Arthur Klimpl

by Michael Klimpl

Diane Topping

by Marla Koche

Max Margulies

by Jeff Margulies
& Cheryl Margulies

Fred Doellefeld

by Jeff Margulies
& Cheryl Margulies

Marshall Berkson

by Barry Neumann & Ellen Ecker

Leslie Peckman

by Joyce Peckman

Irving Plutzer

by Arthur Plutzer

Mickey Beitscher

by Carol Rose

Harold Rosenthal

by Ed Rosenthal &
Mindy Rosenthal

Carl Roy

by Medina Roy

Jan Finer

by Stuart Sax & Lauren Sax

Wally Steinberg

by Lei Steinberg

Candi Steinbock

by Stephen Steinbock
& Rosemary Barefoot

Leonard Tobin

by Andrew M. Tobin

Mark White

by Susan White

Rose Fine

by Larry Wolfe & Dorothy Wolfe





**KEYS JEWISH
COMMUNITY CENTER**
Congregation Ohr HaYam
Cathy Kaplan Sisterhood

Friday, May 22, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

SHAVUOT

Counting of the Omer is ending.
We celebrate the giving of the Torah.

JOIN US at the KJCC

for a

Shavuot Dairy Potluck Dinner Celebration.

Contact Joyce Peckman at

732-447-5225

joycepeckman@gmail.com

**to RSVP and coordinate your veggie
or dairy dish**



Sponsored by Mimi and Richard Bentolila

No charge for dinner

Shabbat and Yizkor Service

will follow at 7:30 p.m.

WORLD JEWISH REPORT

Medina Roy



“I am a Jew”

In early March, an American soldier who is credited with saving the lives of 200 Jewish comrades in a Prisoner of War camp in Germany during World War II has received the United States military’s highest decoration, the Medal of Honor. Master Sergeant Roddy Edmonds, who died in 1985, was the recipient. Edmonds, a sergeant from Knoxville, Tennessee, was the highest-ranking soldier among a group taken prisoner during the Battle of the Bulge in 1945. When the Nazis asked him to identify the Jews in the group, Edmonds knew that anyone he identified would likely be killed and so he made the decision to have all the soldiers present themselves as Jews. When a Nazi challenged him, he announced, “We are all Jews here!” This show of solidarity only became known after Edmonds’ death. In 2008, a Jewish soldier who was among the prisoners at the camp shared his recollections with the New York Times as part of a totally unrelated story. Several years later, Edmonds’ family came across the article. It was the first time they had heard about the incident. That’s when they began to campaign for a Medal of Honor.

On International Holocaust Remembrance Day in 2016 during remarks at the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C., President Obama said, “I cannot imagine a greater expression of Christianity than to say, I, too, am a Jew.”

In 2015, Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust Memorial, recognized Edmonds as a “Righteous Among the Nations” for his bravery. And in 2019 President Trump recounted the story at the New York City Veterans Day Parade.

Edmonds’ son Chris attended the Medal of Honor ceremony on behalf of his father. (www.jpost.com, 2-23-26)

Israel Prize 5786

Chantal Belzberg, founder of OneFamily, has been chosen to receive the Israel Prize of Lifetime Achievement for 5786 in recognition of her excep-

tional contribution to Israeli society and the State of Israel. OneFamily is Israel’s national organization supporting bereaved families and wounded Israelis affected by terror and war. Yoav Kisch, Israel’s Minister of Education, announced the award. “What distinguishes the organization is its uniquely holistic, family-centered model: OneFamily is the only organization in Israel that addresses every circle of bereavement and injury within a family, including parents, siblings, widows, widowers and orphans, treating each family as a whole in need of emotional, social and financial support not only in moments of crisis, but throughout life.”

OneFamily was founded in 2001 in the aftermath of a Palestinian suicide bombing at a Sbarro Pizzeria in downtown Jerusalem which killed sixteen people, including seven children and a pregnant woman. An additional 130 people were wounded. The attack occurred during the Second Intifada. Today, OneFamily supports more than 20,000 people from across Israeli society, providing sustained multi-layered care including the ongoing daily accompaniment families need long after public attention has moved on. In response to the announcement that she has been selected for the award Belzberg said, “...The prize is, first and foremost...an embrace for the thousands of families who continue to carry this country, even when their hearts are broken.”

Chantal Belzberg was born in Antwerp, Belgium in 1966. She immigrated to Israel with her family in 1991 settling in Jerusalem. From the beginning, she was known for her activism, deeply concerned for others’ well-being. The turning point in her life happened in 2001, following that devastating terrorist attack. The bombing took place on her daughter Michal’s 12th birthday, just three weeks before her scheduled bat mitzvah celebration. Facing a national tragedy, Chantal and her husband Marc decided to cancel the event and redirect all

the funds set aside for the celebration to help the victims' families; a single act of compassion that grew into a national organization.

The Israel Prize is considered the State of Israel's highest and most prestigious civilian honor. It has been awarded since 1953 and is presented each year in a state ceremony on Independence Day. This year's ceremony took place on April 22nd in Jerusalem. (www.israelnationalnews.com, 3-26-26)

“A Black Day for the State of Israel”

In a preliminary vote in February, the Knesset, Israel's 120-member parliament, backed a bill (56-47) that would effectively prohibit egalitarian prayer at Jerusalem's Western Wall by giving the Chief Rabbinate the authority to determine what types of prayer practices are allowed at holy sites. This does not necessarily mean that the bill, which was introduced by Avi Maoz, leader of the far-right fundamentalist Noam party, will ultimately become a law. It still needs three additional votes for it to pass. If enacted, prayer practices associated with the largest denominations of American Jewry could be punishable by a prison sentence of up to seven years. *The Women of the Wall*, the multidenominational feminist prayer group, said the bill's advancement is a “black day for the state of Israel.” This decision underscores the strength of Israel's right wing voting bloc and is alarming advocates for pluralism, including many American Jewish leaders.

Yizhar Hess, vice chair of the *World Zionist Organization*, said the day would “always be remembered as a dark day in the history of Zionism and the nation-state of the Jewish people.” Hess called on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to intervene against the legislation. “Fifty-six MKs (members of the Knesset) raised their hands and told millions of Jews worldwide they have no place at our holiest site,” Hess said. “How could it be that the only Western democracy without freedom of religion for Jews could be the Jewish state?”

Anna Kislanski, CEO of the *Israel Movement for Reform and Progressive Judaism* said, “The bill advanced by MK Maoz... seeks to determine that the manner in which Jews who do not pray according to his interpretation practice their faith is illegal, effectively barring them from the stones of the holiest site of the Jewish people.” She added: “Judaism that is confident in itself does not require police enforcement or criminal penalties to safeguard its sanctity. When religious disagreement becomes a criminal offense, the issue is no longer holiness but control.”

In a post on Facebook, the Women of the Wall organization wrote: “This is a day that will be remembered as the moment the state sent a clear message to millions of Jews in Israel around the world: You are not welcome in the Jewish people's holiest site if your prayer does not align with the Rabbinat's interpretation...” (www.haaretz.com, 2-25-26)

2025 Antisemitic Attacks

According to a recent study from Tel Aviv University, the number of fatalities from antisemitic attacks reached their highest level in 2025 in over three decades. Twenty people were killed in four attacks over three continents. These attacks included those in Sydney, Australia, Washington DC, Boulder, Colorado, and Manchester, England. This marks the highest number of deadly attacks since the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires which killed 85 people. Vandalism and verbal harassment fell in many countries but violent attacks against Jews, including beatings and stone-throwing, increased in many places. Overall, the total number of antisemitic incidents increased to 1,727 in 2024 compared to 1,200 incidents in 2023 and 472 in 2022. “The data raise concern that a high level of antisemitic incidents is becoming a normalized reality,” Uriya Shavit, the study's editor-in-chief, said. “The peak in the number of incidents was recorded in the immediate aftermath of the October 7 attack...”

Tel Aviv University releases these studies every year in conjunction with Yom HaShoah, the Jewish Holocaust Memorial Day. “Offenders align with two main ideological orientations,” the study's authors wrote. “They are predominantly Christian white supremacists or Muslims who apply antisemitism as a response to grievances about Middle Eastern political developments.” The authors of the study wrote that the most worrisome phenomenon of the past year has been the “normalization of antisemitic rhetoric in American political discourse,” writing that President Donald Trump “had tolerated, as no contemporary president has, deep-seated, loathsome antisemites within his camp, and continues to do so for cynical political reasons.” The presence of antisemitic rhetoric within Trump's Republican Party has been a source of tension within the party for months. “The result is a new culture of everything –goes that is undermining the sense that Jews have had for decades that their future in America is secure,” the study's authors wrote. (www.jta.org, 4-13 -26)

“Remember a Child”

Dozens of families at Temple Beth El in West Palm Beach, Florida, have “adopted” child victims to memorialize as their own. Every week, shortly before Shabbat morning services end, something unusual happens as the congregation prepares to recite the Mourner’s Kaddish. Alan Bell, the synagogue’s Rabbi, asks all those who are observing a *yahrzeit* and about to recite the prayer on the anniversary of the death of a loved one, to stand. He also asks other congregants to stand as well: those who have taken it upon themselves to recite the Kaddish for a child up to the age of 17 who was murdered in the Holocaust and for whom there is no living relatives remaining to say it. The Conservative synagogue calls this program “Remember a Child,” and at least a third of the members of this 150-family congregation participate. Rabbi Bell and his wife Susan have “adopted” a girl named Renee Albersheim who was born in 1930 in Berlin. They do not know when she died, only that it was in the Kovno Ghetto in German-occupied Lithuania.

Cheryl Finkelstein, who steered the project for many years, said she noticed that those who participated tended to take the project very seriously and grow deeply connected to the child they committed to remembering. One woman bought “aging” software and used it on a photo of the child she had “adopted” to see what the child would have looked like as an adult. Ari Rabinovitch, leader of *Yad Vashem’s* international media section, said the names of the children murdered in the Holocaust and for whom there is no one to say Kaddish are kept in the organizations online names database, which has 587,226 names of children up to and including age 17. “It takes a toll on you when you do the research and learn what happened to each of these children.”

Menachem Rosensaft, general counsel emeritus of the *World Jewish Congress* who was born in 1948 to survivors of Auschwitz and Bergen Belsen, is an outspoken advocate for such a commemoration. “It’s important in whatever way to bring into our consciousness that we are not letting it become just another event in Jewish history, just another occurrence, just another tragedy, just another pogrom,” Rosensaft added. “Because if that happens, in another generation the Holocaust will be a statistic and basically a catchphrase for people to throw around.”

Cheryl Finkelstein said she knew of at least one case where “Remember a Child” is likely to have impact into the next generation. One congregant who

adopted a child murdered by the Nazis “put in his will that his son was to say Kaddish for the child after he dies,” she said. “He put the instructions in the safe deposit box so that his son would take them out along with the keys to the house.”

The Nazis murdered an estimated 1.5 million Jewish children during the Holocaust, many of whom died alongside everyone else in their family. That left no one to recite the Mourners Kaddish on their behalf – no siblings or parents.” (www.sun-sentinel.com, 4-16-26)

Did You Know...

Tennessee recently passed a bill banning the use of the words “West Bank” in official state documents, preferring to use the biblical names, “Judea and Samaria.” Governor Bill Lee is expected to sign the bill into law, applying the mandate to state educational materials including textbooks and course descriptions. “The use of the term ‘West Bank’ is a deliberate attempt to erase the Jewish identity of Judea and Samaria,” the bill reads, “and to obscure the deep historical, religious, and legal connections of the Jewish people to the land.” This is part of a broader push by Republicans to recognize Israel’s claim to land widely considered unlawfully occupied under international law. Last year, House Republicans launched the “Friends of Judea and Samaria Caucus,” a group of Christian lawmakers who support Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank. Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Oklahoma, Utah and West Virginia have introduced similar legislation this year as well as other states working to pass similar bills. Yossi Dagan, head of Israel’s Shomron Regional Council, has spent years building support among American evangelicals to formally recognize Judea and Samaria. “The lie about the ‘West Bank’ or ‘occupied territory’ must end,” he said. “We must put the truth on the table: Judea and Samaria are the heart of Israel.” Jason Rapert, founder of the National Association of Christian Lawmakers and a former Arkansas state senator said, “Eighty percent of the Bible stories that we read occurred in Judea Samaria. Can you imagine someone not wanting to call Tennessee, ‘Tennessee?’”

The region was not known as the “West Bank” until around 1950 after Jordan annexed the area, a move the Arab League condemned as illegal at the time. Israel captured the territory in the 1967 War and has administered it since then. Critics of the bill claim that it erases Palestinian presence and claims to the land as well. (Roughly three million Palestinians live in the area, alongside an estimated 465, 400 Israeli settlers.) (www.forward.com, 4-22-26) ◇

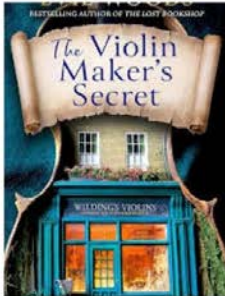


KJCC SISTERHOOD BOOK CLUB



May 28, 2026 *The Violin Maker's Secret* by Evie Woods

June 25, 2026 *The Book of Longings* by Sue Monk Kidd



A MAGICAL REALISM NOVEL ABOUT A RARE VIOLIN THAT CONNECTS THREE STRANGERS WHO FIND IT IN AN AIRPORT'S LOST AND FOUND. THE STORY FOLLOWS THEIR PRESENT-DAY QUEST TO UNCOVER THE VIOLIN'S HISTORY, WHICH IS INTERWOVEN WITH THE PAST LIVES OF ITS PREVIOUS OWNERS, EXPLORING THEMES OF FATE, MUSIC, FRIENDSHIP, AND FINDING ONE'S PURPOSE.



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QUESTIONS/INPUT: CONTACT LINDA @ 305-587-7429
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LAST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH
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ZOOM AT 12:30

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

*Gentle waves caress,
Beneath a sunlit canvas,
Clouds drift, dreams unfold.*

SISTERHOOD REPORT Loni Ochs



Sisterhood has had an epically busy season with many festive dinners, fundraisers and our new outreach program, with more to come! Much of our mishpocha will be leaving soon to escape the heat on our rock for the summer, but for those of us who stay in the Keys, there will be plenty to do.

Our main fundraising event of this season was Jan Price's classical piano concert. We experienced 19th century parlor life through Jan's period ballgowns, intimate stories and pictures of the time, and of course some of Chopin's favorite foods. I'm still dreaming of the candied orange peels dipped in the chocolate fountain! A huge thank you to Jan for all her hard work and for sharing her abundant musical talents with us.

Our annual women's Seder is always such a heartfelt event. We honored Nadine Thompson as our Women of the year, she inspires us with her boundless energy, kindness and willingness to give. Nadine has been donating her time and effort for the benefit of the KJCC for many years. Our dedication to Tikkun Olam is always a central theme for the women's seder and we raised over four thousand dollars for our 3 charities, the Talia Agler Girls Shelter, the Florida Keys Healthy Start Program, and Belev Echad. After a delicious meal, the ladies burned some calories dancing and laughing with our tambourines around the shul in true Miriam fashion. The art tapestry project begun by Marcia Krietman years ago is now up to five panels. This year we took it down a bit early to make room for Lily Saloman's bat mitzvah, (another festive event) but next year we plan to leave it displayed until Passover so all can enjoy the love and history. Thanks to all the ladies who cooked, baked, schlepped, donated, organized and cleaned up. You know who you are, and I am most grateful for all your efforts.

The First Night Community Seder is a wonderful time at the KJCC. We packed in 58 people with a wait list. Thank you to Joe Shabathai and Susan Gordon for leading our Haggadah service. Susan got her steps in managing the crowd! As our congregation continues to expand and evolve, we will be investigating outside venues to host our seder for next year. There's a committee for that! Having to turn people away from the seder was heartbreaking and not who we are. Out-growing our social hall is a good problem to have!

Up and coming, we will be grilling and chilling at our

annual Shabbaque dinner. Show your patriotic spirit with your red, white & blue fashion! Hamburgers and hot dogs are on the menu for Friday, July 3rd at the KJCC starting at 6pm, followed by services. You will find the flyer for the Shabbaque in this issue of Chai-Lights. Please Rsvp to Susan Gordon 305-766-3585 susangordon424@yahoo.com to coordinate your dish.

The counting of the Omer is ending...come celebrate the giving of the Torah at the KJCC on Friday May 22, at 6pm for a Shavuot dairy potluck dinner celebration. Shabbat and yizkor service will follow at 7:30pm. As always, there is no charge for dinner. Please contact Joyce Peckman 732-447-5225 joycepeckman@gmail.com.

The Sisterhood Book Club's next meeting will be April 30th at the home of M'liss Regent-Cunha. Discussion will be the book *The Trade Off*, by Samantha Greene Woodruff. A brilliant and ambitious young woman strives to find her place amid the promise and tumult of 1920's Wall Street in a captivating historical novel. May's selection is *The Violin Maker's Secret* by Evie Woods. A magical realism novel about a rare violin that connects three strangers who find it in an airport's lost and found. The book club meets the final Thursday of the month live and on zoom. Please contact Linda Pollack for more information. 305-587-7429 Lindap4000@ymail.com.

Each week the women of the Sisterhood work hard to ensure that everyone who attends Shabbat services is treated to a bountiful oneg celebration after the prayer service. If you would like to sponsor an oneg in honor of a birthday, anniversary, or any milestone in your life, please contact Joyce Peckman. 732-447-5225 joycepeckman@gmail.com

I encourage all the women of the Sisterhood to connect, participate and grow with us as we head into the summer months. Our next Sisterhood meeting will be our celebratory brunch for a wonderful season on May 3rd at 10am at Lido 63, the Italian restaurant in Tavernier. After that, come out to Founders Park for the Trash Derby. The KJCC will have a booth to do community outreach, and all are welcome to join in the fun.

Wishing you all a relaxing and enjoyable summer!



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JULY 3RD

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From the Committee for Israel
The Passover Seder:
A Key to the Secret of Survival
by Judy Starr

The continuity of the Jewish people over centuries can almost be seen as an anomaly. Conquered and exiled from our homeland, one would think that over time we would have dispersed and disappeared into other groups among or alongside whom we lived. But that is not what happened. We stayed together even after the destruction of the First and then the Second Temple. We stayed together after a centuries-long list of pogroms and other catastrophic events. We did not fade away.

There may be any number of explanations: strong family structure; the emphasis on learning; the yearning for Jerusalem; simply, being Chosen.....But the one that we have taken charge of consciously, that is, we have actively chosen to do, is observing the ritual of remembering and re-telling our story to our children.

It is at the Seder table where the Jewish people gather with family and friends, in a spirit of camaraderie and gratitude, to recount the story of our Exodus. This was the period in our history where we began to come together as a nation bestowed with values, meaning, and purpose. Incidentally, it is also a time where we are abjured from complacency: "In every generation....." We are to take nothing in this material world

for granted.

We remember and we celebrate. We follow in the pattern of those many who have done the same before us, recalling that story which has been carried across time through every prior generation. We then pass it on to the generations yet to be. We are here despite centuries of adversity, our identity preserved, in large part because of what we hold in our group-memory and repeatedly share among family and friends at the Passover table.

In order to survive, every nation needs to teach its children that there is more to a nation's creation and meaning than material manifestations such as fireworks and barbecues and holiday sales. This is something that we, as Jewish people, do.

Maybe it is a lesson, an example available to be adopted by other nations, and even by Western Civilization as a whole. The effect would be to strengthen the will to survive and thrive through even the most difficult challenges. Could that lesson, for those who will receive it, be part of the plan of our purpose?

Regardless, by the grace of the Divine, may we continue the telling until the end of time. ◇

In Loving Memory

Dr. Bernard Ginsberg

Dr. Bernard Ginsberg, a one-time President and long time board member of KJCC passed away just days ago; those of us who knew and loved him here are heartbroken. Bernie was an amazing human being, generous with his diagnostic abilities, his depth of knowledge about Judaism, and his huge vocabulary of Jewish jokes and humorous Yiddish curses. Over his years with us, Bernie loved working with our young students, leading Simchat Torah services, studying conversational Hebrew, and being a key part of the committee for repairing our Holocaust Torah for Torah Dedication Day, at which we all had the opportunity touch the scribes feather quill and fulfill the last commandment, the 613th, to “write a new song.” His memory will truly be a blessing. We will memorialize our much missed and loved Bernie on May 22, after Shavuot and Yizkor services, during the oneg, with a reading of Ruth, Bernie’s favorite scripture, which he loved to call a Jewish Fairy Tale. Join us please.



PHOTO GALLERY

Joyce's granddaughter Michal, celebrated Israel Independence Day near her school in Jerusalem.



Celebrating St Patrick's Day with Susan & the Wee Fib Irish Band at one of their gigs



Shari & Gloria co-lead Shabbat Service



Repair the Sea (Tikkun HaYam) headed up by our very own Rabbi Ed, is offering us the opportunity to have a mangrove tree planted in anyone's honor! Rosemary Ciotti had a mangrove planted in honor of Susan's 70th birthday!



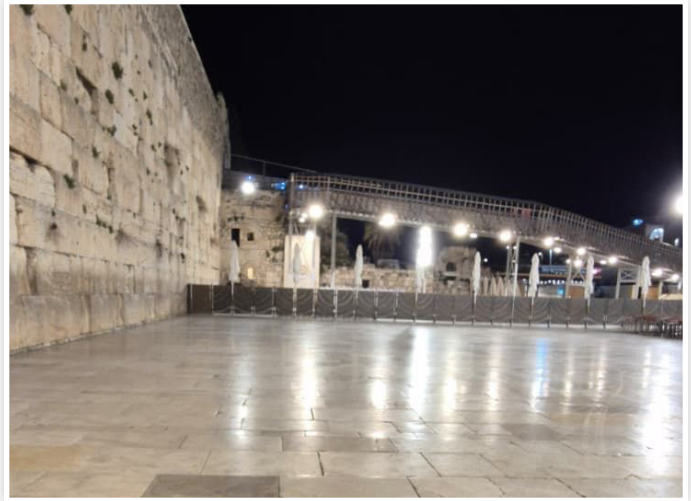
Happy Birthday Jane

Silent Stones

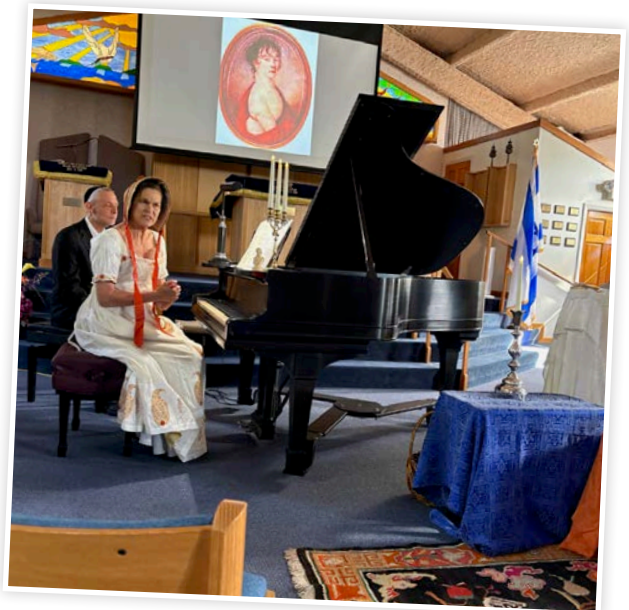
For the first time in recent memory, the Western Wall was completely empty, after Israel's security establishment ordered the closure of Jerusalem's holy sites amid ongoing missile threats from Iran.

Following Home Front Command directives, authorities shut the Temple Mount and the Kotel to all worshippers, an extraordinary step taken to prevent large gatherings and protect lives as the war .

Photo of Western wall, for the first time closed to worshippers. It has since been reopened, and on Independence Day the area was filled with dancing and celebration.



Jan's March 8th Concert fundraiser



Jacob assists Jan with turning pages while Jan performs her one woman show telling stories, wearing authentic handmade costumes, and delighting the audience playing fine classical music on our Steinway, gifted by Beth Hayden of blessed memory.

Community Outreach

We discover more Jews in the Keys and they discover us and our cookbook as we expand our outreach activities. Thank you to Michael Kaufman, Shari Carlquist, Loni Ochs, Jonah Gross, Susan Gordon, Randy Klein Gross and Jake Luria for taking turns manning the tent and giving away hamantaschen.



Lily Salomon's Bat Mitzvah

What an active, multi-talented girl!! We, her KJCC family, are so very proud of her accomplishments.



Lily, with her teacher Joyce Peckman, and her Bat Mitzvah tutor Steve Jacobs, getting ready for her Aliyah.

Reception line with gleaming happy faces once ceremony is over.



Lily, the Bat Mitzvah girl, about to lead kiddush for her oneg.



We happily celebrate Lily at her joyous party.

Congratulations Lily!

Purim Celebration

We love getting dressed up for Purim, reading Megillat Esther, drowning out Haman's name with our noisy groggers, raising money for charity, and having a delicious pastrami and corned beef sandwich meal with all the trimmings, thanks to our generous President Ken Atlas and the cooking skills of Susan Gordon and Màyor Shari C. Big thank yous also to those who donated their art to the fundraiser: Joyce, Gloria, Loni, Randy, a and the Simpson family with gift cards for Lazy Days. A grand success and a commitment to do it again next year.



Community Seder

Community Passover
Seder April 1st



21st annual Women's Seder

This year we celebrated the 21st annual Women's Seder on Sunday March 22 at the Synagogue. 41 women attended including 17 who had not been at one of our women's seder before.

The event began with Marcia Kreitman and Gloria Avner guiding our new attendees on making their unique tapestry squares for the beautiful historical quilt that now spans 21 years, with so many memories of women we have celebrated with. Next year we plan on displaying the quilt for all to see during the Passover Season.

Our meaningful seder service began, and we honored our woman of the past, Susan Gordon, who missed her presentation during our covid seder, and our new honoree, Woman of the year Nadine Thompson.

We ate delicious homemade Passover delicacies all prepared by our guests, and welcomed Elijah as we shook our tambourines and sang joyously.

Rivka led the women through the hall and around the sanctuary as we danced and celebrated Miriam and all the women who have come before us and showed us the path to freedom and strength.

We had a wonderful raffle to raise money for our annual Tik-kun Olam, thanks to Shari Carlquist and Joan Stark for their efforts and to all our members who donated to the beautiful raffle



items. We received many generous donations from our KJCC members in response to the letter that was mailed out which made this fundraising effort extremely successful.

We are pleased to report that this year we raised the most money ever for our 3 charities, the Talia Agler Girls Shelter, The Florida Keys Healthy Start Program, and Belev Echad, an organization for families of soldiers in Israel.

We will be presenting each of the charities with \$1400, which we hope will help in many ways.

Thank you to the 2026 Women's Seder Committee: Erica Lieberman Garrett, Susan Gordon, Gloria Avner, Marcia Kreitman, Joyce Peckman and Joan Stark whose tireless efforts made this one of the most meaningful, abundant and joyful seders ever.



So many new women joined us at the Women's Seder this year--17 new names will be forever with us on our ever growing artistic tablecloth



Samantha Simpson and two of her daughters join new attendees at the 21st annual women's Seder, making artistic colorful nameplates that will be attached to our massive, breathtakingly beautiful tablecloth acknowledging years worth of attendees. Thank you master creator Marcia Kreitman.

Gloria invited her good friend Debi Rialto to join us for the Women's Seder this year. She loved it.



About half of the attendees, enjoying the start of the Seder.

Nadine Thompson, Woman of the year, smiles happily with Joyce Peckman.

21st annual Women's Seder Continued



Congratulations to our two beauties! Nadine Thompson, with her exquisitely hand crocheted "halo" behind her head on the KJCC wall is our "Woman of the Year," selected by this year's Women's Seder Committee. Last year our selection was Susan Gordon, but we did not come together. We are making up for it.



The Passover story tells us to act as if we ourselves were escaping Egypt. So here we are, dancing with our timbrels, following Rivka's Joyous lead. What a great new addition from our energetic Rivka!

Loni's mother dancing with our timbrels at the women's Seder.



Joan Stark presents Susan Gordon with a beautiful orchid in honor of her being awarded Historical woman of the Year at this year's Woman Seder.



Shari is delighted to win a piece of Gloria Avner Art as part of the Women's Seder fundraising. Thank you to our youngest Simpson, Maddy, for picking her ticket.

NEW MOON POEM

by Lucinda Kurtz

New moon of Nissan, we unlock winter doors,
ground ourselves on awakening earth,
delight in yellow crocus pushing through concrete.
We take a deep breath, inhale sweet scents of spring,
trust our vital bodies to stretch their fullest length
stand strong, feet growing roots of courage.

Despite swirling, chaotic chatter,
blaring sirens streaming from screens,
we wave our hands, sing our soul's longing,
declare our truth in this month the Israelites
fled Egypt and found way to freedom.

We are beckoned to navigate
the twisted labyrinth of confusion,
to follow red ball of thread Moses laid,
discover promised path across the Sea
through morass of misinformation,
weeds of division and despair,
muck of malignant motives
to dance with Miriam, arms stretched wide
head thrown back in celebration
as we cry out in the language of love
We Are Free.



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