

Chai~Lights



May 1 - June 30, 2023

10 Iyar - 11 Tammuz, 5783

Passover 5783 Memories — Pages 19-25

Shavuot Celebration! — Pages 12-14

Ready for a Shabbabaque? — Page 28



P.O. Box 1332 • Tavernier, FL 33070 • 305-852-5235 • keysjewishcenter.com

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Services every Friday at 7:30pm	1 MAY Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m.	2	3	4	5 Randy Klein-Gross & Tamir Tencer <i>Ohr HaYam Sisterhood</i>	6
7 Sisterhood Meeting 10 a.m.	8 Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m.	9 Lag B'Omer	10	11	12 Donna Bolton & Joyce Peckman I.CARE cleanup at Bolton home 10 a.m. <i>Roy & Elizabeth Pollack</i>	13 I.CARE Festival at Founders Park 1-8 p.m.
14 KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom 10 a.m. Mother's Day	15 Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m.	16	17	18	19 Jane Friedman & Rivka Rizzo <i>Medina Roy</i>	20
21 Rosh Chodesh Sivan	22 Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m.	23	24	25 Sisterhood Book Club 12:30 p.m. at the home of Elaine Shulberg	26 Shavuot Dinner 6 p.m. Gloria Avner & Linda Pollack, Dvar by Art Itkin <i>Ohr HaYam Sisterhood</i>	27
28	29 Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m. Memorial Day	30	31	1 JUN	2 Joyce Peckman <i>Donna Bolton</i> <i>Donna Bolton & Roy Pollack</i>	3
4 Sisterhood Luncheon at Hobos 12 p.m.	5 Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m.	6	7	8	9 Interfaith Dinner 6 p.m. Rabbi Ed Rosenthal <i>Steve Hartz & Jane Freidman</i>	10
11 KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom 10 a.m.	12 Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m.	13	14	15	16 Ken Atlas & Tamir Tencer, Dvar by Art Itkin <i>Gloria Avner</i>	17
18 Father's Day	19 Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m. Rosh Chodesh Tammuz	20 Rosh Chodesh Tammuz	21 First Day of Summer	22	23 Loni Padden & Erica Lieberman Garrett <i>Ohr HaYam Sisterhood</i>	24
25	26 Drop-in Zoom Chat 2 p.m.	27	28	29 Sisterhood Book Club on Zoom 12:30 p.m.	30 Shabbabeque Independence Day Dinner 6 p.m. <i>Michael Kaufman</i>	Names denote Service leaders. Italicized names are Oneg sponsors.

**2022 - 2023 KJCC
OFFICERS & BOARD**

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Gloria Avner

CHAI-LIGHTS is the
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Keys Jewish Community Center
chailights@keysjewishcenter.com

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
Ken Atlas



**March and April have been busy
but pleasant months.**

Pretty much everything has been connected to food in some way. Our Purim and Pastrami Dinner was a fun and yummy night. It was my first Purim event at KJCC, and was so much fun, I’ve decided to plan for a Purim & Pastrami 2 for next year. If you missed the first one, I highly recommend planning on the next.

As I write this, Passover has just completed. It too was a very tasty night (our KJCC Seder). So much chopped liver. I’ve started to dream that’s what I’ve become. But who can protest that.

The highlight was the kids finding the afikomen and the winner

wanting to donate his prize back to us. It may only have been \$5, but it shows what a great kid he is. I’m still trying to decide if I prefer matzah or challah! Add chocolate and the matzah definitely wins.

As we go through spring, and near summer, we will have another event I’m very proud of. We will be inviting clergy from all over the Upper Keys to join us for an inter-faith dinner and service. I believe they are our partners in this community, and that it’s important to learn from each other. The service will be lead by Rabbi Ed of Scubi Jews fame, with other guests. ◇

Shabbat Service Leaders

May 5	Randy Klein Gross & Tamir Tencer
May 12	Donna Bolton & Joyce Peckman
May 19	Jane Friedman & Rivka Rizzo
May 26	Gloria Avner & Linda Pollack • Dvar by Art Itkin
June 2	Joyce Peckman
June 9	Rabbi Ed Rosenthal
June 16	Ken Atlas & Tamir Tencer • Dvar by Art Itkin
June 23	Loni Padden & Erica Lieberman Garrett

WHAT'S UP AT KJCC

May & June 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. Contact Steve Hartz
Friday, May 5	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Randy Klein-Gross & Tamir Tencer
Sunday, May 7	10 a.m. Sisterhood Meeting
Tuesday, May 9	Lag B'Omer
Friday, May 12	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Donna Bolton & Joyce Peckman 10 a.m. I.CARE Cleanup at Bolton home
Saturday, May 13	1-8 p.m. I.CARE Festival at Founders Park
Sunday, May 14	10 a.m. KJCC Board meeting on Zoom. • Mother's Day
Friday, May 19	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Jane Friedman & Rivka Rizzo
Sunday, May 21	Rosh Chodesh Sivan
Thursday, May 25	12:30 p.m. Sisterhood Book Club at Elaine Shulberg's
Friday, May 26	6 p.m. Shavuot Dinner 7:30 p.m. Shabbat & Yizkor Service led by Gloria Avner & Linda Pollack Dvar by Art Itkin
Monday, May 29	Memorial Day
Friday, June 2	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Joyce Peckman
Sunday, June 4	12:00 p.m. Sisterhood Luncheon at Hobos
Friday, June 9	6 p.m. Interfaith Dinner 7:30 p.m. Service led by Rabbi Ed Rosenthal
Sunday, June 11	10 a.m. KJCC Board Meeting on Zoom
Friday, June 16	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Ken Atlas & Tamir Tencer • Dvar by Art Itkin
Sunday, June 18	Fathers' Day
Monday, June 19	Rosh Chodesh Tammuz
Tuesday June 20	Rosh Chodesh Tammuz
Wednesday, June 21	First Day of Summer
Friday, June 23	7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service led by Loni Padden & Erica Lieberman Garrett
Thursday, June 29	12:30 p.m. Sisterhood Book Club on Zoom
Friday, June 30	6 p.m. Shabbabeque Independence Day Dinner 7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service

NOSH

May is Jewish American Heritage Month

KJCC Congregation Ohr HaYam will participate with an exhibit at the Key Largo Library. Look for our display in the small glass cabinet. The library, which has become a true community resource under the guidance of manager Christina Teasley, is open from 9–6 Monday through Friday, until 8 p.m. Weds, and until 5 p.m. Saturday. .

I.CARE Trash Derby • May 12 – 13

KJCC is joining the I.CARE TRASH DERBY organized by the National Marine Sanctuary! We will organize a trash clean-up 10 a.m. on Friday May 12, then on Saturday May 13th 1–8 p.m. join the festival at Founder's Park. There will be music, prizes and vendors at the park. Contact Randy Klein-Gross at 310-702-7276 to join the team and learn more.

Sisterhood Book Club

Thank you to Cynthia and Joyce for hosting the March and April discussions. It is always enjoyable to meet in person, even better when lunch is involved. After several months of fantasy, we return to the subject of WWII. On Thursday, May 25th at 12:30 at Elaine Shulberg's home, we will discuss "*The Paris Library*" by Janet Skeslien Charles. (We do not yet have a meeting place.) This engaging novel, which moves between time periods, is based upon the true story of the heroic librarians at the American Library under Nazi occupation. On Thursday, June 29th, under the leadership of Beth Hayden, who knew the author, we will discuss "*Shadows Walking*" by Douglas Skopp. Contact Linda Pollack at Lindap4000@ymail.com for further information and to be placed on the Zoom list. See the flyer on page 10.

Interfaith Dinner • Friday, June 9

We will be hosting an interfaith Shabbat dinner on Friday, June 9th to which will be invited faith

leaders of the Upper Keys community. This will be followed by a Shabbat service led by Rabbi Ed Rosenthal. We are hoping that this will rekindle the strong interfaith dialogue that enriched the community in previous years. Thank you to Linda Kaplan for sponsoring this event.

Shabbabeque • Friday June 30

We will celebrate Independence Day with our annual Shabbabeque on Friday June 30th at 5:30. Join us for hamburgers, hot dogs and veggie burgers with the fixing before our Shabbat service. Thank you, Erica Lieberman Garrett for volunteering to coordinate. RSVP to hippiejap@hotmail.com. See the flyer on page 24

Construction Zone

We are in the process of getting new steel hurricane doors installed at KJCC, along with security fencing. We already have an updated alarm and video system. This has been a long and arduous process, which began four years ago when Beth Hayden, Steve Hartz and Linda Kaplan applied for a security grant from FEMA. Since then, they along with Susan Gordon, Donna Bolton and Joyce Peckman, have put untold hours into seeing it through. A shout-out to Lorena Kaufman who has recently come to the rescue, dealing with some of the contractors. We are hopeful that soon you will all enjoy our secure updated facility. ◇

Leaf on the tree of life:

To Honor Toby Goldfinger

– Always Remembered Lovingly,
Linda Pollack 2023

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 Loni Padden 305-772-2584 or email at dr.padden@yahoo.com.

CARING KEHILAH/SUNSHINE COMMITTEE: If you know of any member who should receive a get well, congratulations, condolence card, or phone call from the KJCC, call Lonie Padden, 305-772-2584, or email dr.padden@yahoo.com.

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.

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.

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 2023

Yahrzeit

Laurie Blum & Gary Margolis Janet Blum
Annie Kleinfeldt Bernstein

Medina Roy Bianka Kirschenbaum

Joe & Kathy Shabathai Sally Shabathai

Nadine Thompson Hebert Frankel
& Miriam Frankel

Marshall & Myra Kaplan Gertrude Kaplan
Monroe Kaplan
Luba Tuchman

Linda Pollack Joel Pollack

Joan & Milton Wohl

Maryann Charlap Azzato E Paul Azzato

Frank Rose Cissie Rose Lang
Rene Rose

Laurie Blum Arlene Sugarman Margolis
& Gary Margolis

Joel & Mary Roth Trudy Roth

Larry & Dorothy Wolfe Martha Greenberg

Gerri & Frank Emkey Gertrude Weisberg
Alex Perl

Nadine Thompson Larry Ira Frankel
& Miriam Frankel

Erica Lieberman Garrett Morris Kornbloom
Leo Wolynetz

Robert Temkin Phillip Temkin

Jeff & Cheryl Margulies Max Margulies

Unrestricted

Curtis Pearson In Memory of Toby Goldfinger

Stephen Harris Hello to Everyone

KJCC Purim Collection

In Honor/Memory of

Sara Cohen Memorial Tzeddakah Fund

Lynn Nobil Honoring Parents Sara & Joel Cohen
Sisterhood Women's Seder

Other

Lynn Nobil Sisterhood

Leaf on the Tree of Life

Rita & Harry Rzepka Toby Goldfinger

Meditation Garden

Mindy & Rich Agler Carol Steinberg

— SISTERHOOD DONATIONS —

Dinner Sponsorships

Lynn Nobil Shavuot Dinner May 26

Linda Kaplan Interfaith Dinner June 9

Kaufman Family Shabbabaque

Oneg Sponsorships

Celebrating

Roy & Elizabeth Pollack Elizabeth's Birthday

Jane & Steve Friedman Their Anniversary

Kathy & Joe Shabathai Joe's Birthday
Kathy's Birthday
Their anniversary

Gloria Avner Her Brother Mark's Birthday

In Memoriam – May 2023

Carol Steinberg

By Richard & Mindy Agler

Sam Hitzig

By Wes & Rita Conklin

Michael Brooks

By Lynn Dils

Bea Ginsberg

By Bernard Ginsberg

Max Margulies

By Jeff & Cheryl Margulies

Rene Rose

By Frank Rose

Robert W. Singer

By Mary Lee Singer

Rose Roazen

By Sylvia Berman

Moshe Sages

By Robert Dandrea & Joni Sages

Gertrude Weisberg

By Gerri & Frank Emkey

Morris Kornbloom

By Erica Lieberman Garrett

Leslie Peckman

By Joyce Peckman

Lilyan Sax

By Stuart & Lauren Sax

Sam Wainer

By Richard & Sheila Steinberg

Carlos Cartagena

By Maria Cartagena

Clara Brooks

By Lynn Dils

Alex Perl

By Gerri & Frank Emkey

Leo Wolynetz

By Erica Lieberman Garrett

Maryann Sandusky

By Frank Rose

Robert Schur

By Lee Schur

Susan Cimkowski

By Stephen Steinbock &
Rosemary Barefoot

Phillip Temkin

By Robert Temkin

Benjamin Weber

By Judith Weber

Martha Greenberg

By Larry & Dorothy Wolfe

Anniversaries

May		Years
14th	Alan & Chely Markowitz	22
21st	Marshall & Myra Kaplan	51
June		
1st	Joel Bernard & Joan Stark	37
5th	Erica Lieberman Garrett & Ron Garrett	29
7th	Richard & Sheila Steinberg	64
8th	Stephan & Jane Friedman	27
12th	Steven & Jan Hartz	47
12th	William & Donna Bolton	30
19th	Richard & Mindy Agler	47
21st	Alan L. Beth & Candace J. Stanlake	36
23rd	Stuart & Lauren Sax	49
28th	Wes & Rita Conklin	53
28th	Lloyd & Rae Wruble	54
29th	Oran Kurtz & Lucinda Hesterman	
29th	Jerry & Betty Small	54

In Memoriam – June 2023

David Gitin

By Gloria Avner

Abraham L. Blumenfeld

By Marvin A. Blumenfeld

Sooner Brooks-Heath

By Lynn Dils

Andrew Hutchison

By Susan Horn & Dot Brooking

Les Reitman

By Marshall & Myra Kaplan

Ruth Rosen

By Michael & Lorena Kaufman

Jacob Maxwell Klimpl

By Michael Klimpl

Samuel Segal

By Paul & Barbara Bernstein

Laura Bofshever

By Joel & Toby Bofshever

Sharon Grossinger

By Gary & Laurie Grossinger

Samuel Horn

By Susan Horn & Dot Brooking

Lucy Kaufman

By Michael & Lorena Kaufman

Emilia Mendez

By Michael & Lorena Kaufman

Fred Doellefeld

By Jeff & Cheryl Margulies

Leo Blitzer

By Murray Blitzer & Bev Strumor-Blitzer

Louis R. Coltman

By Barnet O. Coltman

Irwin Grossinger

By Gary & Laurie Grossinger

Max Tuchman

By Marshall & Myra Kaplan

Celestina Bravo-Mendez

By Michael & Lorena Kaufman

Arthur Klimpl

By Michael Klimpl

Morris Rose

By Frank Rose

Jean Shaw

By Frank Rose

Leon Kirschenbaum

By Medina Roy

Candi Steinbock

By Stephen Steinbock &
Rosemary Barefoot

Rose Fine

By Larry & Dorothy Wolfe

Milton Lang

By Frank Rose

Jan Finer

By Stuart & Lauren Sax

Leonard Tobin

By Andrew M. Tobin

Carl Roy

By Medina Roy

Wally Steinberg

By Richard & Sheila Steinberg

Mark White

By Susan White

ONEG SPONSORS

May 5 Ohr HaYam Sisterhood
May 12 Roy & Elizabeth Pollack
Celebrating Madelyn's Birthday
May 19 Medina Roy
Celebrating her 75th birthday
with Israeli food!
May 26 Ohr HaYam Sisterhood
June 2 Donna Bolton
Celebrating Her Birthday
Roy Pollack
Celebrating Elizabeth Pollack's Birthday

June 9 Steve Hartz
Celebrating His Anniversary
Jane Freidman
Celebrating Her Anniversary
June 16 Gloria Avner
Celebrating Her Brother
Mark's Birthday
June 23 Ohr HaYam Sisterhood
June 30 Michael Kaufman
Celebrating His Birthday

Birthdays

May

1st.....Cheryl Margulies
2nd.....Barney Coltman
4th Laura Leigh Tallent
5th Richard Palacino
7thMurray Rapoport
7thSkyler Bella Strasser
8th Sidney Boruszak
9th Camden James Hudson
9th Gary Margolis
9th Reid Schur
11thRichard Agler
11thSheila R. Steinberg
12th Madelyn Ruby Pollack
12th Nyan Feder
13thRose Marie Casey
14th Bernie Ginsberg
14thJohn Temkin
14thMedina Roy
15th Paul R. Schur
18th Jaime Brennan
23rd Jenny Margulies
23rdJules Seder
23rd Nettie Seder
25thMatthew Birnbaum
27thAlan Beth
27thJeffrey Pollack
27thJoan Boruszak
28th Laura Duman
28th Mary Roth
29th Robin Forman
31st.....Robert Sherman
31st.....Wes Conklin

June

2nd.....Barbara Osder
2nd.....Myra Kaplan
3rd Abraham Rakov
3rd Elanor Forbes
5thDorothy Wolfe
6thDonna Bolton
6th Nancy Kluger
6th Suzanne Gilson
7th Carrie Smith
7th Joan P. Wohl
9th Renee Brodie
9thZoe Moshe
13thJeff Miller
13thJustin Greenbaum
14th Jennifer Nobil
15thWilliam Bolton
16th Marvin Blumenfeld
18th Amelia Kasinof
20th Harvey Klein
21st.....Aaron Quesada
21st.....Nancy Hershoff
21st.....Taryn Nobil
22nd..... James Patrick Brennan
23rdSteve Levine
24thDelaney Rohde
25thJake Benjamin Markowitz
27th Frank Emkey
30th Bob Friedman
30th Milo Tainow

In Loving Memory

Rabbi Harold Kushner, wonderful human being, Conservative rabbi and best-selling author of 14 books, including “When Bad things Happen to Good People”, passed away on April 27. His memory will surely be a blessing.

A Love Letter to a World That May or May Not Deserve It

Dear World,

We’ve been through a lot together over the past eight decades, you and I—marriages, births, deaths, fulfillment and disappointment, war and peace, good times and hard times. There were days when you were more generous to me than I could possibly have deserved. And there were days when you cheated me out of things I felt I was entitled to. There were days when you looked so achingly beautiful that I could hardly believe you were mine, and days when you broke my heart and reduced me to tears.

But with it all, I choose to love you. I love you, whether you deserve it or not (and how does one measure that?). I love you in part because you are the only world I have. I love you because I like who I am better when I do. But mostly I love you because loving you makes it easier for me to be grateful for today and hopeful about tomorrow. Love does that.

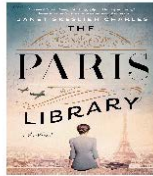
*Faithfully yours,
Harold Kushner*



Sisterhood Book Club



Thursday, May 25, 2023 ~ *The Paris Library* by Janet Skeslien Charles
Thursday, June 29, 2023 ~ *Shadows Walking* by Douglas Skopp - Zoom only



Based on the true
World War II story
of the heroic
librarians at the
American Library in
Paris, this is an
unforgettable story of
romance, friendship,
family, and the power
of literature to bring
us together, perfect
for fans of *The Lilac
Girls* and *The Paris
Wife*.



To be reviewed by
Beth Hayden who
knows the author
and will relate her
personal
experiences.
This is the story
of a German
nationalist and
Jewish friend and
their Nazi
happening.

**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.**

All sessions are at 12:30 p.m.

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

SISTERHOOD PRESIDENTS Susan Gordon & Joyce Peckman



Passover is over, and now we can exhale. We coordinated two very different, beautiful seders.

The Women's Seder honoring Marcia Kreitman and historical honoree was beautiful and moving. Almost half of our participants had never attended before. Randy Klein-Gross organized and ran the Service beautifully and Erica Lieberman Garrett was an amazing coordinator of food and set-up. Gloria Avner's lovely personalized name cards were a hit. Gloria introduced honoree Marcia Kreitman, who we now appreciate even more after learning about her many artistic accomplishments and adventures. Medina introduced and told the moving story of our historical honoree, Irena Sendlar, a Polish social worker who helped to rescue 2500 children from the Warsaw Ghetto, secretly placing them in convents or Christian homes, while maintaining a hidden list of their real identities, so that after the war they could be returned to whatever of their family survived. Thanks to everyone who cooked, set up and cleaned up. We raised enough funds to donate almost \$500 to each of three charities: Wesley House, Talia Agler Girls' Shelter and KJCC Tzedakah Fund.

KJCC Family Seder, also held in the Social Hall, provided 48 of our members with a lovely Service and dinner the first night of Passover. Kudos to

everyone who worked so hard on this successful evening.

On April 21st we celebrated Israel Independence Day with a festive Israel-themed Oneg Shabbat.

Book Club is continuing, moving to the last Thursdays of each month. The April discussion was held at the home of Joyce Peckman and on Zoom. The next two meetings will be at 12:30 p.m. on May 25th and June 29th. See the flier in this issue for more details. Let me know if you are interested in holding the May meeting at your home. During the summer we will go Zoom only.

On May 26th Sisterhood will present a dairy dinner in honor of Shavuot, sponsored by Lynn Nobil in honor and memory of her parents, founding members Joel and Sara Cohen. Look for the flier in this issue.

On June 9th we are excited to host our first interfaith dinner, welcoming faith leaders from the Upper Keys. It will be a traditional Shabbat meal before Services. Thank you, Linda Kaplan for sponsoring.

Our next Sisterhood meeting will be at KJCC on Sunday, May 7th at 10 a.m. The end of season luncheon will be held at Hobo's on June 4th. We look forward to seeing you there. ◇

Leaf on the tree of life:

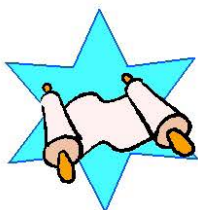
Peace & Love

– Jon & Terry Tainow

Leaf on the tree of life:

**Celebrating Toby Redlus Goldfinger
A Good Friend for 70 Years**

– Love, Rita & Harry Rzepka



KEYS JEWISH
COMMUNITY CENTER
Congregation Ohr HaYam
Cathy Kaplan Sisterhood



SHAVUOT

Counting of the Omer is ending.

We celebrate the giving of the Torah.

JOIN US at the KJCC on

Friday, May 26, 2023, at 6:00 P.M.

for a Shavuot Dairy Potluck Dinner Celebration.

Contact Joyce at

joycepeckman@gmail.com or

732-447-5225 to RSVP

and coordinate your veggie or dairy dish.

Shabbat and Yizkor Service

will follow at 7:30 P.M.



Sponsored by Lynn Nobil

SHAVUOT

WE STUDY AND WE EAT CHEESECAKE.

by Joyce Peckman

A large bowl filled with a mixture of pot cheese and cream cheese, which my mother stirred with a wooden spoon. On the kitchen table, a tiny bottle of vanilla, the large container of sugar from the pantry, and paper towels. On the stove, a mysterious mixture of eggs and flour, which, when poured into the frying pan, would produce the thin, delicate rounds which were neither omelets nor pancakes. She knew how much to pour into the pan, and how many seconds to let each one cook before turning it out onto the growing stack of paper towels that kept them from sticking to each other. In the refrigerator, sour cream and strawberry jam waited to crown the end products of her labor. This is my childhood memory of Shavuot. My mother seldom made those wonderful blintzes (never again once I became a teen-ager and she went off to work) but the memory

of their richness has made the paltry store-bought variety seem not worth the calories. (The exception is the blintz souffle. Come to our Shavuot dinner on Friday, May 26th to taste our delicious Shavuot tradition, usually prepared by Susan Gordon.)

Shavuot was the holiday we didn't really celebrate. It didn't have the drama of the High Holidays, or Passover's matzah and family seder, reading the Haggadah. There was no lulav and etrog to shake in a sukkah. We were allowed to take the day off from school on Shavuot only if we went to services at the temple, but since final exams were quickly coming up, it seemed risky. Apparently, things haven't changed much over the years. When I called my religious grandchildren to ask them how they celebrate Shavuot, the reply was, "We go to shul and eat cheesecake."

Yet Shavuot is an important holiday, one of the three pilgrim festivals, celebrating both the vital wheat harvest in Israel and the giving of the Torah. On Passover, the Israelites were freed from slavery. Seven weeks later, they stood at the foot of Mount Sinai, ready to accept the Torah and commit to serving God. The word Shavuot means weeks. The Torah mandates the seven week-counting of the Omer, which we begin on the second night of Passover.

We no longer go to the Temple with animals and loaves of bread, but there are other ways to celebrate Shavuot. Our favorite is to have a dairy meal. The reason for this custom is not clear.



Some say it is because in the “Song of Songs”, Torah is compared to milk: “Like honey and milk, it lies under your tongue.” Others say it is because the laws of kashrut had just been given, and since the people had not yet prepared a second set of dishes and pots, they refrained from eating meat. Some noted that the Hebrew word for milk is chalav, which has a gematria numerical value of 40, corresponding to the 40 days Moses spent on the mountain obtaining the Torah.

It is a custom to read the Book of Ruth, because her story took place during the harvest, which Shavuot celebrates. Also, Shavuot is believed to be both the birthday and yahrzeit of King David, Ruth’s great-grandson. Ruth, as a convert, willingly accepted the laws of Judaism, as did the Israelites at Mount Sinai.

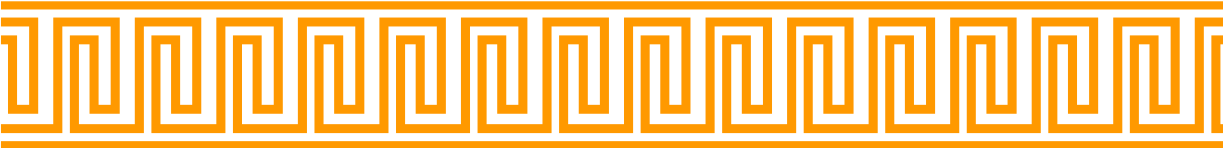
The custom of all-night Torah study (Tikkun Leil Shavuot) goes back to 1533 when Rabbi Joseph Caro, author of the Shulchan Aruch, then living in Ottoman Salonika, invited Rabbi Shlomo Halevi Alkabetz and other Kabbalistic colleagues to hold Shavuot-night study

vigils. According to Moshe Sokolow of Yeshiva University, the mass consumption of coffee in the Ottoman Empire was a factor in the emergence of the all-night study. The earliest use of coffee is reported in the 15th century among the Sufis of Yemen. Those Muslim mystics depended on it to keep them awake during their night-time devotions, and the rabbis probably did too.

In 1967, one week before Shavuot, the Israeli army recaptured Jerusalem’s Old City. On Shavuot day, the Western Wall was opened to visitors for the first time since 1948. Since then, in Jerusalem, tens of thousands of people finish their Shavuot night-time study by walking to the Western Wall and joining in sunrise prayers.

Shavuot this year will be Friday and Saturday, May 26 and 27. It will be celebrated at KJCC Congregation Ohr HaYam on Friday, May 26h with a dairy dinner at 6 p.m., followed by services including Yizkor. At the end of the Oneg Shabbat, we will not stay up all night studying, but we will read the book of Ruth in English, round-robin style. I promise it will end long before midnight! ◇





Yad Vashem & Yom HaShoah

by Medina Roy

April has been a big month for KJCC travelers. Barney Coltman just came back from a cruise in Asia, Lynn and Jeff Dills sent photos of wonderful exotic stops in the South Pacific. Lucinda Kurtz And Oran Hesterman are honing pottery skills while exploring Tuscany and the Aglers are sailing around Greek Islands with cousins. Beth Hayden just left for Israel, and Medina Roy, having spent a month in her namesake country with her cousins who made Aliyah from Far Rockaway, will be returning shortly. We miss her World Jewish Report, but are very grateful for this personal report she sent from the field.

Yad Vashem

A visit to Yad Vashem, Israel's official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust, is a must for anyone traveling to Jerusalem. My cousin's daughter-in-law's mother, Sylvia, volunteers there and she gave us a private tour. To be a volunteer, one must take a class for a year and then pass a test. Out of her class of 100, only 30 made it to the end.

Sylvia told us several stories that are not that well know and not normally part of the

tour. One story really surprised me: After the war, many survivors returned to their homes in Poland and Germany hoping to find relatives who also survived and hoping to return to their homes. Some 2,000 of these people who managed to live through the worst disaster of the 20th century, were killed by the people who took their homes, fearing they would be forced to give up their "new" homes.

Yom HaShoah

I've always wanted to experience Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day in Israel. At 10:00 in the morning, a siren sounds throughout the country. For two minutes, the entire country comes to a standstill. People stop whatever they are doing, even traffic comes to a halt on the highways. All activity stops. People exit their cars, standing and either praying or reflecting on the importance of the day. I dragged my cousin out of the house at 9:45 to be on the road when the siren went off. It was a very emotional experience, one I will never forget. ◇

PHOTO GALLERY



Dressed up for a Purim outing, these cowpokes, Joyce Peckman, her son Daniel and granddaughter Eliana, are off to distribute "mishloach manot," gifts of food to their neighbors. It's a Mitzvah.

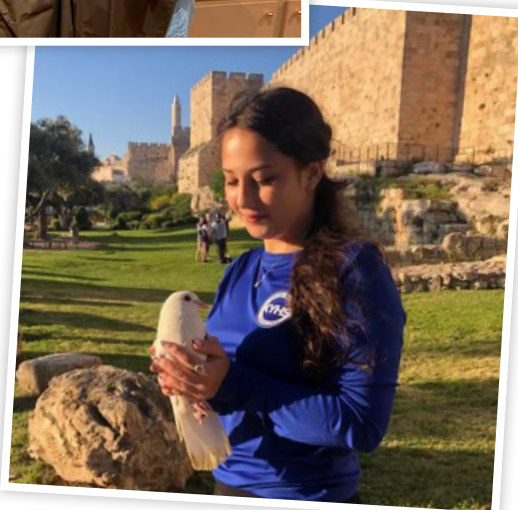
Susan Gordon celebrating her 67th birthday on the water, passing the perfect channel marker.



Randy and Ocean Gross Klein experience the best Europe has to offer. Lots of great attractions in Amsterdam.



Joyce Peckman's granddaughter Michal makes new friend in Israel.



Erica and Sean Kaufman get ready to recite Kiddush.

What a nice turnout for our Shabbat service and Israeli Oneg for Yom HaZikaron, the Day of Remembrance honoring the thousands who fought and died to make a homeland for Jewish people a reality. We observed the traditional 2 minutes of silence before adjourning to the classroom for Israeli style dinner.



Rivka's husband, Max Trent joins neighbor/friend Debbie in Kiddush for L'Chaim. She had recently returned from a trip to Israel and enjoyed the service.



Erica's delicious falafel with all the fixings made many of us remember our trips to Israel as well.



The women who make everything work!

First time service leader Rivka Rizzo joins fellow service leader Joice Peckman in blessings before wine, and then, bread.





Our members are on the move. Rabbi Agler has been sailing around Greek Islands with his cousins.

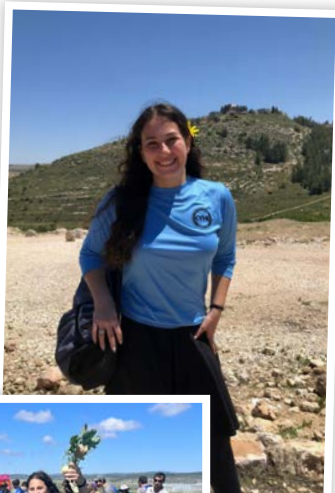


All of Joyce Peckman's grandkids together at Pesach!



Pres Ken Atlas and Exec VP Michael Kaufman share a moment at Oneg

So many KJCC people in Israel the last few months. Here is Joyce's Granddaughter Michal with her 10th Grade Class,



Once again, Rabbi Zucker adds to our joyous Passover celebration by delivering Shmura Matzoh to us for our seders, made according to the strict rules about preparation and timing that make it officially kosher for Pesach. Thank you, Rabbi Zucker. And thank you Joyce for arranging to meet him and accept this gift.



Passover Honorees

The biggest, most powerful parts of our KJCC seders, along with the retelling of our historical escape story, is bringing the past into the present, as if each one of us did the crossing out of Egypt personally. ONE WAY WE DO THIS IS BY HONORING OUR OWN, acknowledging those who currently improve our lives. DONNA BOLTON (P. 20) AND MARCIA KREITMAN (P. 24) ARE OUR HEROES THIS YEAR. We also acknowledge one special woman from history. This year we honor Irena Sendler, a Polish Christian who rescued 2500 Jewish children from sure death in the Warsaw ghetto. She saved every one of their names and family members' names and new family names on pieces of paper in a jar she buried underneath a tree in her yard. Miraculously, she survived to unearth the jar and followed through on her intent to reunite. Thank you Medina, for bringing this hero to our table.

IRENA SENDLER – Warsaw, Poland 1942

On October 12, 1940 – Yom Kippur – the Germans issued a decree calling for the establishment of a ghetto in Warsaw. About 400,000 Jews from the city and the surrounding region were forced to move into an area of 1.3 square miles. In mid-November the ghetto was sealed. On account of the cramped conditions, poor sanitation, and very limited food and medicine, disease and starvation claimed thousands of lives each month. In July 1942, mass deportations of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto began. Most were sent to Treblinka. Horrified by the German persecution of the Jews, a group of Polish citizens formed an underground organization called the Council for the Aid to Jews, or Żegota, in September 1942. Irena Sendler became the head of Żegota's Children's Bureau. She obtained documents that allowed her to enter the ghetto, and she began to smuggle children out. Irena and the members of Żegota led some children out through the underground corridors of a courthouse and through a tram depot. They sedated some infants and carried them out in potato sacks or coffins. A church located on the edge of the



ghetto also became useful. It had two entrances, one inside the ghetto and one on the Christian side of Warsaw. With Żegota's help, some children entered the church as Jews and exited as "Christians." In addition to smuggling children out of the ghetto, Irena found safe places for them to hide – often with Catholic families in the Warsaw area. Children were also sheltered in convents, hospitals, and orphanages. The Germans learned of Irena's activities. On October 20, 1943, she was arrested by the Gestapo and taken to Pawiak prison. Irena was tortured brutally, but she refused to give any information about Żegota or about

the children she had placed in hiding. She was sentenced to death. Members of Żegota bribed one of the Gestapo agents, and on the day Irena was to be executed, she was permitted to escape. She had to go into hiding for the remainder of the war but continued to coordinate her rescue work. By January 1945, when Warsaw was liberated by Soviet troops, the Children's Bureau of Żegota had helped more than 2,500 Jewish children. The exact number of children saved by Irena and her partners is unknown. Irena Sendler passed away in May 2008 at the age of 98. ◇



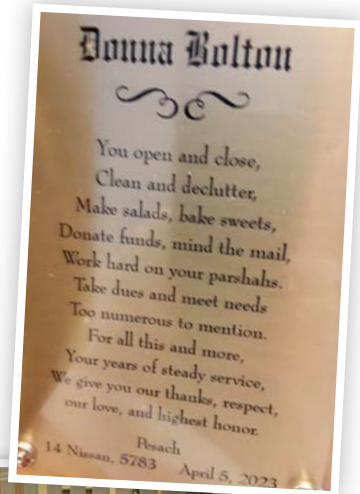
OUR KJCC FAMILY SEDER THE JOEL S. COHEN FELLOWSHIP AWARD

One of the most important things we do at our KJCC Family Seder is present our Shul's Highest Honor to the person who contributed the most to the health, growth and future longevity of our shul, KJCC/ Congregation Ohr HaYam. The decision is not based on who has done the most this year. It is the continuity of hard, continuous, creative and selfless work that is being honored, and the only people allowed to vote on the recipient are those who have already earned the award. You will see them in the pictures, standing up to honor this years recipient. This year the award goes, by unanimous decision to Donna Bolton. Bravo!! Joel Cohen, our "founding father", knew 43 years ago that the secret to our tiny shul's survival, in a place that had never had a Jewish House of Worship before, would be the commitment of intelligent, talented people willing to work long hours without pay to do all that needed to be done not just to survive but to thrive. He instituted the award and was its first recipient.

The words on Donna's plaque say it all:



*Donna Bolton
You open and close,
Clean and declutter
Make salads, bake sweets,
Donate funds, mind the mail,
Work hard on your parashahs,
Take dues and meet needs
Too numerous to mention.
For all this and more,
Your years of steady service,
We give you our thanks, respect,
Our love and highest honor.
Pesach 2023*



Donna, listening to the plaque being read, realizes it's about her. She comes from a long line of charitable work and giving. Her parents long ago founded one of the largest food banks in Orlando.

Michael, Lorena and Sean
Kaufman participate in
Haggadah reading.





Jules and Nettie Seder were also past recipients, as were Medina Roy, Susan Gordon, Jane Friedman, Joyce Peckman, Gloria Avner, and Steve Steinbeck.



Thank you Steve Steinbeck, for all your hard work over the years

Erica Lieberman Garrett, another award owner, still working hard to pass out desserts.



Sean Kaufman, taking part in reading the story of our survival at the Family Seder



Thank you Joe Shabathai for your contributions helping lead the Seder.



Happy winners of finding the afikomen. Not shown is the third winner and maturing tzedakah contributor. Sean Kaufman, who donated a major part of his Prize back to KJCC. We love our youngsters and seeing them grow into fine human beings.



Gloria Avner, reading Donna Bolton's plaque



Jane Friedman, another past winner, continues to work hard for KJCC



KJCC Women's Seder Comes Back to Life!

This is a year of resuscitation. Yes, we are back. Covid forced many of our favorite, most meaningful events and enthusiastic celebrants into exile. But here we are, joyous again, with brand new faces and hardworking hands putting together the 18th annual Women's Seder. We are especially grateful to Erica Lieberman Garrett and her team for organizing the food, set up and cleanup. It was a grand party, with a touch less attendees and lots more "getting to know you." We were blessed to have four different sets of mothers and daughters with us, the youngest of whom, Lily Padden, led us in singing the four questions, found the afikomen and took our breath away with her outrageously stylish shoes. A Special thank you to Kathy Shabathai for taking these (and other) joyous photos.



Lily Padden's mold breaking shoes



Elizabeth Pollack, daughter-in-law of Linda Pollack, and Loni Padden, mother of Lily.



First time attendees, get to decorate their names on cloth and become part of our ever expanding Seder Dinner Party Tablecloth





Enthusiastic pictures
of Women's seder. Yes,
we have a good time
doing good.





The tablecloth, with 13 years worth of attendees names.

From 2004-2019 we devoted our Seder to honoring women, dead and alive, whom we consider unsung heroes. We commit to doing something, making a difference in the lives of Women and Children, fundraising for Tikkun Olam, Repairing the World. Now, in 2023, we begin again. Marcia Kreitman has been the creative force behind this banner since it's inception. Read about this years recipients of our fundraising on page 25.



Marcia Kreitman, our Honoree and Woman of the Year stands between her beloved Sister-in-law and talented actor/niece.

It was wonderful hearing Marcia talk about her early influences, the uncle vaudevillians, the mom and aunt who played piano for silent movies, the childhood house filled with music, art and theater. Marcia became a traveler, importer, masterful art teacher, costume designer and business woman, working for museums, universities, influencing many, including a MacArthur genius grant winner.





Susan Gordon presents a check of \$500 to the Wesley house, a local organization that does excellent work with families and children needing foster care. Joyce and Gloria were very impressed with the services they offer on their visit with Pastor Eric Fisher.



Sisterhood co-presidents Susan Gordon and Joyce Peckman present KJCC president Ken Atlas with a check for our charitable Tzedakah Fund, thanks to the Women's Seder fundraising project.

Women's Seder Donations



Linda Kaplan, after presenting a donation of clothing (now joined by a check for \$500) to the Talia Agler Girls Shelter outside Nairobi. Talia Agler, of blessed memory, Mindy and Rabbi Agler's daughter, continues to be a source of "Tikkun Olam" inspiration.

The money was raised by our annual Women's Seder as part of our commitment to "Do Something" for families and children. We give locally, internationally and to our own Tzedakah fund, here at KJCC/Congregation Ohr HaYam.



WE REMEMBER THE WARSAW GHETTO

THE COURAGEOUS UPRISING OF THE JEWS AND THE POLISH WOMAN WHO RESCUED 2500 CHILDREN

Wednesday marks the 80th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the legendary revolt of a group of Jews who held off the Nazis for nearly a month in 1943.

On the ground in Warsaw, JTA's correspondent noted that things were somber — and yellow. The emergent symbol of the uprising is a daffodil, and Jewish and non-Jewish Poles wear paper versions as pins on their clothing to mark the anniversary each year.

This year, the daffodil campaign ramped up to mark the 80th anniversary. Cafes were full of people wearing them; even LOT (Polish airlines) crew sported them.



A few hundred politicians, Jewish leaders and others marked the 80th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising at the Ghetto Heroes Monument in Warsaw, April 19, 2023. (Artur Widak/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images)

Happy New Moon
Rosh Chodesh Sameach

Greeting Iyar Under the Tuscan Sky

by Lucinda Kurtz

Under the brilliant Tuscan sky
Wispy winged clouds fly like Angels
As the month of Iyar floats in on a unseen river of air
Kissing the silvery green tips of the shimmering olive leaves
Caressing the grape vines just opening their smiling verdant buds.

Iyar, it's time to release stale, secret winter woes
To prune branches of their dried, dead debris
And find joy in a fresh conversation with ourself and the One.

Exposing my raw vulnerability
I explore new ancient spaces on planet Earth
Where multitudes have tramped through fields
Building Aqueducts, raising armies,
Living the simple beauty of their last breaths.

The enduring vineyards and orchards,
Gardens and acres of soft waving wheat
Invite me to walk slowly
Taking in the healing that comes
From deep connection to the earth in her sensuous stillness.

This is the month the open loving heart
Finds healing through a compassionate embrace
That accepts both rot and riches.



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PLACE: KJCC

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WHAT IS HAPPENING IN ISRAEL

- PART 2 -

by Beth Hayden

Continuing with those dangerous to Israel: Binyamin Netanyahu (Likud – Currently on trial for bribery, fraud and breach of trust.)

The current coalition has passed legislation allowing him to serve even if convicted. (As they have passed legislation allowing Aryeh Deri to serve despite his prior convictions for income tax fraud.) Netanyahu just fired the **Minister of Defense, Yoav Gallant**, for speaking out against the proposed railroading of changes to the Supreme Court and warning that reservists refusal to train poses a threat to Israeli security..



Justice Minister Yariv Levin, the architect of the current coalition's judicial overhaul plans, conceded in a TV interview with Channel 14 in Israel that a key piece of his legislation would have led to a situation unacceptable in a democratic country, in which the coalition would exercise control over all three branches of government.



Levin said that while many arguments against his proposals were baseless, he accepted a charge critics made against the original judicial appointments bill, which would have handed the coalition an automatic majority on the panel that chooses judges: that such a change would “lead to a situation in which all three branches of government become one branch.” I

But Levin also claimed in the interview that the government responded to the fears by revising the proposal. The original bill had passed its first reading; the ostensibly softened legislation, which now awaits its second and third (final) Knesset

readings, gives the coalition full control over the first two Supreme Court justices appointed in each Knesset term, and near-complete control of appointments of other judges.

To be clear, many believe changes need to be made to the Supreme Court in Israel; the objection is to the proposals put forth and the way this is being done. The Israeli Presidency is a largely ceremonial position that does not interfere in politics. Both Isaac Herzog (the current President) and the former President, Reuven Rivlin, have come out against the proposed changes that will bridle Israel's Supreme Court. President Herzog went above and beyond his responsibilities by addressing the nation, warning of civil war and suggesting a compromise solution which the current government rejected.

Israel is very fortunate to have a dedicated Army. The strength of the army is the reserves. As you know, Israelis graduate from high school and enter the army for service (with exceptions for religious – we will deal with that later). Then, it is a national tradition, they travel the world and then go to college. We are so fortunate to have these dedicated heroes. After they do their compulsory army service they do “miluim” (reserve duty) until they are 55 years old. So let me be very clear about this, thousands of elite reservists are refusing to go to training – however they have made it clear they do not refuse to serve if Israel is attacked. Nevertheless, it is dangerous for Israel that reservists refuse to train. These are people who take the chance of laying their lives on the line in order to defend Israel – they are ready to defend the Israel they know – not the right wing views of Israel espoused by Netanyahu. Levin, Ben Gvir and Smotrich. Thousands of reservists have been called for duty during the month of Ramadan – I am not aware of one who has refused to defend Israel.

The proposed changes to the Israeli Supreme Court would leave the control of the Court to politicians, just as it is in this country. In the US the Executive Branch (the President) proposes a

potential member of the US Supreme Court and Congress (the Legislative Branch) approves or disapproves. In Israel, Supreme Court Justices nominate potential members and approve or disapprove. It is said that this creates an elite “society of justices” who do not represent the thinking of many Israelis. However, the current coalition/government clearly does not represent the thinking of many Israelis. In addition, the proposed changes call for politicians to have the ultimate authority on laws passed. The Israeli Supreme Court has ruled many times in favor of minorities and protected the rights of “Palestinians”, while **Bezalel Smotrich, a Minister in the Coalition of Netanyahu**, denies that Palestinians exist. The Palestinian Authority and Ra’am (an Arab party in the Knesset which was



part of the last coalition) told Arab-Israelis not to vote in the most recent election. Had Arab-Israelis voted (they are 20% of the Israeli population), it is possible this government would have been avoided. A recent Israeli poll shows Benny Gantz and his Centrist party winning a majority of seats in the Knesset. Benny Gantz was a former Chief of Staff of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and is beloved in Israel because his were the last feet to cross the border of Lebanon when Israel withdrew in 2000. Benny Gantz made sure every piece of salvageable equipment and every “common” soldier was home before his feet stepped over the border. It was even common when Israel was in Lebanon – to allow Israelis to step into Lebanon – one had to have one’s passport to do this – but, if you remember, at this time, Israel was pretty much land blocked from tourism. I, personally, stepped over the border – so I can say I was in Lebanon.

Indeed, the Israeli Prime Minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, has defied the Presidents (both two Israeli Presidents and the US President), ignored the Israeli economists, misrepresented the legislation in addresses to the public, ordered the chief of staff to quash the “insubordinate” volunteer

Israeli reservists, told the police to crack down on road-blocking Israeli protesters, and shrugged off all international criticism.

Shas leader, Aryeh Deri, said that the government would have broken apart had it tried to push through its judicial overhaul legislation as planned last week. Still, he warned that if negotiations for a broadly agreed-upon reform fail, the government will pass its bills unilaterally.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu decided as I write this, to pause the legislation to allow for talks, amid a crescendo of nationwide protests, just as the coalition was set to pass the first, highly controversial overhaul bill — to give the coalition broad control over selecting judges and over-riding their decisions when they might rule against legislation passed in the Knesset.

Deri has reportedly become more and more disillusioned with the functioning of the coalition, particularly far-right ministers Itamar Ben Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, and has been working behind the scenes to keep moderate voices like Gallant in the government.

Deri said the government had made mistakes in the way it handled the reform, both in trying to push it through all at once and in not adequately foreseeing the public backlash. “I also have criticism for myself and we have some soul-searching to do. We did not act correctly, unequivocally,” Deri said. “We went into a nuclear war armed with a cap gun.

Protesters have rallied against the plans for 13 weeks, including in a mass demonstration on Saturday even after Netanyahu announced a pause to the legislation’s process.

Critics say the plans will politicize the court, remove key checks on governmental power and cause grievous harm to Israel’s democratic character. Proponents of the measures say they will rein in a judiciary that they argue has overstepped its bounds.

The Israeli attorney general has warned that the coalition’s current package of legislation would hand the coalition/government virtually unrestrained power without providing any institutional protections for individual rights.

The proposed legislation would give a governing coalition, starting from the current one, control of six spots on the 11-member Judicial

Selection Committee. Three positions would be allocated to the Supreme Court justices, including the president of the Supreme Court, and two to opposition MKs. Seven votes would be needed to appoint Supreme Court justices, but the coalition would unilaterally choose the first two justices in every Knesset term.

Critically, the coalition also intends to change the manner in which the President of the Supreme Court is elected: moving from the seniority system used until now, whereby the justice who has served the longest on the bench is appointed president, to a vote by simple majority of the Judicial Selection Committee. This would, in effect, give the coalition broad control over the court and its agenda.

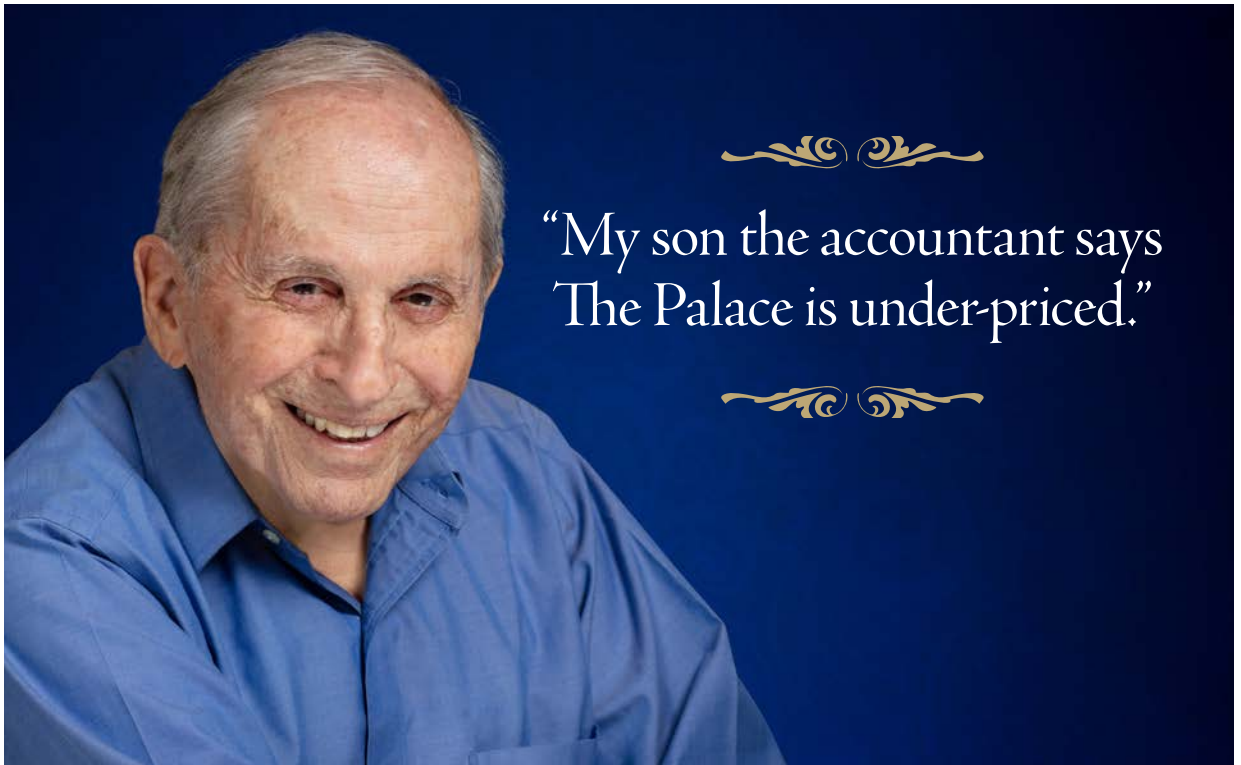
A public warning by Yoav Gallant, Minister of Defense, that the imminent radical remake of Israel's governance is causing divides that constitute *"a clear, immediate and tangible threat to the security of the state."* Unfortunately, just such a warning was given to Netanyahu, resulting in the current Defense Minister being dismissed from his job. Now, it appears he will stay as Minister of Defense if Netanyahu sends a properly worded apology.

Ben Gvir is now asking for a National Guard to be established that would be directly under his control. The Israeli Police maintain they are not answerable to Ben Gvir who is a very divisive figure. He and Smotrich are racists and inciters of anti-Palestinian rhetoric. Smotrich denied, in a speech in Paris, that "Palestinians" even exist as a national group.

There is no question that the Supreme Court in Israel is independent and radically so – when compared to Supreme Courts of Western Democracies. Israel has, at this time, no constitution. It is the Declaration of Independence that directs the country's governance. Many think it is time to develop a Constitution. I was amazed when I saw the Ayalon Highway for the first time – nothing



like this existed when I lived in Israel – it is a major highway with serious traffic – for these protesters to put their lives at risk to stop traffic on the Ayalon is impressive. I think it would be good were Israel to develop a Constitution, and stop this divisive government from implementing laws that are being rushed through the Knesset without proper dialogue and compromise. Ben Gvir, Smotrich, Levin and Netanyahu are very dangerous to the country. It remains to be seen what will happen. Will these right wing fanatics leave the coalition? They have more power now than they have ever had and no one else will make a coalition with them except the extreme religious or Netanyahu. This also brings up one of the simmering disputes in Israel – between the Haredim and the "secular" – it has long been a bone of contention that ultra-Orthodox are excused from service in the IDF and, while they form a small percentage of the population, receive enormous government support to study Torah and support their yeshivot and religious activities. No Conservative or Reform religious organizations receive government support. Let us hope that after 4 elections something good happens for Israel as a result of this "crisis". Israel has pulled off so many "miracles", winning wars with a barely-created official army, having one of the strongest "startup" economies in the world, contributing important innovations to science and medicine. Many who consider themselves secular Jews in Israel, are more observant than Jews who consider themselves religious in other countries. I read a funny story on the net the other day – Moshe Dayan came to Washington and was told by an American President, "I hear you have a fantastic army." Dayan replied, "I don't know – we have only fought Arabs." It is funny, but not funny, since we know Egyptians were put out to fight with illustrated booklets to show them how to use their weapons. How sad. I remember 3 Israeli boys visiting my home many years ago. They spoke with my father – *Shuki* (one of the boys) said, in answer to a question from my father, "I can't retreat." My father took this as Israeli hubris – but I think what Shuki meant, was, "I can't retreat ***because I have no place to which to retreat.***" Let us all hope something good will come of this for Israel. ◇



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