

# *Der Bay*

## *The International Anglo-Yiddish Newsletter*

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December 2005

Vol. XV No. 10

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### **IAYC Tenth Conference Khidushim (Innovations)—July 6-9, 2006** *IAYC Comes of Age: A Tribute to Yiddish Clubs*

Last month The International Association of Yiddish Clubs announced its tenth conference. Each month *Der Bay* will carry another feature article about this very special conference of a vibrant organization. This exemplifies what a vigorous, grassroots movement can do.

It is wonderful when one can create a khidush, but multiplying it into several khidushim is exemplary—that is what IAYC will be doing.

This will be the first time that a first-rate hotel at a reasonable rate has been scheduled so close to the entertainment and cultural centers of New York City. A bus stops at the front door of the hotel and goes to Penn Station in Manhattan. It can make for a convenient, extended vacation.

The next khidush is the greatly enlarged vendor/exhibitor space in the lobby immediately outside of the Grand Ballroom where all the plenary sessions and evening entertainment will be held. Since these tables will be offered with no fee. It will feature a larger display of exhibits and merchandise than any of the previous IAYC conferences, and give an excellent opportunity for our lecture and workshop presenters to showcase their materials.

A third khidush is the Saturday morning plenary session held after optional, Yiddish in-house services. The session will be a cavalcade of major Yiddish programs. Eight to ten organizations will be selected. They will have the opportunity to introduce themselves and give the highlights of their programs. In many cases these will be people who will also be presenters.

A fourth khidush will occur at the Sunday morning session. In the past it had been composed of lectures and workshops. With many attendees coming from out of the area the result, in the past, was that some left early. To encourage you to get the full benefit of the conference and perhaps extend your stay, the first plenary session is planned to be The Forward Hour, sponsored by the Forverts. This will be followed by the Folksbiene Troupe which will entertain us until the closing ceremonies.

Because of the high quality of the program, the accommodations and the excellent location, this will be only the second time that we expect to be overbooked—in Miami we had to turn away over 150 latecomers. Also an expanded journal will permit individuals, Yiddish clubs and organizations to be included and honored at this—our tenth conference.

Enjoy the hospitality of the hosting club—  
The Jewish Center of Teaneck Yiddish Club

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Conference Chairman: Sam Kutner**  
**Ph: 201-858-7193 E-mail: SamIAYC@aol.com**

**Host & Hostess: Gregg & Stephanie Hudis**  
**E-mail: grhudis@optonline.net**  
**Ph: 201-833-4748 or 201 601-7016**

Each month *Der Bay* will carry a feature article on various aspects of the Conference. You will feel the excitement building up. The inside of the back page has the registration form.

## A Pen-Pal Success Story

#316 Manya Bertram [manyamin@california.com](mailto:manyamin@california.com)

My husband and I moved from Los Angeles to San Francisco, and I was complaining that although there was a strong and positive Jewish presence here, I missed Yiddishkayt. It is still not Los Angeles nor the peninsula up here, but in your bulletin, the new San Francisco Jewish Community Center, and the wonderful Jewish Library, I have found some welcome Yiddish activities.

I read *Der Bay* cover to cover and, among all the other welcome information, I must tell you how I love your Chelm stories remembering the ones my mother and grandmother used to tell me 85 years ago. The fact that one of my aunts in Denver, Colorado had married a wonderful man who claimed he was born in Chelm made all the stories more delicious.

Every issue covers more areas of interest. However, I have not read much about the success of your Pen Pal program and wish you would give some coverage to that topic. I would love to hear about successes others have had with their Pen Pals.

I must brag about the Pen Pal who drew my name. She is Karen McKinney of Arizona. When her first letter arrived with the McKinney name, I wondered how she got into the program. But what a delight our relationship has been. Karen has so much to offer with her own experiences which she joyfully shares..

Her husband Arthur, and her oldest daughter's husband, both converted to the Jewish religion, and are dedicated representatives of our faith.. Her granddaughter was bat mitzvah and, not to be outdone, Karen had her Bat Mitzvah just a few months ago as she joined other adults in a ceremony in a synagogue in Tempe, Arizona.

Karen proved to be so skilled in training converts that she was selected to attend and speak at conferences in other cities. By the time I learned all of the above I could not wait to meet this paragon. Soon after her Bat Mitzvah I received a letter from Karen telling me that she too felt we had to meet. Within a short time, she and Arthur drove from Tempe, Arizona to San Francisco. They had only four days for the whole trip but it could not have been sweeter had we known each other all of our lives.

Karen and Arthur are the ages of our children, and I worried that they would be shocked at the 88 year old pen pal and her 92 year old husband. I need not have been concerned. We loved our too brief time together and we adored each other. I actually teared up when they left to go back to Arizona. Now we

shall resume our correspondence hopefully at least partly in Yiddish but it will be just like family and I cannot thank you enough dear Fishl for starting this exciting, enriching program; I certainly hope you will encourage other pen pals to tell us how their "unions" are working.

I would like to inquire whether there are any *Der Bay* subscribers who live in or near the Golden Gateway Center. I would enjoy meeting a fan of Yiddishkayt near my home!

\*note: we say geeti not guti because that's what they said in Kishinev, Russia where my mom was born.

## Der briv fraynd program

Currently there are 424 pen-pals on *Der Bay's* list. They represent ages from the early teens to the 90s and live all over the United States and many other countries.

Registration is done online at *Der Bay's* website. You are asked to fill out the following form:

Name  
Age Group  
E-mail address  
Hobbies  
Self assigned level  
Level to whom you wish to write  
Write e-mail or hardcopy (post)  
Address

All applications are asked to write a little in Yiddish to avoid cranks and to assure the level of proficiency.

Each applicant is assigned a number and asked to use it on all correspondence, and in return is sent approximately ten names.

Personal addresses are not sent out except for those who wish to correspond by regular mail.

Most wish to write using e-mail, for it is not only cheaper, but much faster. It avoids needing to address an envelope, to affix the stamp and wait until the letter arrives at your pen pal's home—and then for it to be returned. Your editor urges corresponding using the YIVO Standard Orthography.

Visit the website at: [www.derbay.org](http://www.derbay.org) and see the many other areas, like the 21 sections that include the updated IAYC News of the Tenth Conference July 6-9 next year in Teaneck, NJ.

## New Issue of *afn shvel* – An Old Yiddish Magazine With A New Spirit!

The first issue of *Afn Shvel* (under the editorship of Dr. Sheva Zucker) is out and it has a great new look. Now in its 65th year, it is published three times a year and:

- features articles of Yiddish cultural, literary, linguistic, and communal interest
- has a modern layout created by Yankl Salant, a multi-colored cover and high-resolution photos
- offers several articles accompanied by extensive glossaries to help newer readers
- a few articles soon to be available on-line, read in various Yiddish dialects.

**To subscribe**, send a check for \$36 (\$18 for students) made out to: *League for Yiddish, Inc.* to: League for Yiddish, Inc. 45 E. 33rd St., Suite 203, NY, NY 10016.

Send your name, address and telephone number, and email address. For questions, please contact us at [info@leagueforyiddish.org](mailto:info@leagueforyiddish.org) or call 212 889-0380. Your subscription automatically makes you a member of the *League for Yiddish* and entitles you to receive **VZMAY, How Do You Say It In Yiddish**, an electronic "Yiddish Q & A" mailing list that promotes the use of Yiddish words and expressions not easily found in existing Yiddish dictionaries. You may contact VZMAY directly at [VZMAY@nyc.rr.com](mailto:VZMAY@nyc.rr.com)

This issue delves into the history of Yiddish territorialism and offers a look at the state of Yiddish today. There are articles on the writers Esther Singer Kreitman and Noyekh Prilutski, and on rare Yiddish names. We are the first Yiddish publication to carry a story on the **Beastie Boys, the first all-Jewish Hip-Hop band**, and their CD, *To the Five Boroughs!*

### Articles include:

- *Ben-Adir: A Window into Our Past* - Sheva Zucker
- *Dr. Yitskhok-Nakhmen Shteynberg* - in his own words
- *Change of Name, Change of Luck* - Mordkhe Schaechter
- *A Bridge of Longing: Yiddish among Yiddishists and Hasidim* - Brukhe Lang Caplan
- *Birobidzhan as I Knew It* - Sergo Bengelsdorf
- *Spivov: Ideal and Real* - Sholem Berger
- *On Your Arms and Between Your Eyes: Why I'm Studying Yiddish* - April Rosenbloom
- *Noyekh Prilutski and the Beginnings of the Yiddish Press in Warsaw* - Kalmen Weiser
- *Laytish Mame-Loshn (Authentic Yiddish): Yiddish Names Overshadowed* - Mordkhe Schaechter
- *Rare Yiddish Names Readers Respond*
- *A Love Song in Verse to the City of NY* - Mark Brukhes
- *Searching for What is Not There: Towards Researching a Bibliography of Esther Singer Kreitman* - Nomi Jones

## A Man from Munkacs: Gypsy Klezmer Directed by Yale Strom

*A Man From Munkacs: Gypsy Klezmer* explores the symbiotic relationship between the Rom and Jews who lived together before and after World War Two in the Carpathian region. Before the Holocaust there, whenever there was a Jewish celebration (e.g., a wedding, Purim festivities, dance etc.), most of the time the klezmer musicians were not Jews but Rom.

In fact, the Rom had played with and for Jews for so many years that some of them spoke a fluent Yiddish. The film examines how this persecuted group (the Rom) saved Jewish folk music until it could be returned to the Jews.

We learn about Gyula Galombosi, a Rom virtuoso violinist who traveled throughout the Soviet Union playing classical, Rom, Russian and klezmer music until his death in 1986. His hometown was Munkacs and in this hometown lived the Jakubowicz family. Ferenc (Feri) Jakubowicz was the first Jewish child born after the Holocaust in Munkacs, which was cause for great celebration - Jewish life was being renewed.

During Feri's birth, Galombosi and his fellow musicians played klezmer music on the street below the apartment. Feri was told this story by his father years later, which caused him to be much more curious about klezmer music. Feri and Gyula became good friends. Feri, a pianist, learned many great klezmer tunes from Gyula. When Feri and his family immigrated to Budapest in 1979, Feri played music with a local opera company.

In the film, Feri shares his initial ambivalence about publicly announcing his Jewishness and his love of klezmer to the gentile world. But in 1990, he formed the first klezmer band in Hungary since the 1920's, "The Budapest Klezmer Band" and taught the tunes he had learned from Galombosi to the rest of his band, who were not Jewish.

On camera, Feri gradually remembers a Munkatsher tune his uncle used to sing to him when he was a young boy. This tune, "The Munkatsher Nign" provides a musical motif throughout the film, as it is interpreted by various Rom and Jewish musicians. Through Feri and Galombosi's stories, we will trace the rebirth of Jewish music in Hungary today.

This 58 min. film was produced by Duna TV (Hungary) & Starcrest Films (Frankfurt, Germany).

## Akh un vey

by Philip Fishl Kutner

Every once in a while a word or phrase will come back from my childhood. Perhaps this has occurred to you. It was during a walk in Scotchhollow Park, late one afternoon while watching a group of small boys playing catch, that this phrase came back to me. It was one of mom's favorite sayings.

It seems that hardly a day went by on our chicken farm, a mile from Baptistown, New Jersey and eight miles from Flemington, that mom did not say *akh un vey*; however, it sounded more like *oykhn vey*. Yes, Flemington was the site of the famous Lindbergh trial.

There always were problems for mom. Here is only a partial list. Each resulted in an *akh un vey*. They came in different levels. A minor one gave a weak response, almost in a regular tone of voice. However, a major disaster, it seemed most were just that, had a gut wrenching *akh un vey*. Just the thought of it still sends shivers up and down my spine.

Here are some examples of situations that caused mom to utter the expression.

- We boys would run with the baskets of eggs and sometimes tripped.
- Our Jersey cow, Betsy would kick over the milk bucket.
- Betsy would get out of the fenced pasture and wander over to the neighbor.
- The Cooperative feed truck arrived just as we were sitting down to eat.
- The coal stove went out during the night and the baby chicks died.
- The raccoons killed some chickens out on the range.
- The pipes froze in the chicken coops and burst.
- The summer boarders didn't have enough money.
- The chickens got Newcastle disease and died.
- One of us came home with B- in our report card.

Weinrich's Modern English-Yiddish, Yiddish-English Dictionary has a separate definition for *akh un vey*. It is listed under *akh* and is translated as *alas* and *alack*.

The Random House Dictionary notes that the word *alack* is an interjection and is archaic, and defines it as an exclamation of sorrow, regret or dismay. The word *alas* is also defined as an exclamation of sorrow, regret or dismay. Thus it is double bad news.

Editor's note: Can you remember any phrases, from your childhood, that are used infrequently today? If so, please share them with our readers

## Why Have A Yiddish Club?

Meyer & Helen Zaremba

WHEREAS:

Jews have been around for thousands and thousands of years.

AND WHEREAS:

Over this period of time they have found themselves scattered over the vast expanse of the world and have had a diversity of experiences wherever they have taken root.

AND WHEREAS:

These experiences have been mirrored in the various languages that they have evolved through origination and/or adaptation.

AND WHEREAS:

For the past 1000 years, Jews living in certain areas of Europe have "recorded" these experiences in the language that they spoke, a language that we now call "Yiddish".

AND WHEREAS:

The lives of so many of our forbears have been etched in that language—in Yiddish.

AND WHEREAS:

It might justifiably be maintained that who they were, what they were, what they thought, what they dreamed, can be found in the words of the language that they spoke to each other. In the stories and jokes they told each other, in the songs they sang together with each other, in the expressions they created to enrich communication with each other. In the poetry they visualized to lift the souls of each other, in the literature they evolved to elevate their level of humanity, etc. etc. etc.

AND WHEREAS:

The past has significance not just as an historical *record but*, in ways in which we may not completely understand, significance for the future.

THEREFORE:

It is incumbent upon us to try to keep the Yiddish culture as it has been lived through its language, alive and that our a Yiddish club is important, not just for the nurturing of feelings of nostalgia, but for the purpose of, in our small way, contributing to the effort of keeping the memory of our people alive through keeping the language of Yiddish alive.

**Editor's note:** Meyer and Helen have contributed articles in the past. They live in Delray Beach, FL, and can be reached at: Ph: 561-496-3514 or e-mail: [greenhcuzineh@aol.com](mailto:greenhcuzineh@aol.com)

## Hurricane Heroes

By **Barbara Goldstein, IAYC Secretary**

Thank you Fishl for honoring me by printing in *Der Bay* my account of Steve's and my evacuation from Houston when Hurricane Rita threatened.

Henrietta Bell has told me that she had a hand in that. I imagine that she told you about her experience during that time. Her daughter was hospitalized because of major surgery, and Henrietta was coping as best as she could with being at the hospital with her daughter, and preparing her and her daughter's homes in the event of hurricane damage.

Her daughter's support group of friends evaporated when people left town. Her daughter's friends were supposed to have prepared foods and brought them to the hospital during that time. Henrietta couldn't find an open market in order to buy anything. At the hospital there was a potential "New Orleans" scenario.

The hospital was locked down. The same staff worked day after day. The staff's families were camped out there. Henrietta's presence was crucial to maintaining the stability of her daughter's condition. Henrietta Bell is an amazing woman! She is a steel magnolia!

### **Britt L. Albritton Writes**

E-mail: [brittalbritton@bellsouth.net](mailto:brittalbritton@bellsouth.net)

Sholem aleychem Fishl!

On 29.VIII.05. I lost everything except the clothing I had on and, *boruch hashem*, my car. The entire complex where I lived was demolished - as well as most of the Mississippi gulf coast. I have relocated to Pensacola, Florida bought a new house, and begun the awesome process of making a new start - at my age.

Since the storm, I have heard nothing of the fate of my Yiddish classmates in New Orleans. I know that Fanny Yokor lived on the lakefront, and that most of it was inundated. The US Postal Service was out of action for weeks, and as of this date I have received none of my publications - including *Der Bay*, *Forward*, etc.

I have moved into my new residence in Pensacola, Florida. I would appreciate it if you would mail me a copy of the article I wrote for *Der Bay* (One Man's Vilna), and any photos you may still have that I sent relating to the article.

Hope all is well with you,  
Shalom, Beryl

## A Native Chelmer Writes

by **Mariusz Matera**

I would like to salute everybody at this page. I would like to salute my friend from Miasteczko (Stetl) John Cudak and Agnieszka Pozniak :)

I would like to start from the very beginning. John wrote "All roads lead to Chelm, it's true." Wherever I've been I felt good, but in my city Chelm I feel the best.

I was born there in 1965 at Zacisze 6 Street. When I was very young, I heard about Jews from my grandmother. It was very interesting for me. Everywhere I walked on the old part of town I felt that there is only one "leg" of Chelm and not the other the other.

My father bought me a book *By the Candles of Shabas* by Horacy Safrin contains Jewish jokes, and I found there one big part about my city, my city from the past which doesn't exist today. I read about people, their heritages, habits, buildings, synagogue etc. I heard strange sound names, and it was really interesting.

So many, many years have gone by, but from time to time it has returned, to make something, to discover it for another people, to show etc. Thank God just about three years ago that I met Agnieszka and it started all over....

Once again I must write like John said/ The atmosphere in Chelm is changing very much. We will meet many people from Chelm living around the world.

Now after our visit to Chaim Lender, Chelmer from Israel, nicest man I've ever met. I was impressed. I could find about my unknown, Jewish city which doesn't exist (however I can feel it). People, dreams, come true! I'm Happy.

Anyone from anywhere who wants to come to our beautiful city is welcome, and we also want to give a hand to you.

P.S. Sorry for my English.

**Editor's note:** The article was a post on the Chelm list online. You will also find a link on *Der Bay's* home page to a section on Chelm. It includes over 30 original Chelm stories.

There are two Chelm Yizkor books. You can check them out on the JewishGen website and the 1300 other Yizkor books. Some of them are translated, or in the process of being translated.

## Highlights of *Der Bay's* 15 Years—January 1991-December 2005

The first issue of *Der Bay* was printed and sent with the courtesy of the Peninsula JCC (then in Belmont, CA and now in Foster City). Judy Edelson, still its director, had the foresight and love for Yiddish to sponsor the Yiddish club and have faith in *Der Bay*. The first 15 issues were 2 sheets of different colored paper stapled together. A look back today at the poor printing, gives a reminder of how far we've come.

Your editor wishes to acknowledge those who were helpful. It would be trite to say that there were many. Zelig Bach, o'h was #1 in encouragement and advice. Stephen Dowling has been there from the beginning. Today's #1 mentor is Dr. Chava Lapin—Layah Laks and Chayale Ash, locally. Every IAYC Board member and conference chairperson has been very supportive and is a dear friend. People whom your editor most admires are Archie Barkan, Ben Giladi, Jack Halpern, Lilke Majzner, Chic Wolk, and Dr. Barney Zumoff.

The editor wishes to recognize those writers who contributed to *Der Bay's* success—a few are gone.

### Significant Major Series

Britt Albriton: One Man's Vilna  
 Zelig Bach, o'h: Best of Zelig Bach  
 Pascal Curin: Alsatian Yiddish  
 Gella Schweid Fishman: Mit yidishe oyses  
 Louis Fridhandler: Sholem Aleichem  
 Ed Goldman: Comic Bible Scenes  
 Troim Katz-Handler: In der velt fun bale-khay  
 Kitty Katz: Photo-Journal of New York  
 Israel Kugler: The American Yiddish Theater  
 Philip Fishl Kutner: Original Chelm Stories  
 Murray Meld: Uncovering Yiddish in Seattle  
 Van Wallach: Jewish Film Reviews  
 Dorothy Wasserman: Heb-Eng-Yid Computing

### Significant Contributors of Articles/Letters

Oscar Antell	Canada
Michael Baker, o'h	MN
Zachary M. Baker	CA
Archie Barkan	CA
Ruth & David Barlas	FL
Jack S. Berger	NJ
Prof. Joel Berkowitz	NY
Manya Bertram	CA
Michael A. Blain	IN
Dr. Allan Blair	OH
Cookie Blattman	FL
Leybl Botwinik	Israel
Frida G. de Cielak	Mexico
Marilyn B. Cohen	LA

Dr. Lillian M. Feldman	NY
Morrie Feller	AZ
Prof. Raphael Finkel	KY
Mendy Fliegler, o'h	MD
Sonia Pressman-Fuentes	MD
Daniel Galay	Israel
Ben Giladi	NY
Leon H. Gildin	AZ
Barbara Goldstein	TX
Rafael Goldwaser	France
Kay Goodman	CA
Al Grand	NY
Seymour Graiver	NY
Jack Halpern	Japan
Hershl Hartman	CA
Alvin Holzman	WI
Gene Kavadlo	NC
Frank Krasnowsky	WA
Dovid Kunigis	Canada
Sunny Landsman, o'h	FL
Raquel Leisorek	CA
Joan D. Levin	IL
Marcia Gruss-Levinsohn	MD
Tsip Levitov	LA
Leon Levitt	MI
Mark Levy	CA
Lori Lippitz	IL
Judith Lubeck	CA
Rae Meltzer	MD
Paul Melrood	WI
Prof. Noyekh Miller	MA
Prof. Dov Noy	Israel
Baila Pransky	NC
Henya Reinhartz	Canada
Sid Resnick	CT
Portia Rose	CA
Hilda Rubin	MD
Simon Rutberg	CA
Henry Sapoznik	NY
Binyumen Ben Schaechter	NY
Helen Schechtman	IL
Sylvia Schildt	MD
Ray Shapero	CA
Shelby Shapiro	MD
Norman Simms	New Zealand
Bess Shockett	Canada
Ann Haber Stanton	SD
Bert Stratton	OH
Yale Strom	NY
Jacob Yankev Szczupak	GA
Jack Wiegman	The Netherlands
Sid Weinstein	CA
Rochelle Winer	South Africa
Yao Yi-Yen	China
Fannie Yokor	LA

Meyer Zaremba  
Prof. Sheva Zucker

FL  
NC

## Yiddish Conference Held at the University of Trier, Germany

The world's largest Yiddish Studies symposium took place at the University of Trier, a school whose thirty-five year-old Yiddish Studies department makes it one of the most important centers for study of the language in Germany as well as throughout Europe.

In its eighth year, the Symposium for Yiddish Studies brings together thirty Yiddish language scholars from around the world and over a hundred local participants for lectures and public discussions on topics ranging from medieval Yiddish literature to contemporary U.S. Yiddish films.

The gathering takes place in Trier, the self-dubbed "oldest German city," and nearby Duesseldorf in alternating years.

This year, an accompanying exhibition displays the work of Jewish-German photographer, journalist and author Alter Kacyze (1885-1941), who documented life in Poland's Jewish communities in the 1920s.

Yiddish, spoken primarily by Eastern and Central European Jews since the Middle Ages, is a hybrid language that combines elements from German, Hebrew, and Slavic languages. German comprises as much as eighty-five percent (editor's note—rarely) of the Yiddish language, making it understandable for many German-speakers after a brief period of acclimation.

Yet Yiddish did not merely absorb the German language – it also contributed some of the most colorful words to the German dialects spoken today. Words such as "Moos" (slang for "money") and Kaff ("the middle of nowhere"), "Knast" (German for "jail," Yiddish for "punishment"), "Meschugge" ("bonkers"), and to have a "Macke" (German for "crazy") are just a few examples of the remnants of Yiddish in German dialects.

While the language has been present in Germany for centuries, the rebirth of Jewish studies in Germany has only taken place in the last thirty years. Today, Jewish studies are not just relegated to history classes, but as an important study to be undertaken in depth.

The study of Jewish culture in all of its facets is an important discipline at many German universities, some of which, such as the University of Trier, have established internationally competitive research centers.

## Michael Baker Scholarship Fund

The International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) announced that it has set up a new scholarship fund in honor of Michael Baker. The purpose of the fund is to enable younger people to attend IAYC conferences. Specifically,

1. It will award two scholarships, valued at \$500 each, to attend the Tenth IAYC Conference at the Marriott Hotel in Teaneck, New Jersey from July 6-9, 2006. The scholarship will cover registration and a shared room. The applicant will need to furnish his or her transportation.
2. The deadline for submitting the application is January 31, 2006.
3. To be eligible,
  - a. An IAYC club must sponsor the applicant.
  - b. Applicants should be under the age of forty.
  - c. Applicants should either have a working knowledge of the Yiddish language or be taking a Yiddish class.
  - d. The application should consist of two sheets. The first should be a cover letter by the sponsoring club that states the applicant's name, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address as well as the club's name and address and its contact person. The second is to be written by the applicant and should be no more than one page. It should include the Yiddish courses taken, the applicant's background in Yiddish culture, and the reasons the applicant should be considered for this award.
4. Application may be made through E-mail at [majpaulww2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:majpaulww2@sbcglobal.net) or by snail mail to Paul Melrood; 500 W. Bender Rd. #46; Glendale, WI 53217

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Mike Baker was a key member of our IAYC Board. Roz, his wife, stepped in and chaired the last conference in Minneapolis. Mike's memory of his love for Yiddish will be kept alive by his generous donation to the IAYC Scholarship Fund.

The selection committee choosing the awardees consists of President Paul Melrood (Glendale, Wisconsin), Past President Dr. Harold Black (Southfield, Michigan), and Morrie Feller, Past Treasurer (Phoenix, Arizona).



## Ray Shapero Brings Yiddish Songs to Religious & Day Schools

In early 2005, I had the idea to bring Yiddish songs to the children of our religious and day schools. Together with the cantor of my Synagogue, Adat An El, we held a meeting with the representatives of the Yiddish organizations and the Board of Education of the greater Los Angeles area and determined:

### Goals

- (1) to create a CD of Yiddish Holiday Songs,
- (2) to be accompanied by a Songbook showing the Yiddish words, the songs in transliteration and in translation,
- (3) the CD/Songbook to be distributed to the music teachers in our 100 schools, and
- (4) to offer the teachers a workshop where they would learn the correct articulation and expression of the songs. Enthusiasm was high. The Holiday CD idea seemed doable.

To date, the CD is in process of completion, as is the accompanying Songbook. Professional singers and musicians, Yiddish academics and children are all contributing to this effort.

I had become active in the Music Commission of my Synagogue and an annual Yiddish program was to be a staple of the yearly program offered to the Congregation and to the community, at large.

I knew that Theodore Bikel was a resident of Los Angeles. Through a personal contact, I drafted a memo to Bikel inviting him to be honored at a concert that our Synagogue would sponsor for him. He has indicated to us his great interest in young children learning the Yiddish language, its culture and history and was particularly pleased to hear that it would be, initially, through songs, his specialty.

I am pleased to enclose the flyer citing all the particulars of the concert we are planning. The profits will benefit the CD/Songbook project described above which we have named "Komets Alef Aw" (our Cantor's brainchild). As you may recognize, it is from the song, Afn Pripechik Brent a Firerl, and we think it is appropriate.

Enclosed is a Mission Statement describing how we arrived at the "KOMETS ALEF AW" project.

**Ray Shapero, Pres., Valley Chapter, L. A. Yiddish Culture Club aka: Valley Yiddish Culture Club Valley Glen, CA.,**  
**Ph: 818-376-1640**  
**E-mail: rlsmmssl@aol.com**

## Komets Alef O (changed to Komets Alef Aw)

By Ray Shapero

We want our children to feel an affinity with their Yiddish heritage. Day schools and religious schools work hard to instill in them a knowledge and love of Hebrew and Israel. But the 1000 year link in the chain of our history has been missing. And the wonderful songs of our parents and grandparents are not being transmitted to our next generations.

We decided to start with the youngest children in our elementary grades and teach them some of the Yiddish songs sung at Jewish holidays. These can be incorporated in holiday programs in the day schools and religious schools.

We made a CD of popular Yiddish holiday songs to be given to music teachers in all 100 of our L.A. religious and day schools. In addition we sent song books having songs in English transliteration and Yiddish with histories as to their origin and significance. We hope that the youngsters will develop a love for Yiddish that will be with them throughout their lives.

We expect this pilot program to succeed and the forerunner to more Yiddish enrichment programs.

## Motke Thief on Stage

University Settlement presents the English world premiere of Sholem Asch's Yiddish gangster epic MOTKE THIEF. A portrait of a criminal. Written in Yiddish in New York City in 1917, MOTKE THIEF has some of the same characters from Asch's most famous play God of Vengeance, that was banned from Broadway in 1923.

The show opens November 17 at University Settlement, the oldest settlement house in America at 184 Eldridge Street. Obie award winner Aaron Beall directs a cast of 15 actors playing more than 30 roles. Irish born playwright, Caraid O'Brien, is the translator whose translation of God of Vengeance "set Show World aflame" according to the Village Voice. MOTKE THIEF received a new play commission from the National Foundation for Jewish Culture.

**Tickets are \$15 at [www.smarttix.com](http://www.smarttix.com) or by phone 212-868-4444.**

**More info [www.motkethief.com](http://www.motkethief.com) or call 212-715-1938.**

**Caraid's translation of God of Vengeance is at: [www.cafepress.com/yiddishplays](http://www.cafepress.com/yiddishplays)**