

# Der Bay

## The International Anglo-Yiddish Newsletter

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September 2005

Vol. XV No. 7

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### A Yiddish Historian Looks Back at the Summer of 2005

Decades from now your 2 year-old Yiddish Historian will look at the shelves of her Ivy League office, and find this copy of *Der Bay*. She will know about the resurgence of Yiddish, for it is all about her.

Yiddish has been through what is very much like the landscape after a volcanic eruption. The aftermath of poisonous gases spewing out of the volcanic cone, fiery blocks blasting through the air and the oozing volcanic flow engulfing everything in its path—all leave a ghoulish gray scene of utter devastation.

But Yiddish like the volcanic scene recovers. The physical forces of wind water/ice and the chemical actions help in the creation of new soils. Soon small plants and animals return—followed by larger ones, and a new Hawaiian Paradise is born.

Signs of the reinvigoration of Yiddish are all about us. Yiddish, today, is being reshaped by new people, new organizations and new alliances of older organizations. It is only when one looks at the global scene, as if through the peering lens of an orbiting satellite, that one sees the *big picture*.

All gone are the Yiddish theaters, schools, newspapers, journals, homes and businesses of the East European cities and towns. Gone are the great Yiddish centers of creativity that were the seeding grounds of our immigrant parents' landsmanshaftn.

There is only a small vestige of old Yiddish New York. The Jewish clothing sweatshops are

gone—having moved overseas and operated by people with odd sounding names and laboring in odd sounding places. Nor have they started to organize unions as our Yiddish-speaking elders did.

So where are these signs of new Yiddish organizations and vitality?

Just as the decay of old organic matter is the nourishment of new life, so are the old people and institutions the fodder and fertilizer of the new.

The merging of older groups and the sharing of resources and office space and buildings are wonderful examples of beneficial symbiotic relationships.

Likewise the splitting off, and spawning of new groups, adds a youthful vitality to the reinvigoration of Yiddish. Examples of the above situations can be seen in New York City with the Workmen's Circle, the Forward and with YIVO.

Other signs of this dynamic, youthful stamina are in the University Yiddish programs, klezmer groups, Yiddish cyberspace lists, Yiddish institutes, Yiddish conventions and Yiddish conferences.

One of the most exciting is the growth of Yiddish clubs and the IAYC (International Association of Yiddish Clubs). It is a 100% grassroots movement with no offices, no paid director and no paid staff. It will be having its 10<sup>th</sup> conference July 6-9, 2006 in Teaneck, NJ.

## WITNESS

And we shall be a witness for our times  
The grey and the white, the black and the brown;  
Far off clouds obscure the hills where ravens fly  
The sound of trumpets, drums and thunder  
And then -- stillness, smoke and ashes

And we shall be a witness for our times  
They will ask  
Why did no one speak out  
Why did no one care  
Why didn't anyone do anything  
Why was nothing done

And we shall be a witness for our times  
Why was it too soon  
Why was it too late  
Why were we all paralyzed  
Like dreamers in their sleep

And we shall be a witness for our times  
Why did we listen to them  
Why didn't we listen to others  
Why were all our efforts in vain  
Why did no one stop  
Why did nothing begin  
It was not enough

And we shall be a witness for our times

By: Andrea Meld

Andrea Meld, granddaughter of immigrants from Latvia, Romania, and the Ukraine, has a deep appreciation for Yiddish culture, which she traces to her childhood visits to New York City's Lower East Side to see her paternal grandparents.

Years later, while in graduate school, she studied Yiddish language with Ruth Peizer and then participated in student activities at Hillel. She also fell in love with Klezmer music, which, incidentally, provided the music for "dancing the hora" at her wedding.

Andrea studied Educational Psychology and received a doctoral degree from the University of Washington in 1985. She has since worked in educational assessment and research.

A workshop on teaching students about the Holocaust through the arts was the starting point for the poem, "And We Shall Be A Witness For Our Times." Murray suggested translating the poem into Yiddish. Andrea lives in the Seattle area with her husband, Marco Ferrarini.

## EYDES

un mir veln zayn an eydes far undzere tzaytn  
di groye un di vayse, di shvartze un di broyne;  
vayte volkn fartunklen di berg vu robn flien  
di klangn fun trumeytn, barabtn un duner  
un dan -- shtilkayt, roykh un ashen

un mir veln zayn an eydes far undzere tzaytn  
zey veln fregn:  
far vos hot kayner nit oysgerufn  
far vos hot es keynem nit ge-art  
far vos hot keyner nit epes geton  
far vos iz gornisht gevorn derfun

un mir veln zayn an eydes far undzere tzaytn  
far vos iz es geven tzu bald  
far vos iz es geven tzu shpet  
far vos zaynen mir geven gantz paralizirt  
vi kholomdike in zeyer shlof

un mir veln zayn an eydes far undzere tzaytn  
far vos hobn mir zey tzugehert  
far vos hobn mir tzu andere nit gehert  
far vos zaynen undzere ale pruvn gefalen tzu pust  
far vos hot es keyner nit opgeshtelt  
far vos hot gornisht ongehoyn  
es iz nit geven genug

un mir veln zayn an eydes far undzere tzaytn

Iberzetter: Murray Meld

Murray's first language was Yiddish, which was spoken with a Litvak accent. Literacy came to him with attendance in kheyder and growing up in ethnically-rich Bayonne, N.J., but time and career moves around the country resulted in its lack of use and the loss of fluency.

The opportunity to renew his connection with Yiddish came with retirement and returning to Seattle with his wife, Sophie (also a Yiddish speaker). Here, they found a group of Yiddish devotees who for years had been meeting to read, speak and sing together informally.

Corresponding with a cousin in Israel (a veteran of the Red Army and the only survivor of his European mishpokhe) also keeps Murray's Yiddish fresh and challenging.

**Editor's note:** Murray has had several articles published in *Der Bay*, including "Uncovering Yiddish in Seattle's Jewish Past". Along with Frank Krasnowsky, he co-chairs the Seattle Yiddish Group, which is a member of the IAYC. Murray can be reached at: [murmelo4@AOL.com](mailto:murmelo4@AOL.com)

## A Pen Pal from Italy

Fayvl un Dina diannefred@interfree.it

We wrote to Isabella in both Italian and Yiddish, and we asked her to respond to us in Yiddish. As you know, the Vilna Yiddish Institute has suspended activity for this year anyway. We are going to study Yiddish in July at the Martin Buber Institute in Bruxelles, Belgium for 2 weeks. We'll let you know about it.

I (Fayvl) also wanted to let you know what a success the pen-pal program is. Naturally, I never have the time to write as much as I want, but I enjoy corresponding in Yiddish immensely. In this way Yiddish is truly a living language. We shall be in touch with you after Isabella responds to our e-mail.

## East Bay Kindershul

The East Bay Kindershul offers a unique educational experience. As a link in the chain of schools that were established early in this century by immigrant Eastern European Jews, we pass along the rich culture of Yiddishkayt in a secular context.

Kindershul emphasizes the important contributions of Jews in the movements for social justice and being part of that tradition today.

We see the understanding of Eastern European life, immigration and life in the 'New World' as essential to the child's understanding of Jewish history. Finding out about one's own family history then becomes a natural part of the school program.

We celebrate holidays, and emphasize learning through cultural projects: art, music, drama, etc. In the past we have done a Sholem Aleichem play, sung at the Berkeley and San Francisco JCCs. We made an animated music video of a Yiddish folk song as part of a cultural exchange with a Jewish school in St. Petersburg, Russia.

We emphasize the Yiddish part of yiddishkayt. Yiddish songs, Yiddish phrases, and stories translated from the Yiddish are a basic part of our curriculum. For some children this will be their only Jewish education. For others it will be a prelude to Bas/Bar Mitzvah training. We offer a secular Bar/Bas Mitzvah class on Monday. 4:00-5:30 P.M. Interfaith and alternative families have always been an integral part of our Kindershul family.

Classes meet every other Sunday at the Berkeley Richmond JCC, 1414 Walnut St., Between Vine and Rose. We start at 10 a.m., and finish at noon. For information about Kindershul, call Gerry Tenney at 510-465-7911, or e-mail gtenney@earthlink.net

## A Wonderful Idea

Shalom, My name is Heather Morgan, and I am a freelance writer based in New York City. My work has been featured in newspapers, among them the NY Daily News, The Jerusalem Post, Forward and NJ Jewish News, the renowned weekly Time Out NY, as well as many national women's magazines, including Fitness, Mademoiselle, Marie Claire and Seventeen.

My focus of some years on global human-interest pieces has recently led me to an incredibly worthwhile story about the trend of corporations relocating part—or at times, all of their company to Israel. Stemming in part from growing anti-Semitism in Europe and elsewhere, this movement towards "corporate aliyah" is designed to lessen the problem of unemployment, which is cited as one of the key deterrents to people actualizing their move to Israel. This concept of helping people to realize their dream of aliyah through job/corporate relocation while also improving Israel's economy is embodied by an organization called Leavi.

I have just completed writing a thousand-word piece incorporating interviews I have done with a number of individuals who, with the help of Leavi, have successfully moved their job function or part of a company to Israel, as well as the perspectives of others whose moves are pending. Among other points, this article explores individuals' motivations for making aliyah, their experience of running a "satellite office" from Israel, and the role that Leavi has played in facilitating this process.

I have also interviewed two of the organization's chief officers and obtained a comment from the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI). The concept of corporate aliyah is tremendously newsworthy. Billion-dollar companies such as Microsoft and Intel already have Research and Development divisions in Israel; enlightening a North American audience as to the possibility of helping Israel while helping themselves economically and spiritually (in realizing their dream of aliyah) would undoubtedly be of much interest to your readers.

Please let me know if you would like to publish this article.

Best regards,

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**New York, NY 10011**  
**Phone: 646.325.4477**  
**E-mail: heathermorgan18@gmail.com**

# Yiddish and Polish Proverbs©

by Magdalena Sitarz, Cracow, Poland

We collated a list of corresponding Yiddish and Polish proverbs, arranged by subject-matter, and investigated cultural influences between Jews and Poles. We have analyzed language influences found in Polish and Yiddish proverbs.

We analyzed the corresponding Yiddish and Polish proverbs and established the areas of cultural influences, which are manifest in them. We have shown that proverbs are a very good basis for investigating influences of languages and cultures.

We analyzed Polish and Yiddish proverbs (not only the corresponding ones) and found mutual influences in vocabulary, morphology and syntax. The influence of Yiddish on Polish is only in vocabulary. It is important that the borrowed words not only deal with new concepts (e.g. Jewish religion), for which there was no word in Polish, but also with some already known ones (*cymes*, *kapcan*, *kliker*, *mecyja*, *mojra*, *pikes*, *pomelech*, *szabasnik*). Polish had a much greater impact on Yiddish than the other way around. Influences can be found in vocabulary, morphology and syntax.

In vocabulary the borrowed words deal mainly with everyday life: nature (landscape, animals, plants), furniture, tools etc., clothes, food and its preparation, people, professions, health and body, family, property, money, trade and there are only a few abstract meanings. Morphology and syntax had already been formed when Yiddish encountered Slavic languages.

Among proverbs there are some sentences or their parts borrowed as a whole, and some of the Polish words and structures used did not find their way either into spoken nor into written standard Yiddish language.

*A proverb is a true word*--says a Yiddish proverb, and *A proverb tells the truth*--so does its Polish equivalent. One could say that the corresponding Yiddish and Polish proverbs tell us the truth (or at least part of it) about mutual cultural contacts.

There are many equivalent proverbs that are only in Yiddish and in Polish. Often not only are their meaning, but their wording is exactly the same. If the wording differs, one cannot assume a borrowing (although it is possible). What is evident is the same attitude to a given problem, a similar attitude to life. The corresponding Polish and Yiddish proverbs cover the whole of life with its diversity and riches.

Equivalent proverbs confirm cultural contacts and influences in areas in general and abstract concepts concerning life and death. There are 30 such pairs (or groups of proverbs). Yiddish proverbs seem to be slightly more pessimistic—one observes it when the form of the corresponding proverbs differs. Yiddish uses more metaphors than Polish. In such cases it may suggest the direction of the borrowing with the Yiddish proverb as the original one.

An important feature is the form of proverbs about poverty that is conceived more strongly in Yiddish proverbs. The Jewish community suffered more from hardship than its Polish counterpart. This tells us a lot about the groups of people who used proverbs. They corresponded to the lower and middle classes of society more than the upper ones.

Yiddish proverbs are more metaphorical referring to God as somehow 'stronger'—God is seen as more omnipotent, stricter and further away than in Polish proverbs. The social group of people in which the influence occurred—the conceptions of God represented are those of a simple man and not of a rabbi or priest. Jews know the Bible better than Poles, for they were able to understand various metaphors that were put plainly in Polish proverbs.

With proverbs dealing with problems of man and his nature by simple people there are similarities. Both hold wise men in high esteem, and did not think much of peasants. Yiddish proverbs are often more elaborate, which suggest that the Polish proverb was the original one, since one of the characteristics of proverbs is their shortness, and Jews just added comments after the translation—as is often found if a Yiddish proverb uses a Hebrew quotation.

As the family is very important in Jewish and Christian society, there are more corresponding proverbs. The reason for so few borrowings is that normally women are the ones more concerned with family problems. Women were less flexible than men (in Jewish families it was not befitting for a woman to leave home and mix with strangers)—especially with strangers from the other nation. Men were *making history* also more in cultural contacts.

It is remarkable to see in the proverbs that the Polish and Jewish communities, which must have had many contacts with each other, shared so many common experiences and views. What is important is that we actually begin to see the influence in the spoken language. It tells us much about the average person of both societies and their contacts.

## Words for Yiddish Club Meetings

Every club should have at least one dictionary at its meetings. If the group is advanced then Yiddish and Hebrew dictionaries are essential. Weinreich, Harkavy, Niborski and Jacobsen have excellent ones. Be sure to have a magnifying glass for members who have trouble reading fine print.

For groups where members may not know the Yiddish/Hebrew letters, then Galvin & Tamarkin as well as Coldoff's dictionaries may be used.

There are several online sources that are helpful. *Der Bay* has 28 word lists divided into categories. One of the lists consists of verbs, and there are over 430 of them. The site uses the YIVO standard orthography with Roman letters.

Article -	der artikl
Chairperson -	der forzitser (m)
Club -	der klub
Complain -	baklogn zikh
Conference -	di konferents
Conversation -	der shmues
Date -	di date
Drink -	trinken, der trunk
Experience -	di genitshaft
Food -	dos esn, di shpayz
Guest -	der gast
Interrupt -	iberraysn
Joke -	der vits, di shpas
Lecture -	der referat, di lektsye
List -	di reshime
Location -	der plats
Magazine -	der zhurnal
Meeting -	di zitsung, dos bagegenish
Member -	der mitglid
Newspaper -	di tsaytung
Perform -	forshteln, oyftretn
Performance -	der funksionir
President -	der prezident
Program -	di program
Read -	leyen
Report -	der shos
Secretary -	der sekretar
Sing -	zingen
Snack -	dos iberbaysn, dos nosh
Song -	dos lid
Speak -	redn
Spell -	oysleygn, zogn di oysyes
Story -	di geshikhte, di mayse
Take Attendance -	oysrufn
Tell -	dertseyln
Time -	di tsayt
Translation -	di fartaytshung, di iberzetsung
Treasurer -	der kasir—Treasury - der oytzarnie
Write -	shraybn

## Conference in Vienna

By Astrid Starck <astrid.starck@unibas.ch>

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR SECTION  
Yiddish as a Medium of Cultural Transferences

Conference IRICS—Innovations and Reproductions  
in Cultures and Societies  
Congress Centrum Vienna, 9 to 11 December 2005  
<http://www.inst.at/irics/>  
Topic of Section: Yiddish as a Medium of Cultural  
Transferences

As a medium of Jewish and non-Jewish cultures  
Yiddish plays an interesting, versatile and unifying  
role. In all the places where a Yiddish culture and  
literature was created by Yiddish-speakers, first in  
Western and Eastern Europe, later in countries of  
emigration in North and South America, in South  
Africa, Australia and Israel, it had combined features  
of the Old Home and the new country, of the Self  
and the Other.

A new form of Jewish culture and literature has  
emerged simultaneously in the language medium of  
the new country. This has led to an astonishing  
interplay between Yiddish and the languages of the  
host countries.

From the 20th century Yiddish has created a kind of  
world literature and culture, for which the concept of  
"Yiddishophonie" seems to be very appropriate. The  
question which arises today is the following: is  
Yiddish able to meet the new challenges of the 21st  
century?

Abstract Submission should not exceed 200 words,  
should contain the Title of the Presentation, Contact  
Address, Body of the Abstract

Email Submissions are welcome  
Important Dates: Deadline of Submission of  
Abstracts: 03.09.2005

Acceptance Notification of Abstracts: 09.09.2005  
Final Programme of Section: 24.09.2005  
Section Language:  
English, French, German, Yiddish

Deadline to deliver the articles: depends on  
conference outline  
Suggestions, topics, abstracts to:

Astrid Starck, Prof. for German und Yiddish,  
Université de Haute  
Alsace, Mulhouse, France

Email: [astrid.starck@uha.fr](mailto:astrid.starck@uha.fr)

# THE SURVIVOR MITZVAH PROJECT – Helping Elderly Holocaust Survivors in Eastern Europe

In 2001 I traveled to Vilna to attend the first Litvak Congress. There I met **Prof. Dovid Katz**, Academic Director of the Vilnius Yiddish Institute at Vilnius University. Every year Prof. Katz goes on expeditions in Eastern Europe seeking out the last remaining elderly “shtetl” Jews, bringing them aid and documenting their unique life stories on film.

Knowing I was making a journey through small villages in Lithuania and Belarus he gave me a list of elderly Jews to visit and bring them food, Yiddish newspapers, and small packets of US dollars. I did, and had a wonderful and meaningful experience.

When I returned to the United States, with the help of Prof. Katz and his close friend and colleague **Mr. Chic Wolk**, we created *The Survivor Mitzvah Project*—dedicated to helping elderly and forgotten Holocaust Survivors in Eastern Europe. The list has grown to over 90 Holocaust Survivors in Lithuania, Belarus, Russia, Ukraine and Slovakia.

These last remaining Shtetl Jews, have little money for food, heat, or medicine and many exist on what food they can grow—mostly potatoes. But now, in their 80s and 90s, they are too old to even continue to dig the earth. Most are sole survivors of their families who were murdered by the Nazis, many are the last Jews in their town or village, and all are elderly, alone, and in dire need of help, human contact and a little loving kindness in the form of friendly communication from Jews the world over.

You can correspond and send aid directly to a person in Eastern Europe, perhaps a Landsman from towns such as Vasilkov, Kiev, Pinsk, Svencionys, Dnipropetrovsk, Grodno, Vilna, Brovary—to name just a few.

Once we have designated a recipient for your letters and help, you can write telling a little about yourself, your family and where your ancestors came from in the Old Country. You will receive a reply, written in Yiddish or Russian, and this will be the beginning of a wonderful friendship.

Last year, from Kaunas, Lithuania, 86-year-old Josif “Itske” Gavenda, wrote in Yiddish that the letter and aid I sent was “like Manna that G-d sent to the Jewish people in Sinai.”

Rakhil Fridman from Pinsk, Belarus writes, “From your letter I feel warmth. We have the same Jewish blood. When I think I have friends in America, Jewish people who think of me, this is very nice.”

Professor Meier Shub, founder of Judaic Studies Vilnius Yiddish Institute, writes long Yiddish letters on a variety of fascinating subjects, including philosophy and current events.

Inna Genyush from Grodno, Belarus, writes “I am very grateful to you for all the letters and help. Thank G-d he gives to the world such people like you who care about us.”

Yefim Fabie, 87 years old, from Kherson, Ukraine writes about the current political chaos brought to his country by Perestroika.

Karol Groszman, the last Hazzan in Bratislava, Slovakia writes: “In a small village in Romania in 1925, I attended Cheder. It was there I learned Jewish prayers and songs. I would never have imagined at that time how that education would be appreciated 50 years later in Bratislava.”

Eva Semyonovna Kalgina, from Grodno Belarus, has a severe case of diabetes. She lost her daughter and son-in-law. “Do you know a nice Jewish young man for my granddaughter? She is 22 years old, is studying medicine and writes English.”

Each person has a unique story about his or her life in pre-war times: some were slaves in the Gulag long after the war ended, some were survivors of the killing fields, some fought in the Russian Army or as Partisans in the forests of Belarus.

For these elderly and forgotten people, just knowing that there are people in the world who care about them, touches their hearts and gives them the will to live on.

*The Survivor Mitzvah Project's* sole purpose is to help these elderly Jews, as time is running out. These are people who have experienced first hand the horrors of the Holocaust. It is our hope that you will help and correspond with them. We can make sure that they will not be hungry in their final years.

For more information about the project, email me at [zzmail@sbcglobal.net](mailto:zzmail@sbcglobal.net) or call me at 800-905-6160.

**Zane Buzby**  
**The Survivor Mitzvah Project**  
**2658 Griffith Park Blvd. Ste. 299**  
**Los Angeles, California 90039**

**Editor's note: Chic Wolk will be a presenter at the next IAYC Conference.**

## KlezCalifornia 2005

The Berkeley Richmond JCC, in Berkeley, will be hosting KlezCalifornia 2005 this September 17 & 18 ... and it's going to be lebedik (joyful, rollicking)! We've planned a 2-day, affordable, family-friendly program of music (both listening & playing), dancing, singing, and stimulating presentations. Bring your instruments, a friend, your family, etc.

VERETSKI PASS - Stu Brotman, Cookie Segelstein and Josh Horowitz will thrill you with the art of klezmer. They will be our feature band Saturday evening (Sept.17), and teach classes for all levels on Sunday, including a master class for more advanced musicians.

STEVE WEINTRAUB - Der barimter dance instructor from Tshikage (Chicago) will lead us in a freylekhe evening as we dance our way around the BRJCC to the melodies of Veretski Pass and other talented musicians.

SPECIAL FAMILY CLASSES - We are featuring many classes for families (with or without children) who are not musicians. Bring di gantse mishpokhe to learn some Yiddish, sing a song, hear about the Yiddish Theater, do art projects .... and more.

SPECIAL TEEN PROGRAMS - THE ELECTRIC KLEZMER BAND, for teens into loud music ... bring your electric guitar, bass, drums, etc., and make Klezmer ROCK! (Bring your own amplifier too.) Plus, a Multi-Generation Klezmer Band. This ensemble class for players of all ages (who can "keep up") will bring kids and adults together to teach and learn from each other. You can enrich your klezmer skills by playing with others not in your age group.

CHAYALE ASH & YIDDISH THEATER - Acclaimed diva, Chayale Ash, will reminisce about her life and times in the Yiddish Theater. Stories sure to engage, entertain, and educate you.

SCHOLARS & TEACHERS - NAOMI SEIDMAN will talk on Yiddish literature in translation. HARVEY VARGA will help with your Yiddish phrase book. MARTIN SCHWARTZ will discuss the connections between Klezmer & Greek music. Prof. JOHN EFRON will lecture on Eastern European Jewish History.

REGISTRATION FEES - Saturday night is \$12 for Berkeley / Richmond JCC members and seniors, \$15 for other adults, free for teens & kids. Sunday is \$18 for BRJCC members and seniors, \$20 for other adults, and free for teens and kids.

More program information, including a schedule, is at: <http://www.klezcalifornia.org/>

## A Yiddish Wikipedia Journey

By Philip Fishl Kutner

All journeys begin with the first step. Oddly enough, this one had its origin in an apparently, short e-mail message from my dear friend, Morrie Feller of Phoenix, Arizona. It read:

"My Yalie grandson just informed me of a very interesting Web site. If you are not aware of it, here is the URL: <http://yi.wikipedia.org/wiki> It's all in Yiddish."

For *Der Bay* readers who are not familiar with Wikipedia, an explanation is in order. Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia that is constantly being updated and to which anyone is eligible to write.

Let us continue on the Wikipedia Journey. Clicking on the URL took me to a page that was to have Hebrew / Yiddish characters, but was only gibberish. Others could read the characters, but not your editor.

There was no turning back. The challenge to overcome barriers is my nature—the higher the hurdle, the greater is the challenge. After all this was merely a simple computer dead-end.

After poking around on a list of 2-letter abbreviations of Wikipedia languages, the abbreviation for Yiddish, not surprisingly, turned out to be YI. What else could it be?

With a glimmer of success this put me back on the trail of Wikipedia Yiddish. Ah, but the trail was not that simple, for when YI was inserted, there arose a new leg of the Wikipedia Journey.

YI turns out to be one of the 56 Chinese ethnic groups according to the classification of the Peoples Republic of China. They are the 7th largest Chinese group, with almost the same number as there are Israelis.

The First International Wikimania Conference was held in Frankfurt am Main, Germany August 4-8. The publicity said, "Come brainstorm with the global Wikimedia community about theoretical and practical uses and implications of *wikis*. A primary goal of the conference is to bring together the communities of the Wikimedia projects and to help them improve their understanding of one another."

Our online list Mendele started out as a free way to communicate in and about Yiddish, and remains the premiere list.

# GOSSIP (four short takes here)

By Bert Stratton—Yiddishe Cup Klezmer Band

## 1. "To Kugel," a New Verb

Yiddishe Cup recently Kugel-ed the owner of The Ark, a club in Ann Arbor, MI. One of Yiddishe Cup's biggest fans, Lea Grossman, delivered a homemade noodle kugel to The Ark's headquarters. The Ark's owner was startled—did he expect brisket with that?

File this one under "Jewish Forklore, 21st Century."

## 2. Ole, Oy Vey

Yiddishe Cup Klezmer Band has cornered the market on Cleveland's Spanish-speaking Jewish scene. This niche fits in the back seat of a Ford Taurus. (We occasionally play bar mitzvahs and weddings for Cleveland Clinic doctors originally from Latin America.)

We know a few Spanish tunes. And this will come in handy at our next concert, at the Chamizal National Memorial, an outdoor venue on the Rio Grande in El Paso, Texas. The crowd will be about 2,500 Hispanics, plus a handful of Jewish doctors.

What will we play for an encore? Think of it this way: When the Ukrainian dance troupes come to Cleveland, they do a Yankee hoedown for an encore.

We could go with "La Bamba," but we are sick of it, or we could do "El Rey," the mariachi tune. That would establish our bona fides along the border.

We've played El Paso before, a few years back. The predominately Hispanic crowd danced to everything we played. Our dance leader, Sir Dance-a-lot, called that show the "Jewish Mexican Woodstock."

## 3. World's Scariest Gig -- And Yiddishe Cup Wasn't Even Playing

That'd be day I was slunk in a chair at the "Jeopardy" studio in Los Angeles. My 23-year-old son, Teddy, was scheduled to play.

I sat in the audience next to a large "country" guy from Idaho, who was the father of the winner of the first few games. This winner, Bud, was a Bill Gates look-alike with Coke-bottle glasses. He ran a category on Hawaii, thanks to Bud who just returned from a Hawaiian vacation. Dad told me that.

The contestants were editors, teachers, reporters, law students and computer guys. Teddy was in a batch, or "class," of 13 contestants.

I'm sitting in the audience, through four games, thinking, "Are they not going to call my kid, and we'll have to fly back to Ohio and do this all over again?" ("Jeopardy" tapes 5 games a day.) I worried like my late father. Pathetic—one of the "Jeopardy" ushers told me it was conceivable Ted wouldn't play that day. Turns out she had her facts wrong. Only locals -- from places like Ventura, San Diego and Long Beach -- get held over. "Jeopardy" doesn't like paying return airfares for contestants from far away.

So Teddy got on.

It was like watching my kid try a 50-yard field goal at the Ohio State-Michigan game with a second left on the clock. I was helpless to affect the result, but I felt like I was kicking the ball. That's the part about being a parent—out-of-your-control joy and pain.

I'm ready to die now. Seen it all. He won two games.

I won't be that nervous again until Yiddishe Cup gets on national TV with Perlman. (2025?)

## 4. Math Problem

Yiddishe Cup played a blues bar in downtown Cleveland, as a joke sort of, to get through that nasty winter. We were supposed to get X dollars. After the show, the club owner said, "You don't really expect me to pay you X dollars, do you? How'd we get that figure? I grossed X-500 at the door."

I said, "OK, give me what you want." So he started handing me single dollar bills. Singles. Those are worth, like, a quarter. I said, "How about a check?"

He said, "You wouldn't want a check from me."

True.

He got out some \$50s and \$100s, plus 100 singles.

Well, at least it felt like a lot of dough. No more bar gigs, unless they're bar mitzvahs.

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Yiddishe Cup plays Brooklyn next year. When our lead singer heard about that gig, he asked, "You mean Brooklyn, Ohio?" (Brooklyn is a suburb of Cleveland.) No, the real Brooklyn, singer man! The Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, April 23.

**Burt Stratton, 216-932-3586, [www.yiddishecup.com](http://www.yiddishecup.com)  
[www.cdbaby.com/cd/yiddishecup](http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/yiddishecup) for audio clips**

## *Der Bay's Little Labels*

As I sit here looking at the little U.S. labels that I place each month on your copies, names flow by alphabetically from Professor Aarons in San Antonio, Texas to Milton Zwang of Toms River, New Jersey. The other countries range from Hindy Abelson in Toronto, Canada to Mira Zylberman of Elsternwick, Australia.

Issues go out to every state in the U.S. and 35 other countries. Foreign ones must be placed in envelopes. Except for Canada and Mexico, it costs almost three times as much to mail.

Finally there is a date after your name. That was when *Der Bay* last received your wonderful support to keep *Der Bay* going. Most readers send a little extra and some send in for multiple years or for a friend or relative.

These little labels are like messengers from me to you. It lets all the postage handlers know where to send these *Der Bay* copies. As each one goes on, I imagine my reaching out to touch you. It may sound funny, but it is true.

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Networking is having others help you get whatever **YOU** want. *Der Bay* is a real great networking tool. Use it to publicize, ask for info, or locate someone.

**Be sure we have your change of address and also e-mail address. Thank you!**

### **Nokh a bisl**

If you have read the column to the left, you know how much I appreciate your sustained support in helping *Der Bay*. If you have forgotten, won't you please do your fair share?

If all that you are interested in is to be made aware of Yiddish conferences, please let us know. You still freely can use *Der Bay's* website.