

Our Yiddish Club's Journey to Chelm and the Garden of Eden

Our Yiddish Club members from Yenemsville decided to visit Chelm and learn about their common heritage. They have researched their genealogy and made plans. This chapter deals with the flight to Warsaw and the train trip to Chelm.

Departure day has arrived. All of our plans have been made—or so we thought. Our families came to the airport to see us off, and the excitement began to grow as we realized that we finally shall be going *home*. After boarding the plane and getting comfortably seated we became quiet and began to think what it will be like. Will the Chelmers accept Our Yiddish Club?

Nar the Narrator wrote in his logbook. "We took a Boeing 767, Flight 27 of Lot, the Polish National Airlines, and left JFK International Airport at 10:30 P.M from Terminal 4. Arrival in the Warsaw Airport (WAW) was at 1:15 P.M. the next day at Terminal 1. The 6,854 kms. (4259 Miles) flight took 8 hrs 45 mins." But we are getting ahead of ourselves. This article is about the flight over and the next one is about the Joyous?? Arrival!

Tova the Teacher and **Leybl the Librarian** had researched the subject and wrote many notes about what the club should know. Here are just a few:

- Time is on a 24 hour clock starting with midnight and 1:00 is 1:00 A.M., and 13:00 is 1:00 P.M.
 - Dates are reversed so that 13/5/04 is May 13, 2004 while we would write, 5/13/04
 - Money: \$1US is 4 Polish zloty (ch)
 - Metric system is used based on multiple of 10s.
- Distance in Meters: 1 meter is 1.1 yards or 3 ft. 3 in.
Weight in Grams: 1 kilogram (1000g) is 2.2 pounds.
Volume in Liters: 1 liter is a little over 1 quart.
Temperature: Fahrenheit F° is $1.8 \times C^\circ$, plus 32°

If C is 20° , $F^\circ = 1.8 \times 20 = 36$, $+32$, $F=68^\circ$

Temperature: Centigrade $C^\circ = (F^\circ - 32)$ divided by 1.8

If F is 68° , $C^\circ = 68 - 32 = 36$, divided by 1.8, $C = 20^\circ$

As the plane flew above the clouds, each one slowly drifted off to dreamland. **Mendel the Computer Maven** wondered how cyberspace affected Chelm. How would the old stories be different if they were written with computers for the Computer Age? Since Spam is not kosher, how would the Chelmers prevent their PCs from becoming treyf?

Danny the Doctor asked himself what Chelmers were like on other planets. After all, G-d made other Earths before He left this one. Maybe he did not destroy the others. When the stork dropped the babies over Chelm, maybe they also dropped others on other planets.

Benny the Brewer was very eager to visit the Zywiec Brewery. It is the Guinness of Polish stout.

Pincus the Pickle Maker had dreams of opening an old-fashioned Jewish deli just like the one he had lived above when he was a kid on Pitkin Avenue. After all, when Jews come to visit Chelm, they'll need a place to eat.

Sitting next to Pincus was **Heshy the Chocolate Maker**. He came from Ocean Avenue and remembered the old candy store and the delicious frapes. His mouth watered as he thought about how the Chelmers would love his delicious drinks.

Bobbe the Baker learned that there are no Starbucks in Chelm. The closest things are little bakeries that also sell coffee. Opening a Starbucks along with the baked goods would be an instant success.

Gitl the Gardener was the most nervous of all. She had read that G-d had made Chelm into the best place on Earth to live. The Chelmers were the smartest people, and the smartest people had the choice of living anywhere on Earth. After all didn't they chose Chelm, somewhere in Chelm had to be the best place—The Biblical Garden of Eden.

Perele the Pearl Peddler and **Rokhl the Raykhe** took turns going to the—you should excuse me, the you know where. For them there was no fond thoughts and no sleep.

Fayvl the Fire Fighter had been the last to board the plane. His thoughts were of the Chelmer yidn who labored in the camps and perished in the chambers. Prior to WWII there were about 15,000 Jews in Chelm. December 1942 the remaining half was sent to and exterminated at Sobibor.

After a tiring trip, the plane landed in Warsaw, and we took taxis to the Warsaw Central Station. The train departed Warszawa Centralna at 11:07 and arrived in Lublin at 13:33. There was a 23-minute wait and the train arrived in Chelm at 15:10. The time on the train was 4 hours and 3 minutes. The ride was uneventful, for we were tired and slept for a while.

Since there are no *Der Bay* issues in the summer, your editor has time to research and get feedback from our 13 club members. They all have made plans on visiting the sites and doing their share to help improve the lot of the present-day Chelmers. Be especially alert to anticipate the visit and excitement in Chelm's Garden of Eden. Have a good summer—see you September as we continue this series.