

Der Bay

The International Anglo-Yiddish Newsletter

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Yiddish Must Thrive—Not Just Survive!

Basic Tenets

Yiddish must have a base. This requires membership. There are people in charge. We need leaders and not just managers.

Every Yiddish organization is important and serves a purpose.

For Yiddish to thrive and not just survive there has to be growth.

- The **intellectual aristocracy** is needed for research and to act as information resources.
- A **repository** is essential to collect, store and save Yiddish books.
- Jewish and Klezmer **music** has to be recorded and expanded.
- **Bookstores** and dealers have to sell the many Yiddish items.
- **Writers** and **publishers** must create Yiddish material.
- Yiddish **publications** newspapers, journals, newsletters & magazines play a critical role.
- The **translator's** task is to make our rich heritage available in understandable form.
- Actors/actresses in our Yiddish **theater**, are interpreters through their performances.
- Yiddish/Jewish **storytellers** pass on the rich Ashkenazic heritage.

The Role for IAYC

With so many other organizations and groups why is the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) pivotal in the thriving of Yiddish?

There is no *central clearinghouse* for Yiddish publications, Yiddish/Jewish music, writers, translators, poets, actors/actresses or singers.

What exist are major groups like NYBC, YIVO etc. and small groups like the Jewish storytellers at the 92nd Street Y, online lists of Yiddish teachers, Yugntruf, League for Yiddish, AAPY, groups mainly in Paris, Israel and of course Mendele online to mention only a few.

Here is where the role of the IAYC comes in. It is the only one itself that is made of groups in many regions, and is the only one that has a different venue for each conference.

It is the only one that is a grassroots movement without a central headquarters, paid hierarchy or charismatic leadership.

IAYC long ago realized for it to flourish it must encompass all areas of Yiddish and *reach out*. It must and has been willing to both accept aid and work with all other Yiddish organizations. That is why it is especially appreciative of the aid it has received from the Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring—the only **fraternal** organization that fosters and supports Yiddish.

We look forward to acting as the vehicle for Yiddish teachers to organize and have *their own* central clearinghouse.

Yiddish from Madrid

Linda Jiminez Glassman
englishcorner@radiosefarad.com

Der Bay's Abbreviated Edition—

Now Online

Editor's note: Linda belongs to the Madrid Yiddish Club that is a member of the IAYC. Linda was at the last conference with her mother from Syosset, NY. She has a radio program and recorded interviews.

Here are the instructions for listening to the program: go to www.radiosefarad.com Then click on "modem" (for a dialup connection) or "ADSL" (for a high-speed connection). When you get the program, scroll down to "RS en otros idiomas" and click on "English Corner".

If you want to hear previous ones, after clicking on "modem" or "ADSL", you'll get the current program. Then, click on "archivo" in the upper right-hand corner and on the drop-down menu "secciones", click on "English Corner" and then "buscar" and you'll get all the programs in chronological order. Or if you want to look for something specific, you can write it in the space on the left (for example, your name, next week after the program is no longer current).

I hope you enjoy it.

We met with the committee from the Council of Europe on Wednesday. It's the "Committee of Experts" under the "European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages". On the 12-13 of Sept they held their bi-annual "on the spot visit" in Spain, speaking with people about regional languages, but also about other minority languages. They wanted to know about how many Yiddish speakers there are in Spain (very few--only about 40-50--we think--in Madrid, we don't know about other parts of Spain, but there aren't any other "vinkls").

Yiddish is considered a "non-territorial" language under their charter and the speakers of these languages can ask the authorities in each country for help in preserving the languages. (The request has to come from the speakers themselves.) They were very interested in this at the radio, because they're planning to do something with Yiddish (I don't know exactly what), and maybe can get some sort of financial aid. Also Rhoda Abecassis, the leader of our vinkl (and translator of various books directly from Yiddish to Spanish), who was also at the meeting, is hoping to get a subsidy to be able to bring speakers and/or entertainers here.

One of the interesting things that the Committee said is that they've found an upsurge of interest in Yiddish in...Finland!

The abbreviated, October online mailing was the first issue of *Der Bay* to go out over the Internet. It had 8 pages of the 16 in the hardcopy. These are quickly expanding since there is no charge and contributions are appreciated but not required.

Anyone interested in receiving the shorter version online may do so by sending a request to: fishl@derbay.org and include address and phone number. If you already are in *Der Bay's* database it is unnecessary to do so.

Primarily it is being done to expand the foreign distribution. With overseas postage alone being \$1.80 per issue as against \$1.00 for Canada and 58¢ for the U.S. one soon realizes how important it is. It is hoped that as more information is received from overseas, that there may be a separate foreign edition.

When one sends an e-mail to someone for the first time, it is often not recognized and removed as spam. Thus when you send a message, it permits your editor to respond knowing that it most likely will be received and not rejected.

Der Bay never has accepted paid ads. All material is evaluated and no publication, CD, etc. is mentioned unless it has at least an acceptable rating. Negative reviews are not published—why waste space!

E-mail is checked several times a day and a response will be given usually within 24 hours. Articles sent online are particularly welcome as well as review books and CDs.

Meanwhile the website is still a rich resource with its larger *der internatsyonaler kalendar*, *briv fraynd*, lists of Yiddish resources, suggestions for Yiddish clubs and over 30 transliterated wordlists.

Der Bay purposely is not copyrighted. The editor's intention is to have the material distributed as widely as possible with the least amount of inconvenience as possible. Clubs are welcome, even encouraged to copy articles for club use. Rarely a contributor will ask to have their contribution copyrighted and of course it is honored and marked accordingly.

Our policy is to treat all incoming calendar listings alike when it comes to including events in the calendar. The online calendar always is available in an unlimited manner, but the hardcopy has to be limited to a single column or a page.

Yiddish Club Leadership

by Philip *Fishl* Kutner

Leadership in general may take its form in varied styles from dictatorial to overly permissive. Neither extreme is desirable. A healthy mid-ground will permit one to temporarily move up or down without losing sight of the aim.

First we shall deal with advisable actions—as I see it. Then we shall be specific for a Yiddish vinkl in its varied formats. While the ideal is the aim, reality necessitates adapting realistic goals.

Advisable Actions

- Give them choices that are acceptable to you. Never ever have to say, "Take it or leave it."
- If possible, try to give them what they want—it's easier and you can work to change it slowly later on.
- Give them credit for ideas or actions. One cannot receive too many deserved compliments. Don't have an ego that constantly needs to be fed.
- Show them how they can save money by sharing books, newsletters cassettes/CDs, etc. start a lending library.
- Show them how they can save time. By using many Yiddish sites on the computer one can get information much faster.
- Say "we" or "us" whenever possible and try to use "I" or "me" as infrequently as possible. When a difference arises, try to sit alongside of the person and not across. Think of the problem as the adversary and not the other person.

Being Practical

When starting a new group you have to have a meeting day, time and place that best suits your needs. In the publicity ask people if they cannot make the meeting to let you know their first, second, and third choices of the above. A key decision at the first meeting is to discuss alternative day/s time/s and place/s—these may not be final decisions, but meets your needs and that of as many other potential members as possible.

The type of group can vary from a high level in a leyenkrayz (reading circle) or shraybkrayz (writing circle) to the opposite extreme of "entertain me". The group as a whole can be modified only slightly as

time goes by. However, if you, as the facilitator or leader, have certain strong needs or feelings, you may wish to work with a smaller group.

Dealing with a prima donna (Italian for *first lady*—of course it could be a gent) is often tiring and can have a negative effect on the group. First, compliment him/her deservedly and then assign a task. Often this will quiet the member or cause that person not to return. If the member is a good worker, then you have a gem.

Ask members to volunteer for assignments. If some members do not feel capable of running a meeting, have them form groups of 2 or 3—never more. For the others let them choose to handle refreshments, publicity, be on the sunshine committee to contact members who are ill or who have had a loss, take attendance or be on the phone squad.

Another task might be the one in charge of looking up a word in the dictionary. Be sure to have a Yiddish dictionary, or several different ones, at meetings. They may be Weinreich's Yiddish-English/English-Yiddish Dictionary or one in transliteration.

A good leader always has someone ready to step in during an emergency. There are times when the leader cannot make a meeting—personal illness, family emergencies or family business.

If the leader has prepared properly, the alternate leader should be able to step in and take over for a single meeting or even longer. Many clubs have fallen apart when the leader is no longer able to carry on.

A good leader is able to answer every conceivable question. There will be many occasions that a question is asked that the leader either does not know the answer or is not sure of it. NEVER ever fake it. Instead say, "that is an excellent question" or "hmm, no one has ever asked me that" or "you know that is something that has puzzled me". Then say, "Let me see if we can't find an answer to it. Perhaps someone in the audience knows the answer or will help us find it."

Most of all know your strengths and weaknesses. Capitalize on your strengths and use the time to work on your weaknesses or get someone in the group to help in those areas. Use *Der Bay's* website for assistance—it's free.

If You Build It, They Will Come—The Birth of A Yiddish Club

by Sonia Pressman Fuentes

My Yiddish Background

I can't remember what mix of languages my parents spoke in our home when I was growing up. I know they spoke Yiddish--not as many parents spoke Yiddish, only at times when they didn't want their children to know what they were talking about--*they spoke Yiddish*.

It was their *mameloshn* (mother tongue). But I'm sure they also spoke English and some German since my parents had lived in Germany for over 20 years.

From the time we came to the U.S. in 1934, I always spoke to my parents and brother in English. As a result, to this very day, I have an excellent understanding of Yiddish but can barely speak it.

I grew up in the Catskill Mountains of New York State where my parents ran, first, a *kokhaleyn* (rooming house) in Woodridge, and, later, a 25-bungalow colony in Monticello. The Catskills were, of course, known as the Borscht Belt, where many Jewish comedians got their start.

The Catskills are about 100 miles from New York City, and we frequently drove into the city to attend the Second Avenue Theater and enjoy the comedy of entertainers like Menasha Skulnick, singers like Miriam Kressyn, and composers like Sholem Secunda.

I would look around the theater during these performances and everyone seemed to be in their sixties, seventies, and eighties while I was in my early teens. Now, were I to go, I would fit right in.

In July 1990, I spent a wonderful month at Queen Mary and Westfield College in London's East End studying Yiddish at a program run by Devra Kay, who had gotten her Ph.D. at Oxford University's Yiddish program run by Professor Dovid Katz. (The Oxford program is now located in Vilnius, Lithuania.)

Yiddish Speakers

Reports of the number of current Yiddish speakers vary significantly. The web site of the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers University states:

"It is estimated that there are about a quarter million Yiddish speakers in the

United States, about the same number in Israel, and another 100,000 or so in the rest of the world. That's a lot less than the peak number of Yiddish speakers—11,000,000—on the eve of the Holocaust."

Paradoxically, as Emanuel Goldsmith, a Queens College professor, has pointed out, "As Yiddish has declined as the language of Jews in America more Yiddish terms have been absorbed into English." I have noticed in recent years that newspapers like the *Washington Post* don't even bother translating Yiddish words when they use them any more.

Be that as it may, I love Yiddish and it is a significant subset of my passion for Judaism. Like every language, Yiddish has unique words and idioms that cannot be translated into any other language. It represents the Jewish way of looking at the world.

International Association of Yiddish Clubs

In the years that I lived in the Washington, D.C., area, I was a member of the group, Yiddish of Greater Washington, an organization that belongs to the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC), which has annual conferences in different cities.

I attended a number of the IAYC conferences and was one of the speakers at the tenth conference in Teaneck, New Jersey, last year and the eleventh conference in Cleveland, Ohio, this year. I also had a booth and was a vendor for the sale of my memoir, *Eat First—You Don't Know What They'll Give You, The Adventures of an Immigrant Family and Their Feminist Daughter*.

Philip "Fishl" Kutner, who was one of IAYC's founders, is on its board and is responsible for site selection, programming, entertainment, and vendors at the conferences. Although he is legally blind, Fishl is also the editor and publisher of *Der Bay*, a newsletter with news of interest to Yiddishists around the world, and the webmaster of its online version.

At this year's IAYC conference at the Cleveland Marriott East Hotel, dining with us at my luncheon table was Professor Yoshiji "Yoshi" Hirose, who is in the English Department of the Notre Dame Seishin University in Okayama, Japan. Professor Hirose, who has a diploma in Jewish Studies from the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, is

an expert on Jewish-American literature, translated one of Isaac Bashevis Singer's books into Japanese, and is the founder and president of the Jewish Literary Society of Japan. He spoke to me in Yiddish; I responded in English.

Vivian Felsen, a Toronto, Canada, translator and visual artist, met Yoshi when she visited Japan and was responsible for his attendance at the Cleveland conference and for his being one of the speakers.

During her own talk she told us that there's another Japanese professor with an interest in Judaism who had left Japan, moved to Israel, teaches Hebrew Linguistics at a college or university there, and converted to Judaism.

Yiddish Vinkl

When I started coming to Sarasota as a snowbird in 1994, I was delighted to learn that there was a Yiddish Vinkl that met monthly at the Jewish Community Center, and I attended whenever I could. Initially, the course was taught by Fred Ellin. Then Lin (Linette) "Leah" Schlossman joined him as a co-teacher. When Fred died, Lin took over the class. She also led the Yiddish Tish (Table), a group that met monthly at various restaurants in Sarasota and spoke Yiddish.

On October 31, 2006, I moved from the Washington, DC, area to Sarasota full-time. That December, I was saddened when Lin, who had cared for her sick husband for the last few years, died, only a few months after his death. Thereafter, the Leyenkreis, a group that met weekly to read Yiddish poetry and literature, which Lin also led, continued under the leadership of two of its members, Natalie Forman and Bina Nadler; the Yiddish Vinkl and the Yiddish Tish did not. I decided to see if I could restart the Yiddish Vinkl.

Fun with Yiddish

I discussed this with Fishl, who encouraged me, but my main problem was I did not have a teacher. Some years ago, I had spoken at the Yiddish Vinkl in St. Petersburg and I now called Phil London, my contact there, to see if there was someone at that Vinkl who could come to Sarasota to lead a monthly course here; he told me that the Yiddish Vinkl in St. Petersburg no longer existed.

I was able to start putting together a list of people who might be interested in attending a program on Yiddish if I could put one together. One of the people I contacted, Delores Lustig, volunteered to help me--and was a great help thereafter. Sim

Lesser, co-president of the Congregation for Humanistic Judaism (CHJ) in Sarasota, to which I belong, gave me an assist by having a sign-up sheet at CHJ's September 8, 2007, Meet and Greet program. But I still had no teacher.

And then lightning struck. At a Women's Equity Day luncheon in Bradenton, Florida, on August 18, I was sitting at the table of my friend, Gini Hyman, who introduced me to another woman at the table, Orna Nissan. Orna is an Israeli who'd recently joined the staff of the Jewish Federation as outreach coordinator and has a background in Jewish education. In chatting with Orna, I told her of my efforts with regard to a new Yiddish Vinkl, and she suggested I contact Betty Silberman, who has taught Yiddish. I'd met Betty some years ago through a mutual friend, but I knew her only as an entertainer and singer.

I contacted Betty, who graciously and generously agreed to lead the course. We are so fortunate to have found her. She is an effervescent young woman, a singer, actress, and a highly qualified and experienced teacher of Yiddish.

Delores suggested a new name for our group--Fun with Yiddish. Then, Betty, Delores, and I began to contact synagogues, temples, libraries, and various organizations in our search for a room in which the group might meet. Betty hit pay dirt when she contacted Howard Tevlowitz, executive director of the Jewish Federation. He offered us the use of the Desenberg Room at the Federation for our meetings.

Fishl immediately made Fun with Yiddish a member of IAYC and sent us a packet of helpful informational material.

And so we are to begin. Betty will be teaching elementary Yiddish--vocabulary, phrases, diction, and grammar. The class, which will also cover light poetry, songs, and music, will be interactive.

Our program will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, December 9, and meet thereafter every second Sunday of the month. Proficiency in Yiddish is not required for attendance--just an interest in Yiddish.

The program will generally end at 11:30 a.m. but on December 9, we will continue with a discussion from 11:30 a.m. to noon.

Anyone in the Sarasota-Manatee, Florida, area interested in attending should contact me at spfuentes@comcast.net or phone 941-379-6215.

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Yiddish is More Than Just a Language and a Culture

By Philip *Fishl* Kutner

It is a way of life.

It is a thread to our family background.

It binds us together from all walks of life and from many countries.

For our readers, Yiddish brings back memories of a bygone era. It is full of nostalgia, mama's phrases of endearment of lullabies and humor. It is full of aromas of mama's kitchen on Friday nights and holidays.

Yiddish is the language of struggle, of pogroms and the Holocaust. It is the language of our immigrant ancestors, the sweatshops, Delancey Street, Second Avenue and the old delis, candy stores and kosher butcher shops.

We cannot replace our millions of murdered kin, but we can marvel at their creative talents. It was their family pride, their love of learning, their abiding traditions, and hope for a better future for their children and grandchildren that sustained them day-to-day.

For those of us who care about our Yiddish heritage, how does it manifest itself? For some of us it is in the stories, poems, plays and songs. Their variety is almost endless. We can read or hear about tragedies, lovers, scholars, jesters, fools and heroes.

We may read it in the original, in transliteration or in translation. While our aim should be to read in the original, every level has its rewards. Just as in sports we have the little leagues, college sports and the pros, so too are these levels of proficiency in the language.

Another way we show our dedication is by attending a Yiddish club, Yiddish play, Yiddish lecture or a Yiddish concert. These are enriching and support the work of those others who feel as you do.

Editor's note: It is essential that we record our thoughts and feelings for later generations. It is in publications like the *Forverts*, *Pakn Treger* and newsletters like *Der Bay*, which are preserved in university libraries and the Library of Congress, that this record will be preserved and hopefully read. Please send in your comments, opinions and even advice.

Yiddish, Storytelling, Genealogy & History

by Philip *Fishl* Kutner

Bobi, Zeydi—what was it like when you were a kid?

Many of us have heard this uttered time and time again. Each generation searches for its roots. What seems to us to be self-evident because we have lived it is an unknown arena for our offspring. A perfect example of this is the tremendous interest in film series like *Roots*.

Many of us have a rich heritage of terrible conditions in our youth and the challenges of making it in a new land. For some it is our experience for others it is their parents or grandparents.

This article is a when-to, what-to and how-to share your rich background of exciting ventures and adventures you have encountered and witnessed first-hand.

When-to

It is never too early to share stories. Many of us have had the experience of babysitting, and then we have a wonderful opportunity without distractions. As the children get older there are times when you will be approached about certain stories related to your past. It may be on a visit to the old hometown/country. It also may be part of a project for school.

What-to

This is almost unlimited. Most of the activities our young people today confront are quite different from what we experienced.

One of the most changed areas is in communication. Today we deal with the cell phone and the computer as against the wall phone and party lines of the past.

When considering transportation, the old cars had running boards and some had a rumble seat and even the hand shifting of gears.

How-to

Develop a style—make it your own. You have to feel comfortable with it. I call mine the "Triple Play" I ask the child or the audience to select 3 items animals or people and then weave an unusual story about them. One exciting "Triple Play" was about a puppy with a lame leg, a set of t'filin, and a young boy whose father was a shoykhet.

In Der Yiddish Vinkl

By Stanley Siegelman

My favorite Yiddish word is "Oy". Is "Oy" a word— or is it an expression? To me, it's a word. I tried to capture this sentiment in a poem I wrote for *Der Yiddish Vinkl* in the *Forward*. The poem is entitled, "An Ode to Oy". It's in English, but there's a Yiddish version written by Dr. Joan Braman. Your description of Mama as a "recycler"—the newspapers on the mopped floor every Friday night, etc.—was poignant. It described the situation in my childhood home.

An Ode to Oy

Of all sad words that we employ
The saddest one of all is "oy!"
For centuries this plaintive groan,
Accompanied by rueful groan
Embodied, by hyperbole,
The wailing of humanity.
Primordial, this mournful note
Its origin: a Jewish throat!
(The Jews propelled by pain and fear,
Soon coined the phrase "Oy vey iz mir!")
But "oy" alone conveyed the raw
Eruptions: hurt and shock and awe
And indignation, irony,
Astonishment, uncertainty,
Revulsion, anguish, and dismay
—All sentiments we feel today.
So here's to "oy!" You've served us well!
You're quintessential nonpareil!
You're genuine, you're non-alloy.
You're mameloshn's pride and joy!

Ode Tsu 'Oy'

Fil yidn, yung un alte layt,
Bahalt'n zeyer yidishkayt;
Ober ven s'kumt fun moyl an "oy"
Veyst men shoy'n s'iz nit kayn goy.
Far khidish, freyd, rakhmones, glust
"Oy" iz dos punkt gezogt "mot juste";
A vort an oysnam, me ken derkvikn.
Ober ven mit "vey" oder "gevald" geshrign
Dos meynt der umshtand iz a shlekhs;
Un ven me git dertsu a krekhts,
Farshteyt zikh hot men ergets a veytik.
In glik un tsores "oy" iz neytik;
Primal geshrey fun oys di kishkes
Dos vertl hot a langen yikhes;
Fun yidishn kop amol oysgetrakht.
Geveykt in laydn un in shmakht.
A dank dir "oy" du bist fil musik
(Un tsum glik, du bist nit shmutsik!)
"Oy" hot harts, neshome, soul
A perfekter yidisher parol!

Yiddish (Pirseem) Publicity

by Philip Fishl Kutner

This article is geared to those of us who are interested in publicizing. At one time or another everyone is interested in publicizing something. How can I get FREE publicity in *Der Bay* or other publications? This will be covered in this article.

Is Yiddish publicity different than any other type of publicity? If not, then what can Yiddish clubs, klezmer groups, authors, lecturers, book dealers or translators learn from the general art of publicizing their event, service or product.

By definition publicity encompasses all of the means by which information is dispersed to the public—your consumer. It includes, radio, TV newspapers, magazines, flyers, billboards, e-mails and websites.

Publicity can be divided into active and passive. Active publicity is the type in which the reader or listener initiates the search for information. Passive publicity is what is foisted upon you as in watching TV listening to the radio, highway bill boards and subliminal advertising.

Practical Ideas and Suggestions

Don't pay for publicity if you can get a human interest story published free—or get paid for it.

Compile a short list of outlets; newspapers, magazines, and bulletins. Get the name, address, e-mail and phone number of each editor.

Place this information into your computer and put the e-mail addresses into a group.

On a monthly basis send them an updated list of events including the following information.

- Day and date of the event
- Name of the event. If it is a klezmer group and no special event, use the name of the group "in Concert"
- Time of the event. Be aware of time zones. Places like Arizona may not be like nearby areas.
- Location of the event
- A contact phone number
- URL (Uniform Resource Locator) of your website if you have one. Be sure to update the events regularly.

In order of length, *Der Bay* has calendar listings. Second is a letter to the editor. Third is a human-interest story or reviews of books, CDs or DVDs.

My Mama Never Served Us *Ized* Milk

By Philip Fishl Kutner

I was the milk “man” on our chicken farm 8 miles outside of Flemington, New Jersey. Dad bought the farm in 1937 during the depression. It was my job to milk the cow/s every morning and night—we always had at least one milk-producer. My favorites were Betty, a Jersey-Swiss cross, and Nodgie a purebred Swiss. Betty’s milk was very creamy and Nodgie gave more milk. I wondered how Nodgie ever got her name or what it means.

After the milk was strained to remove any straw or flies that fell into the milk pail, it was mama’s milk. She worked wonders with every drop of it.

We always drank fresh milk. What was left over was separated and the cream rose to the top. Mama skimmed the cream off. We had it on our cereal, and over compote or rice and bread pudding. The rest was set aside to be churned into butter. We boys hated the tedious job of churning. It was wonderful when finally the golden butter emerged—separated from the buttermilk. The buttermilk was fed to the chickens in the wet mash. We spread butter on the bread almost a quarter of an inch thick.

Meanwhile the skimmed milk turned sour and separated into custard-looking curds and pale-green watery whey. The whey also went into making wet mash for the chickens. I always wondered why Little Miss Muffet sat on her Tuffet and ate curds & whey.

Mama poured the curds and whey through a cheesecloth funnel and the curds dripped until it became pot cheese. We had the pot cheese in blintzes, mixed with vegetables or with buttery noodles.

Mama’s milk was never “ized”. Mama never gave us homogenized or pasteurized milk. Actually that was served to the city kids. City kids wanted only milk that came from a bottle. Every morning during the summer when mama had roomers and boarders from the City she filled several milk bottles with the milk I brought in and put them in the icebox. The city kids thought city milk was cold milk from a bottle.

As long as we milked the cows, they gave milk. That is, until the unborn calf grew larger and consumed more of the cow’s energy and production. When the calf was first born, it, took the milk, for the first milk after birth is too rich and we could not use it. If it were a bull calf, it shortly was sold for veal. Every few years we raised a heifer to replace one of the “dry” cows.

My mama never served us “ized’ milk.

My Mama Never Did...

Mama NEVER thought her shnir were good enough for her 4 boys—except the last one.

Mama NEVER raised her voice except when she was angry with papa.

Mama NEVER hit her boys—except when Fishele asked, “What do you do with that (a kontshik)?”

Mama NEVER liked anyone in papa’s family—except her shver—after he died.

Mama NEVER thought papa was a good businessman—except when he took her advice.

Mama NEVER thought teachers were wrong—except when they gave Fishele a B on a report card.

Mama NEVER spoke Polish—except to our hired hand.

Mama NEVER spoke Russian—except with the woman from the farm across the creek.

Mama NEVER drove a car—except when we moved to the farm.

Mama NEVER ate treyf—except when she met papa’s folks—and she didn’t know it until later.

Mama NEVER talked to her boys about sex—except to tell her boys that nice girls don’t do IT.

Mama NEVER ate on Yom Kippur—except when she was pregnant with one of her boys.

Mama NEVER stopped lifting very heavy weights— except after Semele was born.

Mama NEVER voted for a Republican—except when John F. Kennedy ran for president.

Mama NEVER went into a church—except when one of her grandchildren got married.

Mama NEVER stole anything—except little onion rolls—when we ate at Ratner’s on Delancey Street.

Mama NEVER thought kids should eat candy—except her grandchildren.

Mama NEVER said Xmas was good—except when Semele had a good *season* in the shoe store.

Mama NEVER missed lighting Friday night candles— except when she got very, very old.