

Der Bay

The International Anglo-Yiddish Newsletter

November 2005

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IAYC Announces Its Exciting Tenth Conference—July 6-9, 2006 *IAYC Comes of Age: A Tribute to Yiddish Clubs*

The International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) started in 1993 as a small grass-roots movement, and blossomed into a major group on the international Yiddish scene. It bears the joys and responsibilities of preserving and fostering our Yiddish language and culture.

With the Statue of Liberty, the port of entry for most Jews entering the United States, the Lower East Side nearby and the rich resources of organizations and Yiddishists to draw from, and upon—this will be a conference not to miss.

Exciting—because it is in the New York City area (the conference site is Teaneck, NJ near the George Washington Bridge and buses stopping at the hotel going to Penn Station, Manhattan).

Because of the high quality of the program, the accommodations and the excellent location, this will be only the second time that we probably shall be overbooked—in Miami we had to turn away over 150 latecomers.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CONFERENCE

The Marriott at Glenpointe in Teaneck, NJ is a first rate hotel. We have been able to reserve a limited number of rooms at only \$99 plus tax, per room, per night with the privilege to extend the visit at the same rate. To get the special rate, at the time you make the reservation, you must mention the IAYC conference.

The format will be to start each morning with a plenary session and a very special all-morning plenary closing out on Sunday.

After the opening morning plenary there will be a morning and two afternoon sessions with 5 workshop/lectures going on simultaneously. The 30 presenters are dynamic speakers and come from all over the U.S. and Canada. In addition the plenary presenters and performers are exceptional.

Along with your dining pleasure each evening there will be an entirely different array of performers, culminating in the Saturday night Workmen's Circle Gala Banquet.

An expanded journal will permit individuals, Yiddish clubs and organizations to be included and honored at this very special conference. There will be over 20 exhibitor/vendor tables outside of the ballroom, featuring the largest display of exhibits and for-sale merchandise of any of the 10 IAYC conferences.

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

CONTACT INFORMATION

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

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 being built up by the host committee and IAYC Board of Directors.

Klezmer Shack Revisited

Several people lately asked your editor the same question and also an e-mail message from Di Bostoner Klezmerim (telling of a Waltham gig) were the incentive to write this column. The question deals with the future of mame-loshn.

The burgeoning list of Yiddish institutes, sof vokhn, conferences, institutes, newsletters, classes and clubs, and the remarkable success of the NYBC under the leadership of Aaron Lansky have been the bases of articles in *Der Bay*. This one is about a remarkable klezmer website

If you have access to the web, you should visit Ari Davidow's website, Klezmer Shack. If it appears that I admire and am indebted to Ari, I am, for he was my first computer guru and introduced me to the WELL.

Especially if you are interested in Klezmer music you should visit Ari's very extensive site related to Jewish music. Below are my favorite links on his site—The Klezmer Shack.

Bands and Performing Groups: Klezmer, Jewish, and Related or Derivative Musics.
www.klezmershack.com/contacts/klezbands.html

Listing your gig on the Klezmer Shack website
www.klezmershack.com/forms/eventlisting.html

If you are connected to Jewish music—klezmer, Sephardic, Israeli, Cantorial—and wish to be to listed, go to:
www.klezmershack.com/formstml

Clues on making your own klezmer website.
www.klezmershack.com/howto.html#web

Der Bay continues to be the major listing for all Yiddish events, internationally. However, you should list your events in as many places as possible. If it is a local event, be sure to have it in your local Anglo-Jewish newspaper. Listings are usually free.

For klezmer groups, make up a list of free resources online, and in hardcopy, to which you send monthly updates—network, network, network. These are the 3 most important words in free advertising. Dad's best advice was "Don't pay for what you can get free."

Finally, Ari, thank you once again for all you did in getting me and many others started in becoming computer novices.

Der Bay Readers Are Leaders

by Philip Fishl Kutner

More accurately, the title should read, "Many *Der Bay* Readers Are Leaders." The majority of our readers are Yiddish club leaders, Yiddish teachers, klezmer group leaders, translators, authors, performers, lecturers or activists in Yiddish organizations.

What are the prime qualities of leadership? Is a leader born or made? Is it nurture or nature? Are leaders those who rise to the occasion during an emergency? Would FDR or Churchill be considered great if it were not for WWII?

Yiddish now needs leaders both on the macro level and the micro level. Aaron Lansky has risen to be a major leader on the international scene. We have many local leaders who go far beyond what one would expect. Perhaps you or your group leader is one of them. This article addresses leadership traits.

The Great Leader

- **is a risk taker**—one who is not afraid to break new ground, or try new ways.
- **has high standards**—one who strives to improve both oneself and others.
- **takes responsibility**—accepts blame for failures, yet passes around accolades for success.
- **manages details**—sees to it that others things are done either by delegating or doing them.
- **influence others**—inspires the group by reaching out and stimulates the others.
- **knows oneself**—stresses one's strengths and does not rely on others for his weaknesses.
- **develops others to take one's place**—trains others so that one can rise to an even higher level.

How would you rate yourself? If you can answer in the positive to:

**six out of the seven, consider yourself superior.
five of the seven, consider yourself excellent
four of the seven, consider yourself very good
three of the seven, consider yourself good
two of the seven, consider yourself fair
one of the seven, consider yourself poor
none of the seven, reconsider your position.**

Your editor rated himself very good. YOU should be proud of YOUR effort to foster our mame-loshn!

Folksbiene: Nat'l Yiddish Treasure

Folksbiene is a worthy player on the Yiddish scene, as it continues to expand and improve in quality with new programs and variations on old ones. It deserves our attention and financial support. The many new young performers give it a vibrancy equal to its first-class performances. The 2005-2006 Season is well underway and there still are tickets available for your group outings.

Their colorful and musical website is located at: www.folksbiene.org/homepage.htm or clicking on the Yiddish links page on *Der Bay's* website. You can register to be on their e-mailing list

Performance Schedule

A GLEZELE TEY: A series of free performances on Saturday at 7:00 P.M. in the JCC lobby. Tea & cookies served during the show "On 2nd Avenue."

Oct. 29—Zalmen Mlotek, "The Making of 'On Second Avenue'."

Nov. 5—Henry Carrey, A Musical Program Honoring His Mother, Leah Post Carrey.

Nov. 12—ASHIRA (Arienne Slack, Laura Lenes, Leah Moss), A Jewish Musical Program.

Nov. 19—Mike Burstyn & Zalmen Mlotek, A Tribute to Legend Lillian Lux.

Nov. 26—Sruli & Lisa, A Klezmer Duo in Concert, Klez Kabaret.

Dec. 10—Sholem Berger & Celeste Sollod, Perform George Der Naygerik

Dec. 17—Kolye Borodulin, Instant Yiddish, Learning Yiddish in 45 Minutes.

Dec. 24—Khanike Simkhe, Music, Pontshkes

Kids and Yiddish: Unplucked: Nov. 13-Jan 1, 2006 at 11:00 A.M., Joanne Boarts and Zalmen Mlotek, JCC in Manhattan, call 800-9-YIDDISH

Bar Kokhba, Dec. 6, 2006 at 7:00 P.M.,

ESN: Adrienne Cooper, Frank London and Lorin Sklamberg—Saturday, January 28, at 8:00 P.M. and Sunday January 29, 2006 at 3:00 P.M.

Purim Shpiel: March 11, 2006 at 8:00 P.M.

Folksbiene Cabaret: April 6, 2006, Yiddish Theater Songs, at Don't Tell Mame, call, 800-9-YIDDISH

Ghetto Tango: April 27, 8:00 P.M., Adreinne Cooper and Zalmen Mlotek, JCC in Manhattan, call 800-9-YIDDISH

The Folksbiene is located at the Manhattan Jewish Community Center. The Administrative Offices can be reached by calling 212-213 2120, and they are located in the Workmen's Circle/Forward Building at 45 East 33rd, 3rd floor, New York City, NY 10016. Their press contact is: Beck Lee at Media Blitz, phone: 718-403-0914

KlezKamp Celebrates 20 Years

When a superior organization marks a special occasion, the combination is unbeatable. In your editor's opinion, Anyone who is very interested in Jewish music, especially klezmer, should not miss this event.

First, KlezKamp is a program and production of Living Traditions, and a product of its founder and executive director, Henry Sapoznik. Now, let's turn to the particulars.

Henry Sapoznik's array of instrumentalists on his KlezKamp music staff reads like a Who's Who of the Jewish music world. To name just a few, the list includes; Josh Horowitz, Frank London, Ken Maltz, Dena Ressler, Pete Sokolow, Deborah Strauss, Jeff Warschauer as well as Henry himself.

As far as the vocal program is concerned, the list gets even better. With quality stars like Joanne Borts, Adrienne Cooper, Susan Leviton, Zalmen Mlotek, Paula Rosenzweig and Paula Teitebaum, it is understandable why this event is so exciting and ranks as one of the not to miss for those whose major Yiddish interest is in Jewish music.

Along with the instrumental and vocal aspect of KlezKamp is that of The Dance. Felix Fibich shows off his choreographic skill along with Steve Weintraub. Steve skillfully shows his talent in the "shers" and "freylekhs."

In addition to the musical portion of the program there are very good presentations by outstanding teachers. They include:

- Hershl Glasser: Jewish Geography
- Miriam Isaacs: Words as Music
- Anita Norich: Yiddish Holiday Stories & Poems
- Michael Wex: Daytsh af tselakhis

Rounding out this program is Foodways: Jewish Holiday Cooking with Anne Rosenzweig, and Paper-cutting with Adam Whiteman.

Living Traditions is located in the Workmen's Circle Building at:
45 East 33rd St.. Suite B-2A
New York City, NY 10016

To contact them you can reach their website by clicking their listing at *Der Bay's* website or going to: www.klezkamp.org

e-mail: info@livingtradition.org
ph: 212-532-8202
fax: 212-532-8238

Yiddish and the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag

by Philip *Fishl* Kutner

What is the relationship between the two items in the title? They both have two parts. Sometimes we forget that Yiddish is the language AND culture of our people for almost the last thousand years.

So, too, is it with our pledge of allegiance (even said at ballgames). We say, "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America AND to the republic for which it stands."

Since *Der Bay* is an Anglo-Yiddish newsletter, of course the emphasis is on Yiddish and not American politics. However, the analogy is exactly the same. **We spend much time on the Yiddish language, and it is a wonderful tool, but it is for the people who used the language that also deserve our attention.**

Too often we get hung up on the vocabulary and grammar of Yiddish, albeit important, and place a lower priority on our persecuted, but highly innovative and creative ancestors who beat all odds. They came out as shining lights here and in the only true democracy in the Middle East. We are a remarkable people and have a right to be very proud of our many accomplishments.

Let us turn to the practical end and see how we can use our rich Yiddish cultural heritage as material for programming at some of our Yiddish Club meetings. The possibilities are almost endless. Here are just a few applicable areas and suggestions on how to implement them.

GENEALOGY is the study or investigation of ancestry and family histories. Where are the old family photos, the old letters written in Yiddish and memorabilia from the *Old Country*? Not only can they be the basis of wonderful club meetings, but they can be the vehicle for intergenerational links to your children and grandchildren. Many letters and photos have names or dates on the back and can help in identifying the individuals.

Have a member of the local genealogical society give a club presentation. JewishGen is the major online site on the subject. It is an affiliate of the Museum of Jewish Heritage. With great software programs genealogical recordkeeping is much simpler.

Gary Mokotoff is the founder and editor of *Avotaynu*, the major journal on Jewish genealogy. It is located at 155 N. Washington Ave., Bergenfield, NJ 07621. Phone: 201-387-7200, Email: info@avotaynu.com Website is at: www.avotaynu.com/journal.htm

GASTRONOMY is:

1. The art or science of good eating.
2. A style of cooking, as of a particular region. We all have favorite recipes that mom and bobe handed down. The list of recipes is very long. They include; appetizers, hearty soups, entrees, delicious desserts and special holiday treats.

Dos Bletl, the Toronto Friends of Yiddish's great newsletter, regularly publishes dos kokhlef. The column has a recipe and instructions in Yiddish as well as in English. I hope my constant urging will have them publish the series in a booklet.

First one reads through the items and you will learn the Yiddish words for the ingredients and utensils used. In my group the discussion then centered around the merit of the recipe and why their bobes way is much better.

Another source of information is *Der Bay's* master lists of words. On the website are 28 lists which include

GEOGRAPHY is the distribution of people and locations. One of the first questions people ask is "where are you or your family from?" Most of us know very little about the geography of Eastern Europe—its cities, rivers and mountains.

An exciting program that can be used that includes activities utilizing geography is landsmanshaftn. The New York area had several thousand of these "clubs." Its members came from the same city or region in Eastern Europe. My family belonged to the Glovner Society—Glowno, Poland. YIVO has the archives of many landsmanshaftn not now extant.

Locating the shtet or shtetlekh where your Yiddish club members' ancestors originated can be done with maps of the area. Using a large map and have each person locate and then place a pin or paper dot on the city gives a pictorial view of where their ancestors originated.

The map of Poland that I use is 35" x 42" with a scale of 1:700,000 (1 cm = 7 km or 1 inch = about 11 miles).

The history of Poland is that of changing boundary lines. Poland was not a country from 1795-1918. Its boundary also was changed after WWII. Russia annexed the eastern third including Gdansk, formerly Danzig.

Yiddish Insects: Di Yidishe Insekt fun Stanley Siegelman

Ant: Di Murashke
Murashkes darfn gayn, mistome,
Tsu zayere "picnics" in di zumer.

Bedbug: Di Vants
Di vants, er krikht arayn in bayner;
M'zayt im nisht—er iz a klayner.

Bee: Di Bin
Di bin, zi flit un makht a buzz—
Un kaynim toke vayst farvuz.

Cockroach: Der Tarakan
Der tarakan loyft oyf krume fis:
Er kukht oys mudne (zayer mies)

Cricket: Di Gril
A yenta-insekt iz di gril:
Zi kvetshet ven di nakht iz shtil.

Fly: Di Flig
Di flig hot lib in drek tsu zayn;
Bay im iz pishokhts oykhit "fine".

Gnat: Di Muk
Di gnat, s'iz emess, iz a muk;
Zayn nomen rhymes mit luck, un azoy vayter

Grasshopper: Der Shpringer
Sinatra's gevayn a voyle zinger,
Un nisht a nar, vi Jerry Shpringer.

Locust: Der Heysherik
Der heysherik! a shrek? avade!
Men gefint im in Hagadah.

Louse: Der Loyz
A zokh vos voynt in hor fun "boys":
In Yiddish zogt men bloyz: "a loyz".

Mosquito: Di Moskit
Di moskit bayst un nemt oys blut.
Feh! ze tit undz nit kayn gut!

Moth: Der Mol
Er makht, in klayder, "kvayt a hole";
In Yiddish ruft men dos "a mol".

Praying Mantis: Der Frumer
An erlikher, er bentsht shoy'n ales,
Un davnt (yo!) miton a talis.

Termite: Der Termit
Der termit iz an insekt shtoltz:
Er gayt in d'rerd un est no r holtz.

Morrie Feller Writes from Phoenix

Editor's note: here is a perfect example of the old adage—if at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

The American Gathering of Holocaust survivors publishes a journal, "Together", two or three times a year which it sends to the members of its organization, plus some who are not directly members. Somehow or other, since some of our dearest friends are survivors, and since we have also had the pleasure of meeting and knowing Ben Meed, the president of this organization, plus his wife, Vladka, we also have been on the mailing list of "Together".

Some years ago, I wrote a letter to the editor complaining that the only Yiddish word in this journal was in the masthead. Inasmuch as for most of the survivors Yiddish was their native tongue, I felt that there should be some Yiddish also in the body of the journal. I never received an answer to my letter.

A few months ago I received the latest issue of "Together", and I decided to try again. This time there apparently is a new editor, Jeanette Friedman, who responded to my letter. She not only promised to publish my letter, but also invited me to submit a Yiddish piece for consideration to include in the next issue.

So I submitted a copy of Yugnt-Himen, by Shmerke Kaczerzinski which he wrote for the Yugnt-Club, a ghetto organization of teenagers. I also included a short bio of Kaczerzinski, plus the poem was also given in transliteration and included an English translation.

Jeanette liked it very much, and told me that she plans to include it in the next issue which will probably not come out until next January. Also, she said that I should plan on becoming a columnist who will submit more of such Yiddish writing which would be appealing to the survivors. Probably one reason that she responded so favorably is because she is involved in Yiddish herself. She is on the Board of Zalmen Mlotek's Yiddish theater in New York.

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Morrie is on the Board of Directors of the IAYC. He is a Yiddish teacher and former Hebrew teacher and leads the Phoenix based leyenkrayz. He is well-known for presentations at conferences on using the computer for Yiddish. He has been a long-time contributor to *Der Bay*, and can be reached at: mfeller@cox.net

NY Teacher Certification Exams' Bilingual Education Assessments in Yiddish and/or Hebrew

Dear Sholem Berger,

We obtained your contact information through *Der Bay*, The newsletter's translator information page. We hope you will assist us in locating professionals and/or educators to assist us in scoring activities for the assessments in Yiddish and/or Hebrew.

National Evaluation Systems, Inc. (NES®), as contracted by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) is seeking native and/or fluent speakers of languages other than English to assist in scoring the written and spoken components of the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations (NYSTCE®). At this time we are in the process of developing a scorer-pool of educators and professionals to participate in scoring the recently redeveloped Bilingual Education Assessments in Hebrew and Yiddish. We hope you will consider serving as a scorer for this very important activity and/or may recommend qualified individuals.

The purpose of the NYSTCE® program is to ensure that teachers seeking certification have the knowledge and skills necessary to teach effectively in NY State Schools. The Hebrew and Yiddish Bilingual Education Assessments (BEAs) are required of candidates seeking a bilingual education extension certificate. These tests consist of multiple-choice questions and constructed response assignments. They include listening, speaking, reading, and writing components. Scorers are provided with a thorough orientation to the methodology of assessing the constructed assignments.

Scoring sessions are held after each test administration at the NES-Malta, NY office, located 25 miles north of Albany. Individuals participating in these scoring sessions are typically requested to commit one or two working days, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.. Scorers are compensated on an hourly basis for orientation and all scoring activities. Catered lunch and refreshments are provided daily. Individuals traveling more than 40 miles (one-way) to Malta, NY are eligible for travel expense reimbursement and overnight accommodations.

If you are interested in being a scorer, and/or would like to nominate friends or co-workers, please send email to nyscore@mail.nesinc.com or you may call Elizabeth Murray Horowitz, Foreign Language Project Manager 800-877-4594 or 518-899-7255. We hope you will participate.

Words of Endearment

Admiration	di bavunderung
Admire	bavundern (v)
Adorable	tayer
Adore	lib
Affection	di libshaft
Amorous	libe
Beau	der feler
Beautiful	sheyn
Beauty	sheynkayt
Beloved	balibt
Caress	der glet, gletn (v)
Cherish	tayer haltn
Cute	kheynevdk
Darling	di lyuve
Dear	tayer
Dearest	tayerst
Dearly	tayer
Devoted	ibergegebn
Devotion	ibergegebn dik
Dream	der kholem
Embrace	arumnemen
Enamored	farlibt
Endearment	hartsikayt
Fiancé	di kale
Fond	lib hobn
Fondest	libst
Fondness	di libshaft
Gorgeous	prekhtik
Handsome	sheyn
Handsomest	shenste
Heart	dos harts
Honey	der honik
Infatuated	farlibt iber di oyern
Infatuation	di farblendung
Kiss	der kush, kushn
Kissing	kushn
Love	di libshaft
Love, to	lib hobn (v)
Loveable	liblekh
Lovely	kheynevdk
Lover	der gelibter
Passion	di laydnshaft
Passionate	laydenshaftlekh
Please	zay azoy gut
Please, to	gefeln (v)
Pleasurable	fargenigik
Pleasure	der maykhl
Romance	der romans
Romantic	romantish
Sweet	zis
Sweetest	zisest
Sweetheart	der gelibter, di gelibte
Yearn	benken (v)

Dear reader, do you know any additional words?
Do you disagree with any of the translations?

Call for Papers

Date: Sunday, Feb. 26th to Monday, Feb. 27th, 2006

Location: Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies, New York University, New York City

Theme: What Does the Field of "Yiddish Studies" Mean in the 21st Century?

Announcing a graduate student conference on the varieties of Yiddish cultural, historical, and linguistic expression either located within Eastern Europe, or emanating to diasporas such as the Americas, Israel.

We seek papers engaging with Yiddish language, its diverse literatures, Yiddishist ideologies, or historical projects which make use of Yiddish sources and/or what we may tentatively call, "Yiddish culture." Our aim is also to deconstruct these very categories and question what it means to study Yiddish.

Our goal is to create a multi-disciplinary conversation among emerging scholars. We encourage diverse submissions. Potential topics may include, but are not limited to: Yiddish cookbooks, the status of Yiddish as a minority language, nationalist movements, Yiddish theatre, gender and Yiddish literature, Jewish presses between the World Wars, the presence (or absence) of Yiddish in Israel, Holocaust memoirs, and Jewish political organizations.

This conference will offer a unique opportunity to present works in progress and receive critical feedback from your colleagues, as well as faculty members, who will serve as chairs of the panels. In addition, presenters will have the opportunity to submit their papers for publication in a volume of conference proceedings.

We are pleased to announce our keynote speaker will be Professor Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (Performance Studies, New York University). Travel funds may be available.

Please send a 300-400 word abstract, along with your contact information, by November 15th to: yiddishconference@gmail.com

Please send any inquiries to the same email address, or call: 212.998.8980

The Organizing Committee:
Shiri Goren, Hannah Pressman, Lara Rabinovitch
PhD Candidates

Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies,
New York University

Club Idea from Milwaukee

Dink Holzman (papadink@aol.com)

This letter may be of interest to Yiddish clubs looking for something different for their meetings. Not an easy task, but it sure was fun. I purchased Sid Weinstein's book on *Gastronomical Judaism* which happens to be a great book on cooking done by our Yidishe Mames.

To carry it one step further, we decided to try and have gastro "nosh" where we would serve a little herring, kikhlakh, kugel and mandelbreyt—a little sample for each member. When I passed around the sheet for people to sign up on the dish they would like to bring, I ended up with over forty volunteers to bring food, and we had a luncheon instead of a nosh

This was our menu for today (not kidding) gefilte fish, gehakte leyber (vegetarian and the real stuff), 3 kinds of herring, kikhlakh, chopped eggs with onions and shmaltz, challah and Jewish rye bread. Would you believe, someone brought g r i b e n e s? That was the forshpayz!!!

For the delicious entrees there were kugels (6 different varieties), varnishkes and kasha, knishes, kosher wieners, pirhakes (stuffed cabbage), kneydlakh and blintzes. And of course there was dessert. We had strudel, lots of mandelbreyt, and honey cakes. We had planned on serving alka-seltzer, but that person didn't show up. He blew his assignment.

We had a turnout of eighty members at our Yiddish club, and because everyone volunteered to bring food, we did not have to charge anything for the luncheon.

We finished the meeting by singing songs pertaining to food—Bulbes etc. Paul Melrood delivered a speech on the history of "TSHOLENT". I did a couple of old Alan Sherman parodies pertaining to food. Jackie and Mel Askot did a couple of short plays out of Sid's book, Frieda Levine sang and Pearl Stein concluded the meeting with a glossary of Jewish dishes with side remarks about each item.

Everyone rolled themselves out of the room, and I guarantee you that they all had a good time. Like I said, most of the reading material came from Sid Weinstein's book. And if any club wants a different kind of meeting, I suggest a Gastronomical Yiddish get-together. It was worth all of the effort put into it by my wonderful committee consisting of my wife Reggie, Frieda Levine and Charlotte Shavzin.

Dankn Tsu Got—A Tale of a Katrina Survivor

by Marilyn Cohen

On August 27, 2005, we evacuated from Metairie, LA, a suburb 12 miles west of downtown New Orleans, the day before mandatory evacuation was ordered for citizens to escape Hurricane Katrina. I remembered our horrible experience when we evacuated in the two prior hurricanes. What a mess: bumper-to-bumper traffic from Metairie to Houston, and to Dallas, taking 20 hours instead of the 6-8 hour drive, and navigating at the point of exhaustion and with no visibility.

We had an hour to pack. Bill wanted to leave before the contraflow was in effect. Contraflow is having all traffic go in the same direction. All of I-10 would go north, and cut over to a western intersecting highway.

I had called my friend Judy in Tallahassee, FL. We reached the state of Mississippi, four minutes before their contraflow was put into effect. By the time we reached Milton, FL, 75 miles from Tallahassee, it was dark. We stayed at the only motel we could get in Milton, an expensive Holiday Inn Express with availability only for that night.

Judy's house was comfortable. The problem was her limited Internet access: she had slow AOL. It was maddening to try to communicate with the outside world. We did not have a cell phone. The TV—our only window to the hurricane—gave a very desolate picture of the aftermath of the hurricane: the devastation was very horrific and unreal to us. What had happened to our neighborhood, our house, and our friends, we wondered?

After four days, we left and drove to Bill's cousin Bernie's house in Jacksonville, FL. There we tracked the hurricane news on three computers, and we had unlimited phone and TV access. We bought a cell phone, which seemed necessary for the first time. We stayed for a week. Then, Bernie and Ambar put us up in her mother's house while she was visiting in Chile. Now we had our own, house with no computer and no cable—only two TV channels.

We were set to go home after 3 weeks in Florida. Metairie residents were allowed to return on Monday, September 19. But Hurricane Rita appeared—we couldn't go home. Think of all the New Orleans evacuees who went to Houston to escape Katrina and had to evacuate again for Rita!

While we were in Jacksonville, cousin Bernie took us to the local Jewish community center (the JCA). Through the Internet we tracked Jewish friends' whereabouts on Google's Jewish nola.com web site. We found three New Orleans families staying in

Jacksonville. One man, Stanley (Shia) Schwam, had been a member of Fannie Yokor's New Orleans Yiddish class, "Lomir Redn Yidish". Fannie, herself, is still in Atlanta now with her family.

We left Jacksonville on Monday, intending to stop at a motel in Pensacola. Bill was worried about finding gasoline and a place to stay if we went further east. He drove through blinding rain for the last 50 miles before Pensacola. Bill, the eternal optimist, said we could drive all the way home. It was too early to stop—only noon--and the sun would come out—today!

After a 10 ½ hour trip on I-10, we took I-12 to avoid the broken twin bridges over Lake Pontchartrain, going into Slidell, LA. We went to the north shore of the lake and took the Causeway, back into Metairie. We drove home along W. Esplanade Ave., parallel to the lake. That street intersects the street we live on. We saw all the devastation caused by the hurricane: mountains of soaking wet carpets, discarded furniture in ruins, broken sheetrock, roofs covered with blue tarp, trees and branches down, the sidewalks and some of the streets covered with debris. It was much worse than you could anticipate from the media. Most of the houses had been flooded: the effect was moldy, ruined belongings.

As we approached our neighborhood (some street lights were not functioning), we saw less debris until we turned onto our block. We saw a hit and miss pattern of destruction. Our house had shingles and cedar shakes off the roof and siding; our front porch and under the roof soffit hanging down; our neighbor's siding in our driveway; our attic fan cover and storm drain covers strewn around.

We opened the front door to see leaves and mud and evidence of water in the foyer that had dried; mold on a wall under a window sill in the dining room; a water spot on one ceiling; one garage door broken off the garage door opener with the opener mechanism hanging down; an attic fan burned out, and the fence broken, hanging at a crazy angle.

We emptied the refrigerator of four weeks of putrid food and cleaned it and deodorized it. Our house is livable and comfortable.

A neighbor said that we must have left our front door unlocked when we left town. Her daughter saw the door open (the wind must have blown it open). The daughter locked the door thus saving our house from major wind and flood damage.

Houston and the Hurricane Rita

By Barbara Goldstein

We evacuated from our home in Houston to San Antonio, Texas. Our original plan was to fly to San Jose, California on Friday morning, September 23, but our flight was cancelled on Thursday afternoon. After we learned about the cancellation, my husband Steve and I drove south on Highway 59 towards Corpus Christi. The information from the national weather bureau indicated that the hurricane likely would make landfall on either Galveston Island or farther northeast along the Texas coast.

Thousands of evacuees were parked in cars along routes leading north, northeast, and west of Houston; consequently Steve and I gambled and headed southwest at 5:00 p.m. First, we took one of the cars to an enclosed tiered parking garage not far from the house. After we parked it on a high level to avoid water problems, and proceeded with our evacuation.

We had a full tank of gas, bottles of water, pillows, blankets, ice, flashlights, batteries, battery powered radio, packets of tuna, hardboiled eggs, baked chicken, peanut butter and jelly, two loaves of bread, canned vegetables, fresh apples, utensils, toilet paper, paper toweling, bleach, dishwashing detergent, bar soap, plastic tablecloths, as well as clothing and toiletries that a normal traveler would carry. We looked like the Joads in *The Grapes of Wrath*.

The road was packed with caravans of families fleeing the city, along with eighteen-wheelers. So many of the evacuees were Hispanic, and they were traveling to join their families in the Texas Valley and across the border in Mexico. Steve and I traveled only 125 miles in 5 hrs. Along the route there were only two open gas stations with horrendously long lines; there were no vacancies in any of the motels; all the restaurants we saw were closed and also boarded up.

We stopped at a rest area near Victoria, Texas. The condition of the bathroom was ghastly and conjured up images of the Superdome in Louisiana. We pulled into Victoria, Texas, a virtual ghost town, where we spent the night sleeping in our car in the parking lot of a motel for protection. Before sunrise the next morning, we went to a hospital in town in order to use the restrooms and clean up.

We started for Corpus Christi with the intention of driving west until we would come to Laredo—when my brother David in New York called us via the cell

phone. He insisted that he would find a hotel room for us in San Antonio and would call us back with the information. He did!

He located and reserved a room for us at a posh Marriott Hotel near the Riverwalk and Alamo. Thanks to David, we were rescued. We turned around and took a local, country highway to San Antonio for about another 100 miles northwest from Victoria. In San Antonio, all of the services were available. We arrived at the hotel and once we were inside of our room, we immediately fell asleep from weariness.

On Sunday, we returned to Houston via the same route that we took to get away from the city, and it took only a normal 4 hours to travel the entire distance from San Antonio via Victoria. We found The house here in good shape. Only dry leaves, and twigs were scattered over the roof and in the yards. We had both electricity and water. On Sunday, supermarkets were open and half the gas stations were operating.

Some of Steve's employees who live in Pearland, Galena Park and other locations in the greater Southeast Houston area did not fare so well. Some still have power outages. Some have water damage in their homes. All of them had frightful trips; one was on the road 36 hours before reaching Dallas. Another was on the road 22 hours before reaching her destination. Others spent 18 hours on the road.

I visited the offices and the atmosphere was glum. I did the supermarket shopping for one employee and her family. I am hoping that this wave of depression will pass quickly; everyone is really exhausted from our ordeal, both physically and also mentally. Hopefully, the coming weekend will provide recovery for us all.

Editor's note: Barbara Goldstein has been the IAYC recording secretary for several terms, and has been The Yiddish Network (TYN) contact for Houston. She can be reached at: besg@ev1.net

The Houston Yiddish Vinkl, meets the second Monday at 8 P.M. and the Houston Jewish Literary Society meets every Wednesday at 1:00 P.M. The Society contact is Yiddish teacher, Susan Ganc.

There is also a Yiddish Oneg Shabbat Club in Houston, that meets every Saturday at 3:00 P.M., (contact phone number is: 713-995-9476).

Binyumen *Ben* Schaechter

Ben is an award-winning composer of musicals, revue songs and cabaret songs which have been performed in theatres and cabarets everywhere. He has been represented off-Broadway by his musical *Double Identity*, and in four revues: *Naked Boys Singing* (now 5 years running in New York; also performed throughout five continents); *Pets!* (published, Dramatic Publishing); *That's Life!* (Outer Critics Circle nomination); and *Too Jewish?* (with Avi Hoffman), for which he was also the Musical Director and on-stage pianist/back-up singer (nominated, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle Awards).

Other musicals include: Eugene O'Neill National Music Theatre Conference), *Dinner At Eight* (2001 BMI Foundation's Jerry Bock Award for Outstanding Achievement in Musical Theatre); *The Wild Swans* (ASCAP's Bernice Cohen Award for Outstanding Achievement in Musical Theatre).

His music has been honored and featured on channels PBS, ABC and NBC; and recorded on nine CDs, including five original cast albums and *It Helps To Sing About It*, all songs with Ben Schaechter's music.

He is an alumnus of the BMI Lehman-Engel-Musical Theater Workshop, and a member of ASCAP and the Dramatists Guild.

His one-man show, *The Shtetl Comes To Life*, has been performed across the US and in Paris. From *Kinahora To Kuni-Ayland*, is a musical revue of songs about the Jewish experience in America, including songs from *Second Avenue* and the Yiddish vaudeville written by Leo Fuchs, Aaron Lebedeff, Menashe Skulnik and others, with Schaechter originals. (Songs are in Yiddish, English and what is referred to as Yinglish.) It premiered in 2004 and he has toured with it, together with his daughter, Reyna.

Ben is musical director of the Pripetshik Singers, the acclaimed, one-of-a-kind ensemble of native-Yiddish-speaking children ages 5 to 17. The URL for the group is: www.yugntruf.org/PRIPETSHIK_SINGERS/IntroE.htm

A film about the Pripetshik Singers entitled, *Pripetshik Sings Yiddish!*, was directed by noted filmmaker Joshua Waletzky (*Image Before My Eyes*, *Partisans of Vilna*), was released this past Fall in DVD and VHS format. It can be found online at: <http://www.jewishvideo.com/>.

Ben translated into Yiddish the first-ever DVD with Yiddish subtitles, *The Life And Times Of Hank Greenberg*. He founded and runs the "VI ZOGT MEN AF YIDISH?" ("How Do You Say It in Yiddish?") E-mail VZMAY@nyc.rr.com to be added to the list.

He is the Coordinator of Yugntruf's annual end-of-summer Yiddish retreat, YIDISH-VOKH (Yiddish only), The website is at: www.yugntruf.org.

Binyumen and his three sisters all speak only Yiddish with their children, giving his parents sixteen fluent, Yiddish-speaking grandchildren. His e-mail address is: Bschaechter@nyc.rr.com

His father, Dr. Mordkhe Schaechter, taught Yiddish at Columbia University, founded the League for Yiddish, is the author of *Yiddish II* and many other scholarly publications. He was the editor of *Afn Shvel*.

The Jewish People's Philharmonic Chorus

Binyumen *Ben* Schaechter is the conductor of the Jewish People's Philharmonic Chorus which is just off its 82nd season. This 40-voice, intergenerational Yiddish chorus has recorded its first CD this season—Unrecorded Yiddish Choral Gems.

The Chorus will be featured as the opening act on Thursday evening at the Tenth International Association of Yiddish Clubs Conference at the Glenpointe Marriott Hotel in Teaneck, New Jersey next July 6-9.

Lazar Weiner founded the Chorus and it blossomed under the next conductor, Jacob Schaefer. Peter Schlosser, who now leads the New York City Labor Chorus, also was once the conductor of the Jewish People's Philharmonic Chorus.

Today, the chorus has the distinction of being the longest continually performing Jewish chorus in the entire world. Back in 1923, when it was founded in the heavily Jewish populated Lower East Side of Manhattan, the garment industry was the prime industry. This part of New York City was one of the main wellsprings of the labor movement in the U.S. It also saw the mushrooming of the Yiddish theater, and many Yiddish publications.

The Chorus recently was honored when it performed *Amerike di prekhrike* in August at Shea Stadium in Flushing, New York.