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May 1, 2019 (5779)

Kol Kehilat

THE NEWSLETTER OF KEHILAT CHAVERIM

Herb Gerjuoy – A Brief Profile

By Joan Walden

It's been ten years since I wrote about Herb Gerjuoy for this newsletter. It seems to be a fitting tribute to his memory to reprint it here. His death on March 11 was preceded by a fall and subsequent brain surgery. Our sincerest condolences have been extended to Carol and the Gerjuoy family as they, and we, continue to adjust to the new normal of life without Herb. JW

Eloquent, erudite and edifying are all words one could use to describe Herb Gerjuoy. Elfin is another. With a highly developed sense of humor and a self-deprecating manner, which barely conceal his teddy bear nature, "Herb is someone with an incredible ability to think outside the box," says Mary Williams, a long-time chavurah member and FOH (Fan of Herb).



Herb and his wife Carol are long-time members of Kehilat Chaverim, having joined the group in the early 1980s. They left for a few years while Herb explored his interest in Hassidism, but they returned to stay in the 1990's and have remained active and in-

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REMINDER

Please let us know if any of your contact information changes. Periodically, we will send out a membership list, and want to make certain that it is current.

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volved members. Herb currently serves on the steering committee, a position he held for the first time years ago. He is the liaison to the Sabbath committee as well as an ad hoc member of that committee and is working with another committee on the development of a new prayer book. He also played a vital part in rewriting our Kol Nidre service.

"I also was on the Ed-Cult committee when Herb Hoffman was the leader," Herb recalls, "and was editor of the newsletter before drifting to the Sabbath committee where I've been ever since."

Herb grew up in East New York, a part of Brooklyn that straddled middle class Flatbush and rough and tumble Brownsville. "Our street wasn't paved until I was 4 years old," he recalls. "We lived within walking distance of a pig farm and the only vehicular traffic were horses, donkeys and mules. The vendors that came through had the same kind of street cries that you would have heard if you saw the Broadway show 'Oliver.'"

"The area was mainly Jewish, but that didn't mean it wasn't tough," he adds. To illustrate just how tough, he mentions a soda fountain where he would take his high school girlfriend after school. Each time they were there, they would see the same three men at a table in the back of the store playing cards. After the men were arrested, Herb learned that they were heads of Murder Incorporated.

"My father was a devout, passionate Communist, which was his religion. His rebbe was Stalin," Herb says. On the other hand, his mother was "the Jewish equivalent of lace curtain Irish." It was her determination "to be proper in every way" that led to Herb's attendance at Hebrew School and his eventual Bar Mitzvah. They belonged to a Conservative synagogue and Herb had "a typical, miserable,

and incompetent Jewish education."

Herb earned a BS with high honors in Psychology and Social Science in 1949 from the University of Southern California where his older brother was on the faculty. He also earned his MS at that school and considered becoming a doctor, but decided that medicine wasn't for him. He earned his Ph.D. from State University of Iowa.

He retired in 2001 as a professor in 13 different fields. "The dean never checks your references," he says with a laugh. Since then, he has been involved with Network of Spiritual Progressives and has been promoting non-violent communication.

Herb is justifiably proud of his accomplished family. "Google me and you'll find even more interesting information about my brother, Edward, who at the age of 90 has produced original mathematical research." You'll also find "a ton of stuff by my oldest daughter, Judith Hope, who has published on medieval society, particularly cookery, and is an officer in the Society for Creative Anachronisms." For the past 27 years, she has hosted a science fantasy convention in Baltimore. Daughter Amy has spent most of her adult life in Natanya, Israel where she is a teacher in a worldwide democratic school. Both daughters were born to Herb and his first wife.

Herb and Carol have 2 daughters, Berry, who is a lawyer working for The Travelers, and Ilana, who works at Everywoman's Center at the University of Massachusetts and is an expert in rape crisis response and family violence prevention. Carol is an RN and a certified midwife.

What drew the Gerjuoys to our group is what drew many of us. In Herb's opinion, "I think historically that one of the greatest mistakes of

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Jewish tradition has been that it has been excessively tribal, and people haven't been encouraged to join without passing a strict entrance exam. I feel good to be in an organization where couples who are not necessarily heterosexual, or where one isn't Jewish can find a welcome." He also appreciates that "we don't want anyone to be holy for us." He embraces our cooperative imperative and believes that the most important sacrifice a person can make is to contribute time and energy—a concept he not only endorses but lives by.

Having eschewed a career in medicine, it is sadly ironic that of late Herb has been thrust into the role of medical self advocate. He has been diagnosed recently with a relatively rare kind of cancer of the stem cells.

"What it does is to lock down the throttle on the production of blood cells," he explains. He is seeing a number of doctors, but is searching for another opinion and treatment. On the day we spoke, he mentioned his plan to make an appointment with the Mayo Clinic as soon as possible.

He is, of course, concerned about his health, as are everyone who knows about it. "What I don't want to do is make it my career," he says. However, since the diagnosis, understandably, "It's all I've been doing, and it's hard for me not to think about it." As Herb deals with his mortality, he has been working on "peeling away dishonesty in my life." It is no doubt one reason why he spoke openly about this now. He reckons that since he's not running for public office, he has nothing to lose in being open and forthright.

On a personal note, I first met Herb and Carol in the 1970s before they were members of our group. His intelligence, intellect, love of life and love of wife, as well as his compassion and desire to play an active role in making this a more peaceful world have always been evident to me. I know that I speak for all of us in wishing him success in managing his health crisis. His contributions to our group are substantial.

June, 2008

Rest in Peace, Herb.



Purim 2007



Carol and Herb, Nov. 2005

Community, Culture and Education Committee**Kehilat Chaverim Annual Meeting – Spring 2019**

Date: Sunday, May 5

Time: 10 AM - Noon

Place: Mandell JCC

SECRET STORY

Theme: I'VE GOT A SECRET

Wait, don't panic! We aren't asking you to reveal a deep, dark secret. But we are seeking is a tidbit about yourself that perhaps most of us don't yet know. For example, a hobby, an upcoming trip, work or family news, or something else that will help us forge bonds and provide even more fodder for conversation.

Agenda: Breakfast foods and conversation followed by exchange of "secrets." The business meeting will include projected budget review and discussion, acknowledging the outgoing Steering Committee members, and voting on the new slate.

We look forward to seeing you there! It simply won't be the same without you.

Questions? Contact Marcey: marceynews@gmail.com





BRIDGING THE GAP

By Joan Walden

As you are no doubt aware, for the past several years Kehilat Chaverim has provided ongoing support to The Bridge, a local non-profit organization.

Initially, Maggie Cohen made contact with the organization and learned that young women who seek shelter there often arrive with nothing more than the clothes they are wearing. It was agreed that welcome bags to help ease the sudden change in the girls' lives were something we could do to make a difference.

Robin Kreisberg has taken over as our liaison to The Bridge, and recently spoke with Doreen Tarascio, Communications Director at The Bridge who began working there last September. Doreen affirmed that our contributions are of vital importance and that, if possible, we should continue to assemble and deliver a dozen bags three or four times year.

This is why we request your ongoing help in making this a reality. In the early days of this project, the contents of a bag amounted to \$25 - \$35, but due to rising costs, contents today can add up to well over \$50. Therefore, in addition to complete bags, we gratefully accept individual items such as shampoo, body wash, journals, bath and hand towels, gift cards, stuffed animals, single sheet sets, socks and pjs. as well as donations to Kehilat Chaverim that are earmarked for The Bridge.

Thank you to everyone who has donated. We can't keep this going without your generosity and support.

Thanks to Robin and her committee for their commitment to this project. And thanks to every member who has generously and anonymously contributed over the years.

Purim

AND THERE WAS NOISE AND REJOICING

Purim Shabbat Celebration 2019

By Joan Walden

Jane and Lewis Gordon provided the hospitality, a pot of chicken courtesy of Lewis, and Jane's homemade, gluten-free hamentashen. Faith Fuerst provided the leadership, and Ellen Coffey provided the prologue to the reading of the Haggadah.

The festivals committee supplied desserts and overall coordination as well as the groggers and other noisemakers. All this enabled the 32 people who attended the KC Purim Shabbat Celebration on the Ides of March to have a rousing good time, barely aware of the raging, late winter thunder storm outside.

The Shabbat service took place in the Gordon's capacious kitchen where everyone stood to recite the prayers and share in both solemnity and bonhomie. The recitation of the Kaddish was, as always, in memory of family and friends with special mention of Herb Gerjuoy, whose death earlier in the week was on the minds of many. The gorgeous and delicious challah was made by Maggie Cohen, who still nurtures us even after she and Alan have relocated to Boston.

As for the reading of the Haggadah, Faith read a prologue by Ellen. Queen Esther ruled the day, but Queen Vashti was cast in a more positive light than the one we may have learned in Hebrew School. An excerpt appears below:

In the Book of Esther, both Vashti and Esther find themselves in vulnerable positions because of their gender. Queen Vashti pays a high price for her dignity when she is banished

and disgraced for refusing to dance naked for King Ahasuerus. Esther, who is chosen in a beauty pageant as Vashti's successor, fears for her life because she dares to approach the King without being summoned. When Esther asserts herself, she overcomes gender stereotypes and ultimately saves the Jewish people.

When many of us were growing up in the 1950's and 60's, Esther was portrayed as the heroine of the Purim story while Vashti was the "evil queen." But by today's standards, both women are positive role models for women. Esther saved the Jews by taking a risk and speaking out. Vashti stood up against sexual harassment even though she was punished for coming forward. Considering current events, both are exemplars for women today.

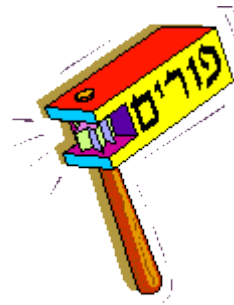
A few members dressed in costume, namely: Mary Williams, as Rosie the Riveter; Faith, as Queen Esther; Ellen as RBG (Ruth Bader Ginsburg); and me, as Joy Adamson (animal rights activist who wrote "Born Free").

Grateful thanks to everyone who participated in this service/celebration.



Phot by Linda Carlson

Purim



Community, Culture and Education Committee

Media Coverage of Religion: How and Why it Matters in American Politics

THE RELIGIOUS VOTE
Ed Cult/Community Engagement Program
By Sue Garten

On Sunday, April 7th, Art Feltman and Dale Wallington hosted a conversation with Mark Silk, sponsored by the Community Engagement Committee. Mark is the Director of the Leonard Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life and Professor of Religion in Public Life at Trinity College. He described historical trends in Jewish American voting patterns and how a combination of professed religious observance and gender increasingly predicts partisan choices in American politics. All present benefitted from Mark's knowledge of the influence of religion on elections over the decades.



Passover

Passover at Susan Doran's home with KC friends Nan Rubin and Faith Fuerst



Membership Support

MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT CONTACT INFORMATION

“Healing wishes are sent to members who are ill or grieving. If we can help by providing food or sustenance, a ride, or a sympathetic ear, please reach out to one of us.”

If you become aware of a member in need please contact one of us. If you are comfortable please ask your friend/member if they mind having a person from membership support reach out. Some people prefer to keep their situation private or only among their inner circle. Thank you for caring.

Debby Szajnberg	860-463-5425	debbysz@comcast.net
Marcey Munoz	860-951-6877	marceynews@gmail.com
Joan Walden	860-233-2379	joan@joanwalden.name

Contact Marcey for General
Membership Information

Passover



Anna Pleet (center) flanked by Jake's youngest sister, Elaine, and brother-in-law Jesse.

BUONA PASQUA

(Happy Passover)

By Joan Walden

There were 20 of us at my husband Jake's family's Seder in Penn Valley Pennsylvania for the second night of the holiday. Thanks to the book, "Three Hundred Ways to Ask the Four Questions" by Murray Spiegel that Jake and I bought at Spiegel's JCC presentation sponsored by KC in March, our niece, Anna Pleet, chanted the Four Questions in Italian. And what a rendition it was! Anna is attending medical school in Milan and is fluent in Italian, so although she had no time to rehearse, she did a first-rate job.

Kehilat Chaverim

invites you to a

Potluck Shabbat

On Friday, May 31, 2019 at 6:00 P.M.

At the home of Karen and Leo Harrington



RSVP to **Susan Doran** (not Karen) by Sunday, May 26, to let her know if

you plan to bring a main dish, a side dish, beverage, or a dessert.

Susan's Email: susan@doran.us

Looking forward to seeing you!

The Jewish Museum

The Festivals and Social Activities Committee of Kehilat Chaverim is planning the following visit:

The Jewish Museum
1109 5th Avenue at 92nd Street
New York, NY
www.thejewishmuseum.org



Sunday, July 21
Museum Hours: 11:00AM to 5:45PM
Group tour from 1:00-1:45 for 20 people
Cost: \$18 per person

Special exhibit: Leonard Cohen “A Crack in Everything”

Opening in April 2019, the Jewish Museum presents a contemporary art exhibition inspired by the influential singer/songwriter Leonard Cohen. Experience immersive contemporary installations by artists who have been inspired by Cohen’s style and recurring themes in his work.

Additional Information:

Lunch is available at the Museum restaurant “Russ & Daughters” either as sit-down or take-out. No reservations taken for lunch on Sunday. There are places to sit inside and outside.

Transportation is on your own.

There is an Amtrak train on Sunday morning that goes from Berlin to NYC departing at 8:10, arriving at 10:51. Or Metro-North trains from New Haven, West Haven, or Milford to NYC. Or carpooling.

Some people may want to stay over in NYC.

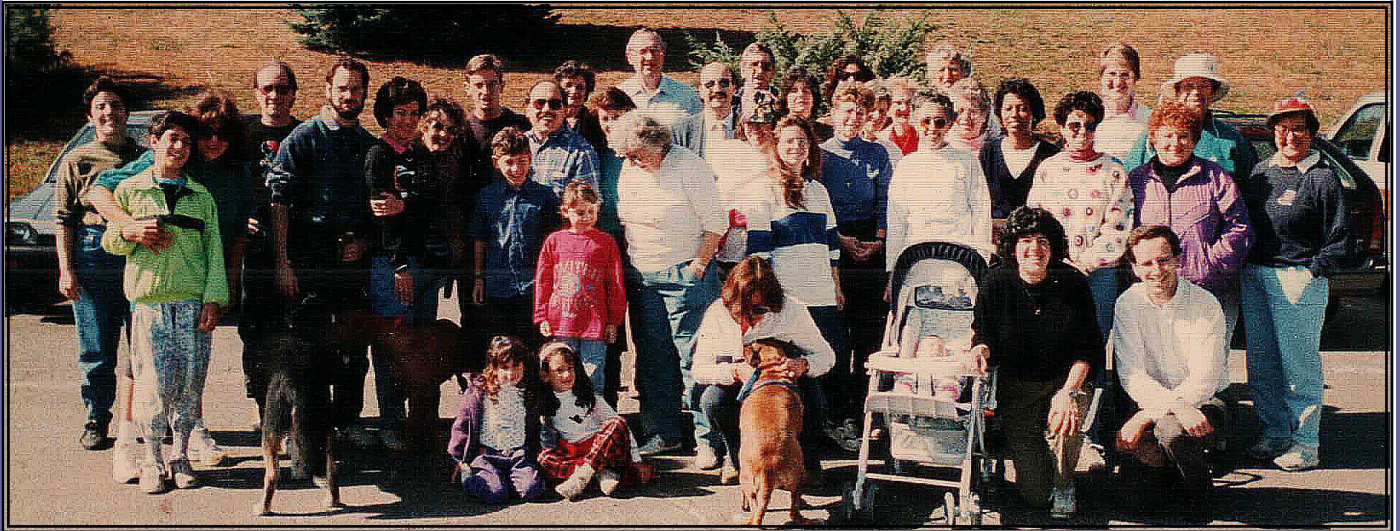
There is a Courtyard by Marriott Upper East Side that is 0.7 miles from the museum.

All we would like to know now is whether you are interested in being part of this group of 20 people. We can add another group if needed. Once we know who is interested, we can figure out sharing transportation, meals and/or accommodations.

Please reply to lpels@cox.net

KC History

Yom Kippur Hike



Are You In This Picture?

The hike was in

1996

Condolences

Condolences to Jim Calciano and his family on the passing of his brother.

Community, Culture and Education Committee**Broadway Musicals: A Jewish Legacy**

The movie DVD “Broadway Musicals A Jewish Legacy” as seen on PBS is available to borrow. It is a 2 disc selection with performances by Matthew Broderick, Kelli O’Hara, Zero Mostel, Nathan Lane, Barbra Streisand, Idina Menzel, Kristin Chenoweth, and many more.

Broadway Musicals: A Jewish Legacy examines the unique role of Jewish composers and lyricist in the creation of the modern American musical. The film showcases the work of legends such as Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, George and Ira Gershwin, Lorenz Hart, Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein II, Leonard Bernstein, and Stephen Sondheim. Interviews with songwriters and luminaries including Sheldon Harnick, Stephen Schwartz, Harold Prince, Arthur Laurents, Charles Strouse, and Mel Brooks provide insight, alongside standout performances and archival footage.

Engaging, Humorous and Provocative !!

Contact Marcie Schwartz mschwartz@megahits.com

or Hila Yanai hila1226@gmail.com

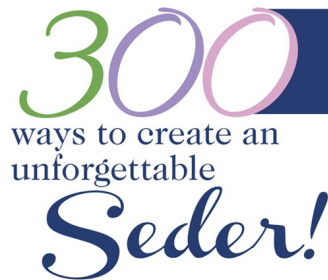
to borrow the DVD.

Communications**Announcement**

We have changed the KC Newsletter e-mail address to:

KCNewsletter1978@gmail.com

This e-mail address is only to send information for the newsletter.



A NEW TWIST ON THE FOUR QUESTIONS

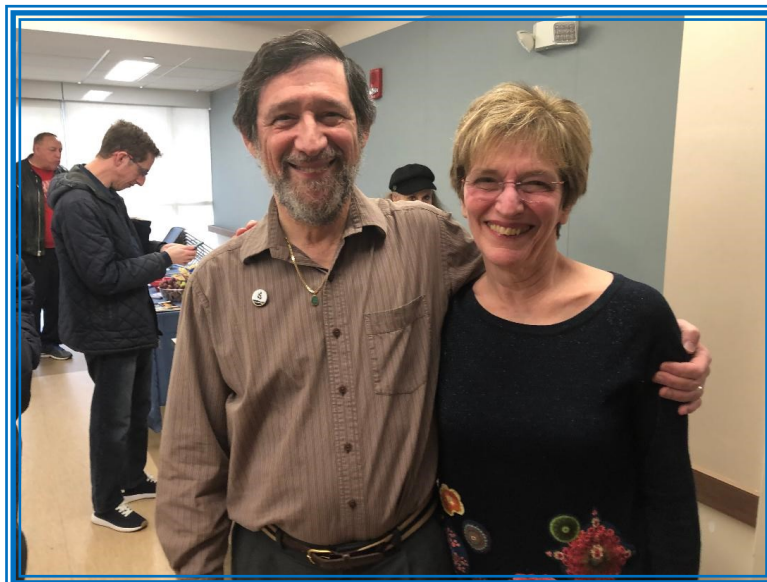
By Joan Walden

On the afternoon of Sunday, March 24 Dr. Murray Spiegel, renowned folk dancer and linguist, accepted our invitation to present his talk, “300 Ways to Create an Unforgettable Seder.” The participatory workshop was an intriguing, humorous, multimedia presentation that has inspired memorable Seders around the world. Three dozen KC members and the general public attended the talk at the Mandell JCC.

Dr. Spiegel, whose innovative Seders have been featured on PBS, offered novel ideas that included music, games, parodies, and quizzes that draw from historic as well as contemporary versions of the 4 Questions. An energetic and fascinating speaker, he made captivating connections to Jewish cultures across the globe.

With a passion for Judaism, Passover, and language, speech researcher Dr. Murray Spiegel has developed a reputation for innovative Seders and has been featured in The New York Times and filmed by PBS. Theodore Bikel called Dr. Spiegel’s presentation, “A great delight!”

KC member and fellow folk dancer Debby Szajnberg made the connection, and we are grateful to her for doing so and to him for sharing his knowledge and joy of Passover.





Kehilat Chaverim Calendar

Updated May 1, 2019

Day, Date	Time	Event & Location
2019		
May		
Sun. May 5	10:00 am	Annual Meeting, Mandell JCC
Fri. May 10	8:00 pm	Playhouse on Park— <i>My Name is Asher Lev</i>
Fri. May 31	6:00 pm	Shabbat at the home of Karen and Leo Harrington
June		
Sat. June 15	TBD	Havdallah pot luck in Niantic: (rain date June 29) At the summer home of Sharon Sklar
July		
Sun. July 21	TBD	Jewish Museum NYC trip/Leonard Cohen exhibit:
September		
Sun. Sept. 15	10:00 am	Fall Membership Meeting
Sun. Sept. 29	7:15 pm	Erev Rosh Hashanah
Mon. Sept. 30	9:45 am	Rosh Hashanah Day
Mon. Sept. 30	After Service	Tashlich

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For additional dates, see the KC Website at www.kehilatchaverim.org.

Please check the website calendar for conflicts before scheduling events.

***Kehilat Chaverim* Contact List**

2018-2019 Steering Committee Members—

Jewish Calendar-Driven Events

Youth Education, Activities and Bar/Bat Mitzvah

	Sharon Langer*	sdlanger@comcast.net
Sabbath	Susan Doran*	susan@doran.us
High Holidays	Sue Garten*	suegarten1@gmail.com
	Marcie Schwartz*	mschwartz@megahits.com

Life-Long Learning

Education and Culture	Linda Carlson*	pegasus891@aol.com
	Hila Yanai	hila1226@gmail.com

Community Support

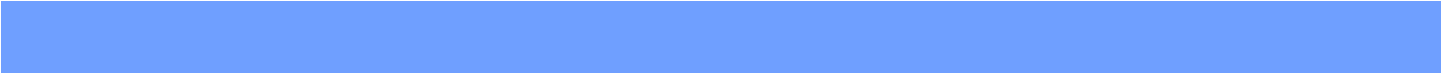
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* Steering Committee Member

Thank you to Joan Walden, Eric Hammerling, and Dan Harr for proofreading this newsletter.



Kehilat Chaverim

c/o Linda Carlson

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Manchester CT 06040

Featured this Month:

- In Memory of Herb
 - Purim Celebration
 - New York Trip
-