

## *IAYC Conference XIV*

It's just before the conference and Jerry Gerger's committee is busy putting the final touches of what should be a super event. His team is a tightly knit group of high-performers and have pulled out all stops to make this conference one of the very best.

Each year the committee carefully studies the previous evaluations for suggestions on how to make the event even better, and again this year there are several exciting innovations.

Yiddish language classes at different levels are worked in among the lectures and workshops.

It has been a while since we have had tours. This year includes those on a par with our finest ever.

Michael Wex will be one of the plenary speakers. His last IAYC appearance was in Toronto at which time he appeared as an entertainer. Since then his books have catapulted him into a key figure on the international Yiddish lecture circuit.

Dr. Harvey Gotliffe is a new figure. His book brings Yiddish into an area never explored before.

Because the greater Detroit area has a rich history of Yiddish groups and key individuals, IAYC has had the unusual good fortune of tapping into this good fortune. This includes staff from both the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and Michigan State in Lansing. (Both are football powerhouses).

If you receive this copy before the conference and have not registered, you still may be able to go. See: <http://www.derbay.org/novi/>

### *Der Bay's Blog*

Thursday, July 28, 2011

#### **What I Have Learned**

Leave a legacy.  
Forge friendships.  
Mama, you were right.  
Grandchildren are easier to raise.  
Let other children play with your toys.

The more you train, the more you gain.  
Men are animals and women are angels.  
The Golden Rule - He who has the gold rules.  
Stretching is going a little more than you would otherwise.  
It's not whether you win or lose, but how you place the blame.  
You can't postpone living—because time can't be back-ordered.  
About giving unasked for advice—don't ask, don't tell, and don't think.  
Success comes from high expectations coupled with brilliant execution.  
Men don't have clean hands—they shouldn't be allowed to touch the Torah.  
If you give more than you get, you'll end up getting more than you give.  
Levels of a situation: Interest – Concern – Apprehension – Anxiety - Panic  
To get something you never had, you have to do something you have never done.  
Winners do what they have to, when they have to, where they have to, and how they have to, even if they don't feel like it.  
"Be who you are and say what you feel—  
Because those that matter...don't mind...  
And those that mind... don't matter."

## The Outstanding Man

By Alva Dworkin and Jack Boxer

Moishe D. was feeling great after exhilarating sessions with the Rabbi and his broker. He stepped gingerly into the street to hail a cab. One came along and stopped for him to enter, and he seated himself.

Then Moishe declared to the taxi cab driver, "Thanks for stopping. I'm in a hurry, so I appreciate your timeliness. I don't always make such perfect connections except with such exceptional people such as Shykie. Maybe you heard of Shykie...Shykie Bernstein?"

The driver turned around and asked, "Who is this Shykie guy you're talking about?"

"Just wait. ... I'll tell you all about Shykie...the outstanding man. Shykie did everything very well. He was a great provider for his family, he played clarinet just like Benny Goodman, he was a singer in the synagogue choir, and in his golf game, he shot in the sixties, he knew all the new dance steps, and was an outstanding actor. Not only that, he was a wine connoisseur and could remember everyone's birthday, and he was able to fix anything. He always was perfectly dressed. No one could measure up to Shykie.... He truly was the perfect man."

"Already I don't like him," mumbled the driver. "Where did you find such a guy?"

"Oh, I have never met Shykie," was Moishe's answer.

"Then, if that's the case how do you know so much about this person, Shaykie?" continued the driver.

"I have to tell you the truth, I am married to his widow."

-----  
Alva Dworkin grew up in Detroit in a Yiddish speaking family and graduated from the Workmen's Circle Mittlshule, earned a Masters degree in Art Education, a second M.A. in Human Development and then taught for 15 years. Yiddish has always been part of Alva's life and she has been active in the local Workmen's Circle branch as well as in several Yiddish groups in the Detroit area.

## An Oysgetseykhenter Man

Fun Alva Dworkin un Jack Boxer

Moishe D. hot zeyer gekvelt vayl er hot norvos gezesn mit zayn rebbe un zayn stock broker. Er hot tsu zikh aleyn geshmeykht az er iz aroys oyfn gas khapn a taksi. Eyne iz ongekumen, iz er arayngegangen un zikh avekgezetst.

"A sheynem dank," hot Moishe gezogt tsu der taksi trayber. "Ikh hob nisht kayn tsayt, un es gefelt mikh zeyer az du bist ongekumen azoy in gikhns. Es treft zikh nisht ale mol, bloyz mit aza man vi der oysegetseykhnter mentsh, Shaykie. Efsheer hostu amol gehert vegn Shaykie...Shaykie Bernstein?"

Der trayber hot zikh arumgekert un gefregt, "Ver iz der mentsh vegn vemen du redst?"

"Vart nor... Ikh'l dir dertseyln vegn Shaykie...der oysgetseykhnter man. Shaykie hot ales gut geton. Er iz geven a groyser fardiner far zayn mishpokhe, hot geshpilt klarinet azoy vi Benny Goodman, hot gezungen in sinagog khor, hot geshosn golf in der zekhtsiker, hot gevust fun ale naye tantsn un iz geven a fayner aktyor. Nisht nor dos, er iz geven a vayn meyvun, un hot gevust di geburtsteg fun alemen. Er hot gekent ales farrikhtn. Er iz ale mol perfekt ongeton. Keyner hot zikh nisht gekent tsuglaykhn tsu Shaykie. Er iz geven take der oysgetseykhnter man."

"Shoyn, Ikh hob im faynt," hot gebeblt der trayber. "Vu host du im getrofn?"

"Oh, ikh hob im keynmol nisht getrofn," hot Moishe im geentfert.

"Nu, oyb azoy, fun vanen veyst du vegn der mentsh Shaykie?"

"Der emes iz, ikh darf dir zogn, az ikh bin farheyret tsu zayn almone."

-----  
Jack Boxer was born into a Yiddish speaking family. He grew up speaking Yiddish and attended a Workmen's Circle Shul. During WW II he was a radar navigation instructor in the Air Force and later taught biology for 33 year. After retiring he became active in Yiddish speakers groups. Jack and Alva have co-authored the book "Gefrishte Mayses", which will be the subject of their presentation.

# Jewish Pioneers of the Black Hills Gold Rush

By Ann Stanton

There is a new Wild West story about Jews of the American frontier. After 20 years of research, countless hours spinning through decades of historic newspapers on microfilm, picking through yellowed records, scrutinizing old photographs, and interviewing anyone with a memory, finally the secret is opening up. I've pieced together the story of the Jewish Pioneers of the Black Hills Gold Rush.

I had to write this book. To me it was a *shande* that no one had written of them or even spoken of them before. Was their story going to evaporate into the ether? Could I allow that to happen? I knew that this would be my calling, my labor of love, and, in fact, part of why I live in the Black Hills of South Dakota. I promised myself I would tell their story so that future generations would know that Jews left a footprint here. We can take pride in who they were and what they accomplished.

Certainly, the California Gold Rush of 1849 got more acclaim, and the Jews of that epoch, such as Levi Strauss of blue jeans fame, got more attention in the literature and the media. But the Black Hills Gold Rush with its Jewish element still goes relatively unrecognized. This, despite the fact that the Homestake Gold Mine, purchased in 1877 by George Hearst is the longest continuously operating gold mine in the country, functioning for 120 years and producing untold billions in treasure. And the Jews were in that picture.

Arcadia Publishing saw the potential of the topic as "exciting" and offered to publish this in their Images of America series. However, they expected what seemed to me at first an impossible number of photographs and other images. Fortunately for me, I was well enough acquainted with the staffs at both the Adams Museum in Deadwood and the Minnilusa Historical Association at the Journey Museum in Rapid City that they opened their archives to me. They allowed me to select images to my little heart's content—a dream come true.

I found a treasure chest of images. Various families and private individuals were only too happy to have their family's accounts included and they contributed many photos and other documents that enhanced the narrative. Their generosity both of spirit and action were inspiring, and I am forever grateful to them all.

The HBO series "Deadwood" was wildly popular for a while. Although it was fictional, it was woven together with some incidents and characters that were based in reality. For example, Solomon Star, who was Jewish, and Seth Bullock, who was not, actual historical figures, were among the leading characters of the series. The two were business partners who had made their way from Helena, Montana, to Deadwood, Dakota Territory, in 1876, the earliest days of the Black Hills Gold Rush, where opportunity was limitless. Both had been prominent in government and business in Helena, where they met during a session of the Legislature.

They brought with them a stock of hardware so that they could immediately open a hardware store in a tent alongside a trail checkered with mining claims. Their stock included a plentiful supply of chamber pots, which were most welcome in a Dakota winter and gave their budding business a jump start (pun intended). Both men displayed that talent for leadership and bent toward civil law and order necessary to help bring stability to the region, and Bullock soon was Sheriff while Star soon was elected mayor. Possibly due to the ambiguities in the HBO series, some elements being fictional and others factual, it was natural for viewers to become confused, some concluding that Sol Star was the only Jew in Deadwood during the Black Hills Gold Rush. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

There were "hundreds," of Jewish pioneers in the Black Hills; according to Blanche Colman, daughter of Nathan and Amalia Colman, who became the first woman to pass the bar in the State of South Dakota. Blanche should know; she was possibly the first child of Jewish pioneers to have been born in Deadwood, and she was unquestionably the last to leave. Blanche was one of the three surviving children of Nathan, Deadwood's first lay rabbi, and Amalia Colman. Four of their siblings already lay buried in the Jewish section of Mt. Moriah Historic Cemetery, high above Deadwood Gulch. Blanche's life and that of her sisters, their parents, their cousins, their friends, and many Jews like them, tell a story of a side of the Wild West that has been hiding in plain sight for over 100 years. Different accounts describe the scene in the Black Hills during the Gold Rush years. Allowing for the space of possibly 50 years between these two

excerpts, you could hardly find two perspectives more completely divergent, one conveying the wildness of the place, the other presenting the more peaceful, idyllic side of the picture:

*"Upon looking closely I saw they were pursued by Indians. The horses ran to the barn as was their custom. As the horses stopped I rode along side of the coach and found the driver John Slaughter, lying face downwards in the boot of the stage, he having been shot by the Indians. When the stage got to the station, the Indians hid in the bushes. I immediately removed all baggage from the coach except the mail. I then took the driver's seat and with all haste drove to Deadwood, carrying six passengers and the dead driver."*  
*Calamity Jane, Autobiography*

*"Rising sharply out of the undulating prairies of South Dakota are the Black Hills, unique and majestic in beauty, imbued by nature with foundations of gold, studded with forests of pine and spruce, favored with sunshine, presenting a natural playground which affords a haven of contrast from the burdens and tense activities of the more populated sections of this beloved land. Nestled in the heart of the Hills, in the extreme Western part of Lawrence County, lies the little city of Deadwood, located by sturdy pioneers, lured by the discovery of gold in the early days of 1875 and 1876, approximately 14 years prior to the admission of South Dakota to statehood." Blanche Colman, last of the original Jewish pioneers*

How did the wild root become such a peaceful shrub? And how really peaceful was it? This book is a good starting place. Now that Jewish Pioneers of the Black Hills Gold Rush has been released by Arcadia, and their stories are beginning to see the light of day, there is a much deeper, chronicle still needing to be related... but that's for another day.

Jewish Pioneers of the Black Hills Gold Rush is available on Amazon. For an autographed copy, send \$25 (includes tax, and S&H). Ann Haber Stanton can be contacted at: [maswired@yahoo.com](mailto:maswired@yahoo.com).

**Editor's note:** Ann Stanton is a long time subscriber to *Der Bay* and our contact on the international list for The Yiddish Network. She represents not only Rapid City but also the state of South Dakota. In addition she is active in her 30-family temple.

Excerpted from: THE JEWISH POST & NEWS,  
 Wednesday, December 1 2010 - Pg. 14

## 60th Reunion of I. L. Peretz Folk School Class of '63, in Vancouver.

By SHARON LOVE

According to songstress Joni Mitchell "the weeks turn into years, how quickly they pass", is it really ten years ago that the I. L. Peretz Folk School class of 1963 celebrated their 50th birthday reunion? That was a May 2000 long weekend in Vancouver. Flash forward to November 12th, 2010. Vancouver again was the setting for a 60th birthday reunion. The "Kinder" who attended were: from Toronto, Guelph, Florida, Winnipeg, Calgary, and the Vancouver area. Greetings were sent from the IL, Peretz Folk School Endowment Trust.

Our exciting weekend events began with a deli dinner and we posed for a group picture. We spontaneously broke into a chorus of "Lomir Zingen", our school song. That alone told me why I was there and brought back so many memories. A letter from our teacher Chaverte Betty Warshawsky was read as written in Yiddish.

So how do we look? We concluded that we all look great. And we recognized each other, considering that some of us had not been in contact for years. We talked till the wee hours of each morning. At first we caught up with each other and our families. Then it was time to reminisce about school-related events and teachers. What happened in hidden places in the school such as in the cloakrooms, backstage, underneath the stage, etc.? People also wondered about what other friends were doing, who did go out with whom, and where they are now. Current events and politics were subjects that were conspicuously absent all weekend. Many of the "kids" shared experiences about growing up as children of Holocaust survivors, and a big topic of conversation was our mothers' cooking and recipes.

We decided not to wait another 10 years to get together, and plan on 5 years from now for our 65th birthdays. Hilda Szternfeld Smith was in Winnipeg to celebrate her 60th birthday with family and friends at Kelekis restaurant. Who said that you can't go back home again? Lunch at Kelekis, a day at Winnipeg Beach, a tour of the North End...

## A Plea for a Translator

Sheva Zucker suggested I get in contact with you regarding translating my grandfather's Yiddish diary.

My grandfather, Solomon Langer, took some time in 1920 to write the story about his escape from Bendzin, Poland in 1914 to Paris and then to New York in 1920.

My mom gave me this very special journal (written in three volumes in notebooks -- approximately 300 handwritten pages) about seven years ago. I immediately tried to find translators but found them to be unaffordable at \$25-30/page! Then, I was directed to Leo Greenbaum at the YIVO Institute in New York City. He told me about a particular "volunteer" who had been working for them for years.

I was very excited at the prospect of having this woman work on this project and then I would make a monetary contribution to the Institute. However, I would have to "wait my turn" as she was busy with other translation projects. Then, she became ill, recovered and moved to Israel. Leo has been unable to find another individual to replace her.

My Dad recently passed away and I would really like my Mom to read this while she is still able to do so.

Do you have any ideas as to how I can proceed with this project? Do you know any Yiddish students willing to take on such a project? I do have the first few pages translated and will be happy to send it to you if you are interested. I can also scan pages from the original text if you would like to see that as well. I have many, many photos and other documents as well. My grandfather ultimately had a wonderful life in this country, but he died too young (at 70) from complications of heart disease.

Thanks in advance for any thoughts you may have as to how I can get this project underway.

Sincerely,

**Stacie Cahn Greenhouse**  
greenhouses@optonline.net

## The Leon Malmed Archives

My gg-uncle Leon Malmed was heavily involved in Emma Goldman's Anarchist movement in the first quarter of the 20th century. The letters between him and Goldman were donated to the Schlesinger Library at Harvard University and are available for anyone who wishes to have access to them.

Leon was a packrat and kept every letter ever sent to him or his family. Beyond that specific series of letters from Emma Goldman, we have over 1,000 Yiddish letters dating as far back as 1889, many having been written in the 1890's and the first two decades of the 20th century. These letters were sent by a wide number of writers that include Leon's extended family, business associates, friends, and comrades in the anarchist movement. They were sent from shtetls and cities in Europe, South Africa, Argentina, Israel, and all over the U.S.

A small team of dedicated, volunteer translators have begun the massive work of translating these letters into English. I hope to create a database of the contents of these letters so genealogists and historians can use it for research. I would like other families to have their old letters be able to have them translated and included in the database.

We need volunteers who can translate Yiddish handwriting, grant writers, technical expertise for creating a database, and help to get the word out. I am consumed in my spare time with scanning and sending letters to the translators, organizing, archiving, and preserving them once they are translated. I would like to be able to pay volunteers who are professional translators and bring in more Yiddish experts.

While there are organizations that hold family archives, I don't believe there is currently anything quite like the database that I am proposing. As well as being a tremendous resource for researchers in general, this would be a important resource to help families to connect to their past and to other members of their extended families.

The Jewish Family History foundation has offered to provide tax receipts for any donations sent to this project from the United States.

**Debbie Rose, Toronto, ON, Canada**  
bdebrose@rogers.com 416-756-9760

# Shayles un Tshuves in "Hilkhes Libe"

Forverts – April 8-14, 2011

Fun der khaznte Khane Slek

[transliterated/annotated by Goldie Adler Gold]

Tayere khaznte,

Mayn beste khaverte baklogt zikh keseyder [constantly]. Zi iz a ziser mentsh ober, beteyve [habitually], a negative. Tomid shtelt zi dem trop [emphasis] oyf vos iz shlekht, un nisht oyf vos iz gut. Bikhlal [in general] bin ikh a pozitiver mentsh, ober ikh hob ongehoyn bamerkn [began to notice] az ikh ver oykh negativ-geshtimt [in a negative mood] ven ikh red mit ir.

Ven ikh farbreng mit ir, vil ikh zikh nisht barimen [boast] mit di gute zakhn vos kumen for in mayn lebn; deriber redn mir vegn di shlekhte zakhn in lebn. Dos geshet [occurs] nokh a mol un iber a mol [over and over], un es gefelt mir in gantsn nisht [doesn't please me at all]. Ikh vil nisht vern aza baklogerte [complainer] vi zi. Vi ken ikh dos opshteln?

Pozitive khaverte

Tayere poz...khav...,

S'iz gut vos ir hot ayngenzen [realized] az ayer oyffirung [behaviour] bayt zikh. Faran a netie [tendency], bifrat [especially] tsvishn froyen, tsu simpatizirn mit zeyere fraynd, un zeyere perzenlekhkeytn laydn [personalities suffer] derfun.

Oyb ayer khaverte baklogt zikh [complains] vegn ir man, vet ir mistame [probably] oykh gefinen oyf vos zikh tsu baklogn vegn ayer man, kedey aroystsvayzn mitlayd un shtitse [to show compassion and support].

Es ken zayn az far dem shmues [before chatting] mit der khaverte, hot ir in zinen nisht gehat tsu baklogn zikh [didn't think to complain...] vegn im, ober nokh dem, zent ir shoyngreyt zikh oystsutaynen [argue things out] mitn man. Dos iz a moshl [example] vi azoy a shlekhte batsiung [attitude] tsum lebn fun eyn mentsh ken mashpie zayn [influence] oyf andere.

Me darf zikh bamien [make an effort] tsu simpatizirn un zikh tsuheren tsu ir, ober nisht vern vi zi. Kedey vayter tsu blaybn a fraynd, darf men nisht

onnemen di zelibike kharakter-shtrikhn [...traits] fun a tsveytn. Neyn, lozt zikh nisht ibermakhn in a baveyner un a bakloger. Shtelt dem trop [stress] bloyz oyf di gute zakhn, un efsher vet ayer fraynd veln vern enlekh [similar] tsu aykh un vet gefinen epes guts!

=====

Tayere khaznte,

Ikh hob tomid gevolt vern a krankn-shvester [nurse]. Itst, az mayne 3 kinder zenen shoyngoysevaksn, un hobn farlozt undzer hoyz, leygn zey for [propose], ikh zol tsurik geyn un shtudirn tsu vern a krankn-shvester, Ikh hob zey gezogt az s'iz shoyngoysevaksn tsu shpet.

Tsulib di ale kursn, in velkhe ikh volt zikh gedarft farshraybn, volt ikh farendikt korev tsu [close to] 60 yor. Dertsu iz dos shtudirn aleyn mistame [probably] tsu shver far mir itst. Entfernen zey az ikh darf nokhgeyn mayn troyim. Zog ikh zey, az me darf dokh zayn realistish. Vi halt ir?

Krankn-shvester

Tayere krank...shv...,

Ikh meyn, az di rikhtike kashe [the correct question] iz: tsi hot ir nokh dem troyim fun vern a krankn-shvester? Ven ir volt itst gevorn a krankn-shvester volt ayer lebn, in ayere oygng, gehat mer vert? Oyb ir hot geentfert az yo, halt ikh az ir volt gedarft dos ton.

Oyb ir vet gefinen, az di klasn zenen aykh tsu shver, nokh dem vi ir hot take shver shtudirt in zey, volt ir gekent vi a breyre [alternative], vern a gehilf [aide] tsu a krankn-shvester [nurse], oder gefinen an andere pozitsye in der meditsin-profesye [medical profession].

Ober ven men makht nisht keyn pruv [if you don't try], ken men dokh keyn mol nisht visn [you will not know]. Gedenkt: dos vert fun lebn iz nisht bloyz der sof-tsil [end result], nor oykh di 'nesie' [trip] oyfn veg tsum tsil.

**Shayles un Tshuves in "Hilkhes Libe"**  
**Forverts – April 29-May 5, 2011**  
Fun der khaznte Khane Slek  
[transliterated/annotated by Goldie Adler Gold]

Tayere khaznte,

Ikh voyn in L.A. un mayn bobbe voynt in Yisroel. Es tut mir layd [...*sorry*], ober shoynt mer vi andert-halb [1-1/2] yor vos ikh hob zi nisht gezen. In di kinder yorn flegn mir forn yedn zumer bazukhn [visit] di zeyde-bobbe, un mayn mame hot zikh bamit [*made an effort*] tsu zayn dort nokh a mol bemeshekh [during] funem yor. Azoy vi ikh hob farendikt di graduir-shul un hob ongehoybn arbetn far zikh aleyn, iz mir nisht laykht gevorn avektsuforn.

Ikh horove [*toil*] a sakh, un in di itstike shlekhte ekonomishe tsaynt iz mir shver tsu fardinen genug [*earn enough*] oyfn lebn. Far a yorn [*last...*] zumer hob ikh bedeye gehat [*intended*] tsu forn keyn Yisroel, ober lesot, iz nisht meglekh geven.

Dem zumer, hof ikh nokh a mol tsu forn, ober mayn khaverte [*friend*] vil az ikh zol mit ir avekorn oyf a vokh, tsvey, vayl mir zenen nokh nisht geven tsuzamen oyf vakatsye. Ikh veys nisht vos tsu ton. Onhalten di batsiung [*relationship*] mit mayn khaverte iz mir vikhtik [*important*], ober ikh veys, az ikh volt gedarft bazukhn mayn bobbe.

Tserisn [torn]

Tayerer tserisn,

Ir zolt bazukhn ayer bobbe. Ikh meyn, az ir farshteyt shoynt aleyn, az dos iz vos me darf ton. Efsheer volt aza bazukh nisht geven azoy romantish vi a vokh vakatsye mit der khaverte, ober s'iz a sakh mer vikhtik [*important*]. Mir zenen gebentsht [*fortunate*] mit zeyde-bobbe. Me veyst ober keyn mol nisht vi lang zey veln zayn mit undz.

Shoynt a hipsh bisl tsaynt [*quite some time*] hot ir zi nisht bazukht. Ven epes, kholile [*God forbid*], volt geshen mit ir, un ir volt nisht gehat oysgenitst di gelegenheit [*used the opportunity*] zi tsu zen, volt es aykh tomid bang ton [*always regret*]. Planirt tog-langike aktivitetn mit ayer meyd—a 'blaybn-in-der-heyem' vakatsye. Oyb ayer khaverte farshteyt dos nisht, iz zi nisht ayer basherte [*predestined one*].

Tayere khaznte,

Ikh bin a muzik-lererin in a sinagoge, un der rov varft a pakhed [*fear*] oyf mir! Er nemt mikh arum vi a bagrisung [*greeting*], un loybt [*compliments*] mayne kleyder, vi ikh gey ongeton. Er iz azoy gut tsu mir, un tomid git mir op komplimentn vos shayekh [*related to*] der arbet. Er hot mir nokh keynmol shlekhts geton [*has never harmed me*], ober mir iz umbakvem [*uncomfortable*] mit im. Zol ikh epes ton? Oyb ikh red mit im vegn dem, hob ikh moyre, az ikh vel im baleydikn [*insult*] oder, kholile, oyfregn [*upset*], vayl dervayl, oyf an emes, [*so far...truthfully*] iz nisht vos zikh tsu baklogn [*complain*]. Vi halt ir? Makh ikh zikh narish?

Tayere Umbakvem,

Me ken nisht avekmakhn mit der hant [*disregard*] ayere gefiln vegn dem inyen [*matter*]. Gefiln ken men nisht haltn far 'narish'. Mayn ershter forleyg [*suggestion*] iz – git im op sholem-aleykhem ven ir bagrist [*greet*] dem rov in der fri, eyder er ken aykh arumnemen [*before he embraces you*]. Dos vet zayn a boyleter [*clear*] simen az ir vilt nisht er zol es ton.

Oyb er nemt aykh say-vi-say [*anyhow*] arum nokh dem vi ir git im di hant, volt ir im gedarft epes zogn. Oyb ir filt zikh nisht bakvem mit im, treft zikh nisht mit im ponem-el-ponem [*don't meet him face-to-face*]. Nokh dem vi er nemt aykh arum, oder loybt ayer oyszen [*compliments...appearance*], darft ir im zogn: "ven ir nemt mikh arum fil ikh zikh umbakvem; s'volt beser geven, ven mir gibn zikh di hent", oder "ven ir drikt zikh oys [*express*] mit azoyne gute reyde vegn mayn sheynkeyt, volt mir libersht geven [*I'd prefer*], ven ir bamerkt gornisht [*don't comment*] vegn dem".

Oyb di eytses [*advice*] veln nisht baynt zayn oyffir [*change...behavior*], darft ir opgebn a barikht [*report*] vegn di epizodn tsum prezident fun der sinagoge. Dos vet nisht laykht zayn far aykh, ober oyb ir hot azoyne gefiln, hobn andere mentshn oykh azoyne gefiln, un dem rov darf men tsu visn gebn [*let him know*] vegn dem, kedey er zol zikh yo baynt.

## Writing from Rochester, NY

by Boris Kopit

Reading accidentally about your biography (on *Der Bay's* website at: <http://www.derbay.org/bio.html>) and seeing you as a little boy on a pony triggered memories of my own youth.

I was born in Poland a few years after that country regained its independence in 1919.

They were difficult years then of deprivation, and I distinctly remember wearing hand-me-down clothes of my two-years-older cousin, sent to us by my aunt who lived in Brooklyn.

After having worn them a year or so and having outgrown them, they were given in succession to a younger of my cousins. There was in our house a photo of my cousin in the same navy suit that I was wearing and a sailor hat with ribbons and an enigmatic inscription of some American ship. There was also one that always fascinated me, of my cousin on a pony with dark and white patches and a white mane.

It convinced me that my aunt must have been very rich, to be able to have a live pony for her little offspring.

After WW II, in my late twenties, I arrived in the U.S.A. Having tried my hand at a succession of different jobs, I finally settled in my present occupation of a slipcover cutter. My job took me to different households in the Polish section of Greenpoint where I used to live.

On one such occasion, my curiosity was raised by a photo on the wall of a little boy sitting on what else but my cousin Benny's little pony with dark and white patches, and a white mane. Chagrined, I asked the lady of the house for an explanation. She revealed to me that an itinerant photographer had taken the photo, and that it was a local custom to have such pictures taken.

Imagine how downhearted it made me. The dream of a rich cousin in America came to an abrupt end.

**Editor's note:** Boris lives part of the year in Rochester, NY and in Costa Rica during the cold winter months. This is his alternate home instead of following the Florida crowd.

## Fishl Remembers

Thank you Boris for taking me back to those so-called "good old days".

### Hand-Me-Downs (HMDs)

Children today think that HMDs are things taken down from an upper shelf. On the other hand, we Depression babies knew these were clothes that had been worn by our older brothers/sisters.

The unfortunate children were the ones where brothers wore items that had been worn by their older sisters. One case comes especially to mind, where a friend was given his older sister's red rubber boots. Boys would use only brown or black. My friend had to leave the house wearing the red boots, but took them off when he got around the corner. His shoes and socks were always soaking wet. He couldn't stand the embarrassment of being mocked by the older boys for wearing those red girl's boots. He hid them in his lunch bag.

When we had a hole in the sole of our shoes, we slid in a piece of cardboard. And when that wore out, we just put in another one. Today the children just toss their tennis shoes out and get another hundred-dollar pair.

In those days, having your own bed was a luxury and having your own bedroom was only for rich people. Even only two in a bed was considered good. What do kids today know about sleeping *tsu fusns*? I still can remember being awakened at night by a kick. The worst part was when one of the twins did not have his toenails cut!

Mama's rule of the house was, "If you put it on your plate, you finish it." Your plate was always empty at the end. If a slice of bread fell on the floor, you brushed it off kissed it and ate it. If you did that, supposedly G-d took care of the germs.

Mama always sewed the holes in socks. Today, ladies and gentlemen, do you remember the last time you did it?

Remember when there were very few parts of the chicken that weren't eaten? The neck, gizzard (pupik), liver, heart, feet, wings, shmalts, and little yolks were all eaten.

# "Honor Thy Father And Thy Mother"

Ray Davidson

This sentence that is read in the Gates of Prayer each and every Saturday Morning has been a problem since 1955, when I lost my Mother, and even more so when in 1964 my Father also joined those who were bound up in the Bonds of Life Eternal. It originates from Exodus 20, verse 16. As long as they lived, this Commandment was no problem for I truly honored both of them with love and affection - with my presence and my attention to their smallest need, never needing to be prodded or cajoled to comply. But once they no longer walked this earth - once they physically were out of reach for me—I was so at a loss to know exactly what I needed to do to continue to honor them.

As time passed and the years flew by, I found myself reaching my eighty-third birthday and a friend of mine was having his second Bar Mitzvah. As I sat spellbound listening to him go through the entire Saturday morning I kept thinking to myself how very nice this was and how much I too would like to have a second Bar Mitzvah.

Well March was six months away, and the Rabbi and I both figured that was plenty of time for me to get ready and even to write my own "Machzor" for the occasion. And so the die was cast and so it was done and I set about becoming proficient enough to "carry it off." I elected to call my Machzor "Memories to Live By," and featured pictures on the front of my Father, my Mother, and my Wife Frieda, also of blessed memory.

I thought of quotes to go under each picture, and it was automatic that those thoughts for my Mother and Father were in Yiddish, for that is how they spoke to each other and to me as a young child and as a young man and as I matured. If I came to my Father with a problem, he would listen carefully to what I said, go into a heavy thinking period, and then say to me, "Es vet shoyt git zayn," meaning, "It will soon good be" and if I questioned my Mother on some item she made for a meal that didn't come out the same as usual, she would say, "Ikh glaykh es azoy," or translated, "I like it this way." Under Frieda's picture the quote was - "Ray, you just don't know how to get old."

All of that occurred over five years ago, but recalling the Yiddish from my parents awoke

thoughts of all the Yiddish they spoke to me and how much I loved the language, almost completely forgotten over the past forty-seven years since I lost my Father. Almost, I say, but not completely forgotten. Perhaps the correct word would be dormant. For as the months passed, I found myself thinking of that language and mentally once again speaking it.

I began to study the History of Yiddish, and last year presented an adult-education class on the subject. The response to that class was so positive that it encouraged me to form a "Yiddish Circle of Learning" which began just one year ago this past first week of June and has grown in one year to over thirty people who share my need to know more of our people's language and culture.

And above all, I now know how to "Honor My Father and Mother." Perhaps it is this feeling that courses through each of us that is responsible for the growth of the "Yiddish Circle of Learning."

Ray Davidson  
9046 W 124th Street. Apt 194  
Overland Park, KS 66213  
Ph: 314-477-4309

**Editor's note:** Ray's inspiring letter truly moved your editor. Every once in a while the task of publishing a newsletter seems overwhelming. Then an inspiring letter comes along and you realize that there is meaning to all of this work.

Perhaps recently you have heard someone say, "Why bother keeping Yiddish alive? We don't need both Hebrew and Yiddish."

What was your reply? Many good answers have been given ranging from the rich Yiddish literature of the great Yiddish writers, to the thousand-year culture of the Ashkenazim, to give meaning to the lives of those lost in the Holocaust

This is an excellent topic for discussion at a future vinkl meeting. When you are asked to verbalize your feelings it is not easy, but it will be very rewarding. If you would like to share it with us, it would be appreciated—also let Ray know.

# A Chelemer's View of America

by Philip *Fishl* Kutner

It was the year 2011 and Chelm had just entered the 20th century. They had a telephone and a radio. No longer was Chelm a Third World Country. With these two new means of communication, they were now attached to the outside world.

Our story begins in the Chelm Shtetl Square. One morning, while Sheyne was on her way to Shmuel the Shnyder, she heard a baby crying. The sound came from a box. Inside was a little boy with a note. *Dos iz mayn kind Zygmund*. Because it was written in Yiddish, everyone assumed that the mother or father was Jewish. No one knew to whom the baby might belong—so Sheyne cared for him.

The gossip around the shtetl was that the mother was Jewish and had an affair with, or was raped by, a Cossack. Others were of the opinion that one of the Jewish men had an affair with a gypsy woman. Either way, they would never know.

As Zygmund grew up, it was evident that he was no ordinary child. Everyone called him Zindele or Zundele. He was a handsome child, dark of color with large piercing eyes. He was a head taller than the other boys. His physical prowess was far beyond the others. He was the fastest runner and out arm-wrestled any boy three years older than himself.

It was in kheyder that his talent really shone. It was said that he would grow up and be a famous rabbi. It was a problem for Sheyne and her husband, for they were plain folks with little religious training.

The time soon approached for Zindele's bar mitsve. Word of his physical and intellectual prowess had reached America. A letter arrived offering to pay for a big event with all expenses paid. It was from the Coney Island Jewish Welfare Board. It read:

WHEREAS Zindele is nearing his 13<sup>th</sup> birthday;  
WHEREAS Jewish boys must have a bar mitsve;  
WHEREAS his foster parents are not able to have an event fitting Zindele's bright future, and  
WHEREAS Coney Island is the second most holy place in the entire world next to the Western Wall, it is hereby suggested that Zindele have the bar mitsve service at the Coney Island Ultra Orthodox Synagogue and that the party be at The Glatt Kosher Famous French Fries, Frankfurter and Fricassee Emporium.

There was no doubt that such an honor for a Chelemer would be accepted.

## Zindele's Report Upon His Return

All of Chelm crowded into the Chelm Shtetl Square to hear "Zindele's View of America". Here is the text of his speech.

"All that the teenagers in America talk about is *temperature and food*. Everything good is COOL. On the other hand if the boys like a girl they say she is a HOT chick. If they don't like her, then she is a COLD fish.

"When someone is not telling the truth they say, He is full of HOT air. There is HOT bed, Hot-blooded, HOT box, HOT cakes, HOT corner, Hot-cross bun, HOT dog, HOT foot, HOT frame, HOT money, HOT front, HOT pack, HOT pepper, HOT plate, HOT rod, HOT seat, HOT shot, HOT stuff and HOT-tempered.

"Of course then there is COLD: COLD-blooded, COLD chisel, COLD cream, COLD cuts, COLD fish, COLD front, COLD-hearted, COLD pack COLD patch, COLD snap, COLD shoulder, COLD sore, COLD storage, COLD sweat, COLD war, and COLD wave.

"When it comes to food, the Amerikaner really go out of their way to mention FOOD. Money is called LETTUCE. There is APPLE cart, APPLE polish, APPLE of one's eye. Someone can be a good EGG or a bad EGG. If you do something wrong, you lay an EGG. If you are smart, you are an EGGhead. If you put all of your money in one investment, you put all your EGGS in one basket. If you are walking very cautiously, you are walking on EGGS.

"I am so happy to get back home to my fellow Chelemer and not have to think only about TEMPERATURE and FOOD."

Dear reader, the next time you visit Coney Island in Brooklyn do be sure to stop over for a visit to the Coney Island Ultra Orthodox Synagogue and look for the plaque commemorating the event of the bar mitsve of Zindele the Chelemer. The plaque is displayed outside the study of the Chief Rabbi.

## Fishele, vos iz a blog?

by Philip "Fishl" Kutner

Du zogst az s'iz afn kompyuter. Meynstu az a blog hengt afn kompyuter?

Neyn mame, siz ineveynik in dem kompyuter, un vi amol shrayb ikh a bisl vegn farshidene zakhn. Dos vort "blog" kumt fun tsvey verter, web un log.

Ver leyent dos blog?

Er oder zi vos vil leyenen vos ikh shrayb, leyent dem blog.

Un, *Fishl*, vegn vos shraybstu?

Farshidine zakhn vegn vos ikh hob geton hayntikn tog oder epes vegn Yidish. Mame, az du vilst zen mayn blog darfstu geyn af mayn vebzaytl ( [www.derbay.org](http://www.derbay.org) ) un klapn af dem linkn zayt, "vu es zogt *blog*". Oder du kenst oykhet geyn tsu ([www.derbay.org/blog](http://www.derbay.org/blog)).

Mame, ikh denk, az efsher vel ikh koyfn an ipod.

## *Der Bay*

Editor: Philip "Fishl" Kutner

Published Since January 1991

Web site: <http://www.derbay.org>

E-mail: [FISHL@derbay.org](mailto:FISHL@derbay.org) Ph: 650-349-6946

Please make checks for chai, payable to *Der Bay*. If you've been blessed, please do send a LITTLE extra. Label date is when you LAST contributed.

Networking, Networking, Networking, is having others help you get what YOU want. *Der Bay* is a great networking tool.

Send a contribution in memory of a dear one, or send someone a *Der Bay* subscription.

All listings in Der Internatsionaler Kalendar in the hardcopy and on the website are free.

Send a notice of club meetings, lectures, classes, a DVD release, gigs, or your book publication.