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## Did You Know That...?

This issue completes eleven years of continuous publication without missing or even being late in a single issue. This year there was so much news to report that instead of ten issues, an eleventh had to be sent. While *Der Bay* has not suggested an increase in contributions, many wonderful readers have sent in extra to help defray the costs for those less fortunate. No one is refused, for only you can tell how much you can afford to contribute.

Surprisingly, there is a long list of reasons that you have used to send gifts of *Der Bay* to friends and relatives. Here are just a few:

- Moving to a new home.
- College graduation.
- Birth of an *eynikl*.
- Bar mitsve present.
- Temple, college and JCC library.
- 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.
- 40<sup>th</sup>, 70<sup>th</sup>, 72<sup>nd</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> birthday
- Retirement party
- Yiddish club
- For a Yiddish teacher

The most unusual request was as a Valentine gift for "a sweetheart in Florida."

A wonderful, free benefit of *Der Bay's* activities is to have a yidish briv fraynd (Yiddish Pen-Pal). The web site has the full registration and information. You may write as e-mail using the Roman alphabet, or write in hardcopy using the Yiddish/Hebrew alphabet. If you wish to register for regular mail only, you may send a note to your editor including; hobbies, approximate age, and your Yiddish ability-level—beginners, intermediate or advanced. Also include the level of the briv fraynd with whom you wish to write—you also may write ALL.

We renew our annual offer to any college library of sending a complete set of issues (11 years) or filling in any missing issues of *Der Bay* at no charge—including shipping. There are three complete sets available. The request must come from the library. A list of organizations and universities receiving copies is on the website. If you haven't visited the site recently, you may wish to see the *Star of David and The Guided Tour*.

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Make checks for chai (\$18) payable to *Der Bay*. If you've been blessed, won't you send a LITTLE extra—please.

## Milwaukee Report #5

By Paul Melrood [MAJPAULWW2@aol.com](mailto:MAJPAULWW2@aol.com)

In last month's fourth Milwaukee Report, we covered the wonderful evening programs/entertainment to be held at the International Association of Yiddish Clubs VII Conference. This month we shall excerpt a portion of the report that the Conference Coordinator, Paul Melrood, sent to the IAYC.

First, we sent out our initial mailing of about 3500 invitations. AB Data sent them out by first class mail. The breakdown is 2000 to Chicago YIVO membership, 800 to the Milwaukee Jewish Federation best prospects, and 600 to the IAYC list that Fishl sent. It is made up of people who expressed an interest in attending or who had attended at least one previous conference. I will also get some extra envelopes and letters, so that I can send them, in bulk, to Detroit, Minneapolis and Madison.

I visited with Irv Saposnik in Madison this week, and he will be a big help. He was the Hillel director at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, and is interested in doing a presentation about Howard Weishel. Mr. Weishel was Mr. Yiddish, in our state, and recently passed away, at the age of 97. He had Alzheimer's for the last 5 years, or so, and we had the opportunity to say *goodbye* to him, at that time.

I made a good contact with the professor who is in charge of Jewish Studies at the University of Wisconsin, here in Milwaukee this past week. Actually, a few of the Jewish professors there had him call me. He's having a conference at the University the same time that our conference takes place. There will be a professor from the University of London in then. He would like to have the University's Jewish Studies Department be a co-sponsor of the conference. Our committee feels that this is a good idea. It means that we would have a plenary speaker (session) Monday morning, before finishing, and Dr. Leon Yudkin would be a reason for people to stay over, after the weekend. We still can have our own business, closing session after he's through.

We're moving ahead with a bookstore in the hospitality room, and are working with Aaron Lansky's people to make that work. They are excited about it, and we have volunteers to man that stand. A prominent Jewish bookstore owner here in town wants to advise us on how to do it. We will also have a boutique, sponsored by the Jewish Home and Care Center, next to the bookstand.

The Park East Hotel, only a very short walk to the lovely lake-front, is now ready to handle reservations—as is Katz's office at 500 E. Buffalo Street.

## Mendele's First Ten Years

Contents of Vol. 11.001 May 15, 2001  
From: Iosif Vaisman <iiv@ibiblio.org>  
Subject: First ten years

Ten years ago 22 enthusiasts of Yiddish and of the internet (the latter was hardly referred to by this word at that point) received an email that read:

| Contents of Vol. 1 no. 1            May 15, 1991  
|  
| Date: Wed, 15 May 91  
| From: Noyekh Miller (nmiller@trincc.bitnet)  
| Subject: Oyfn rekhtn fus  
|

| At last Mendele is ready to go public. We have as of today a total of 22 subscribers (list on demand) and a very good roster it is. And while we're neither in Czernowitz or Vilna we may be at the start of something that none of us might have thought possible 10 years ago. Let us hope so.

Noyekh Miller

Rekhtn fus s'iz take geveyn! And not only this. We all should be thankful for Noyekh's vision and perseverance, for Victor Bers' tireless work behind the scene, for dedication and support of all the subscribers. Today, Mendele is in the beginning of its second decade. Ten years is an extremely long period on the Internet time scale, especially for an enterprise without a budget and staff, without any institutional support or any formal organization behind it. Thousands of Internet projects, big and small, did not make it past their first, or second, or fifth anniversary. Mendele did not just survive, it has grown and matured. Mendele established itself as a respectable electronic publication, which is listed and cataloged by a number of major libraries and library consortiums around the world. It serves as a valuable resource for students and scholars and as a source of enjoyment for all subscribers.

Mendele's tenth birthday is a convenient occasion to recall its history, as well as the history of the Yiddish internet in general. The story below is not complete. I apologize if I missed any important events or people and would greatly appreciate all additions and corrections, that will be incorporated into the future versions.

Personal email was the first truly popular application of computer-mediated communication. In the 1980s, it was complemented by group communication in the form of mailing lists and Usenet newsgroups. The first generation of the Internet users, which consisted mostly of computer professionals and aficionados, scientists and engineers quickly realized that new media can be quite useful beyond the regular working hours. The growing Usenet was expanding into various subject areas, including religion and culture. Before long, there were active Jewish groups on the Net, including net.religion.jewish, and later, soc.culture.jewish and soc.genealogy.jewish.

While the messages on Yiddish-related topics started appearing in the general Jewish Internet media from the mid-80s, the first online public forum dedicated

exclusively to Yiddish was created in October of 1988 by David Sherman from Toronto. A Yiddish mailing list (or mail.yiddish) was issued in digest form and gradually attracted a relatively diverse audience. The contributions to the list were written in English or transliterated Yiddish and covered a fairly broad range of topics, including reports of Yiddish events, songs, jokes, and news.

By the early 90s, several important developments affected the landscape of the Net. An increasing number of academics in humanities and social sciences were becoming email users, which prompted a need for a more scholarly media. In 1991, Noyekh Miller, a veteran mail.yiddish subscriber organized a list named after Mendele Moykher Sforim. For several months, Mendele and mail.yiddish peacefully coexisted, but eventually most mail.yiddish subscribers switched to Mendele and mail.yiddish became inactive. For the next ten years Mendele was steadily growing. It reached 500 subscribers in 1994, 1000 in 1996, 1500 in 1998, and 2000 in 2000.

To provide better channels for the different types of materials, Mendele created two spin-off publications, The Mendele Review and Mendele Personal Notes and Announcements. The Mendele Review (TMR) is a literary supplement to Mendele edited by Leonard Prager. TMR publishes book reviews, bibliographies, fiction, and literary criticism. Mendele Personal Notes and Announcements present a different facet of the Mendele community: materials of local and regional interest - festivals, concerts, exhibits, personal classifieds.

Mendele is a truly international community. As of today, we have 2,100 subscribers living on six continents, approximately two thirds of them in the United States. (The exact numbers are unknown, because it is difficult to attribute correctly addresses in .com, .net, and .org domains. The numbers below reflect only the respective country domains -- .ca, .il, .de, .nl, etc. The actual number of subscribers from some countries is significantly higher.)

	1993	1998	2001
Canada	19	73	76
Israel	8	61	69
Germany	3	45	55
UK	4	22	31
Netherlands	2	26	27
Italy		10	26
France		12	22
Australia	3	17	21
Argentina		11	17
Russia		4	14
Hungary		11	10
Switzerland		9	9
Poland	3	7	9
Austria		5	9
South Africa		3	8
Japan	1	7	8
Sweden		6	7
Belgium		2	7
Spain			7
Brazil		6	5
Total	319	1700	2087

Country domains with less than 5 subscribers include China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hong Kong, Iceland, Luxembourg, Mexico, New Zealand, Slovakia, South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, and Uruguay.

When Mendele started ten years ago, all but one of the 22 subscribers were affiliated with the US universities. Since then their portion in the list has been steadily declining. Today, only 434 (21%) of all subscribers have e-mail addresses in the .edu domain (plus several hundred at foreign universities). Harvard and New York University boast the largest teams - 18 Mendelyaner each. They are followed by Stanford (17), Berkeley (16), U. of Michigan (15). U. of Chicago, U. of Maryland, MIT, Ohio State, U. of Pennsylvania, U. of Texas (11 each), UCLA, Columbia, and Yale (10 each). More than 100 other campuses around the world have fewer than 10 subscribers. Universities outside the US with more than 10 subscribers include U. of Toronto and Hebrew U. (both 13).

One of the problems of Yiddish communication on the Internet from its early days was the rendering of Yiddish letters. In late 80s and early 90s most Internet users were working on the terminals that supported only a single character set. The only way to display Yiddish letters on the non-Hebrew ASCII terminal was to "draw" them using several ASCII characters for each letter. The first program for converting transliterated Yiddish text into a "real" Yiddish, "yidtype", was written by Refoyl Finkel in summer of 1991. This program was designed to enable communication in Yiddish by e-mail and in principle could have served this purpose; however, more practical applications for Yiddish email did not appear until a later time. "Yidtype" gradually evolved into "Yidishe Shraybmashinke", a wonderful tool that permits composing Yiddish text in different formats by entering a transliteration through the Web interface.

In the late 90s, several programs using proprietary formats supported Yiddish e-mail, none of them gained wide popularity. Real progress in Yiddish computer communication is becoming possible only now, with the advent of Unicode, an international standard for multilingual text encoding. Mark David and a group of enthusiasts loosely organized around his mailing list UYIP (Understanding Yiddish Information Processing) played a great role in ensuring correct and full representation of Yiddish in the Unicode standard and in convincing Microsoft to support Yiddish in its browser and e-mail client. Current versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer and Microsoft Outlook support Yiddish encoding and are supplied with the fonts that contain most Yiddish letters and ligatures. These popular programs made possible the creation of the "real" Yiddish Web pages, including interfaces to the databases and other applications with interactive features. One of the examples of such development is the online catalog of the British Library. British Library is the first major library in the world that converted the bibliographic records of Yiddish books into Unicode format, making them available for display in a standard browser.

One of the earliest Yiddish collections on the Net was started by Ari Davidow in December of 1988 within

the framework of the WELL virtual community. The Yiddish resource databank was created as part of WELL's online reference library. Access to the resource was limited to WELL members only. In May 1991 Noyekh Miller started archiving the newly-created Mendele mailing list. In addition to Mendele issues, the archive contained other documents, e.g. Noyekh Miller's own translation of Jacob Pat's "Shmuesen mit Yiddishe Shrayber". For several years the scope and usability of Yiddish archives remained limited. Only the new technologies that enabled global navigation of information space radically changed the situation.

The first serious attempt to collect and classify Yiddish resources was launched in 1993 by Shtetl, the major Yiddish navigation site and virtual library of the Internet. Shtetl contains a large list of links to the Yiddish web sites around the world as well as its own collection with many thousands documents on Yiddish language, literature, culture, and history. Shtetl is a popular site - in 2000 it has been visited by more than 100,000 web surfers and the rate of access is growing. The dynamics of the monthly access to Shtetl (number of unique visitors and number of pages served) is shown in this table:

	Visitors	Hits
Jul 1996	1168	10382
Jan 1997	2179	26262
Jul 1997	2009	29128
Jan 1998	3495	72089
Jul 1998	2149	63987
Jan 1999	6746	137169
Jul 1999	6983	153990
Jan 2000	7687	197178
Jul 2000	8143	209762
Jan 2001	9316	300049

Conventional media is making inroads into the digital age as well. Der Yidisher Tam-Tam, published bimonthly in Paris, was the first Yiddish newspaper on the Internet. Bavebter Yid is a quarterly Yiddish literary journal. Forverts publishes some of its materials on the web. Forverts Sho, a weekly radio program on WEVD produced by Boris Sandler is broadcasted on the internet for more than a year. Another Yiddish radio weekly, The Yiddish Voice, has a longer history - it was a pioneer of the Internet Yiddish radio. At least three other Yiddish radio programs: from Australia, Canada, and Israel are available to the listeners worldwide.

Every year brings more good news. Yiddish education on the Internet is making first steps: two projects were launched recently in Florida and Germany. Onkelos project - the first full text library of Yiddish classics is acquiring more and more works. All these resources, old and new, professional and amateur, multimedia and interactive, make the Internet, a world-wide shtetl of our days, a truly exciting place for the lovers of Yiddish.

Iosif Vaisman

[An earlier version of this paper was presented at the International Symposium on Yiddish Culture in Paris in June 2000]

## **Yiddish On-Line Fall 2001 Levels I & II** by Elizabeth Weintraub

Yiddish Level I and Level II courses are moving along quite well during the Fall, 2001 semester. We have a new Yiddish-speaking teacher's assistant, Laura Davis, who is also technically savvy. She is very enthusiastic and works well with Professor Wajzman. Laura's responsibility is to record the class for the on-line students using the latest in CD, tape & audio equipment purchased by the **Center for Yiddish Culture** for the Fall semester.

There are presently 10 Level I students (all taking the course on-line) and 15 Level II students. We have one scholarship remaining from the scholarship donations by the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) board at this time.

We are excited by the evident improvements in the knowledge of the Level II students from last semester. Most of them came into the class with only *some* Yiddish conversational knowledge but with little or no experience in reading and writing Yiddish. We are very happy with Professor Wajzman's ability to help them learn and develop their language skills. Many of the on-line students have been regularly turning in homework for review by Professor Wajzman, and their progress is measured in this way. They are obviously learning to write and read Yiddish through the on-line course and with the use of the Practice Lessons.

The audio for the live students is still somewhat of an issue. There is no problem hearing Professor Wajzman on-line and the equipment is very good. Students who are taking the on-line course feel that they are "missing something" when they hear students speaking in the background without the microphone. However, these are usually only student comments that do not add greatly to the course learning. Only one hand-held microphone is available to the students in order to prevent the recording of background noise and cross-conversations. The students are aware of the need to record their responses, and as always, we are working with them to improve the class recordings.

A sheynem dank again to the IAYC board for the scholarships that have been an important tool in making the course available to students who could otherwise not afford to participate.

### **Fun der Yidish-lige: a bakoshe tsu kool**

der vos shraybt di shures greyt an english-yidish verterbikhl, vos se zol fartseykhenen etlekhe toyznt naye englishe verter (an erekh fun di yorn 1966-2001) un zeyere yidishe ekivalentn. se veln im derbay aroyshelfn etlekhe mitarbeters.

vos zhe viln mir fun kool? oyb ir hert oder leyent ergets a nay yidish vort, shraybt undz vegn dem. nisht keyn poetishe nayshafungen zukhn mir, nor naye terminen far bekhoh-yoymike zakhn, vi oykh politish-administrative, visnshaftlekhe, tekhnologishe khidushim, vos zey kumen dokh tsu vokh-tsu-vokh. se zenen, a shteyger, tsugekumen: kompyuteray, internets (mit a tsadik vort-oys), blitspost, blitsbrivl, vortirn (word processing), mikrokhalnik (microwave oven), kompaktl (compact disk), kontaktlekh (contact lenses), gvaldglok

(burglar alarm), entferke (answering machine) un nokh un nokh.

a klal, leygt tsu a hant. nisht gelt betn mir, nor naye verter. Shikt zey tsu afn adres

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[For an English-Yiddish glossary of modern Yiddish words created during the past few decades, Dr. Mordkhe Schaechter seeks information about such words, either heard or read. New words can describe technological or scientific advances, political or administrative matters, etc. Poetic coinages are not desired. Please write to the above address with the words that you have seen or read.]

### **A briv fun Rochela in dorem afrike** **Rochelle Winer <rochel@icon.co.za>**

I haven't received Ed Golman's transliterations. As I said before this would be wonderful for me to have as then some of the people who come to my Yiddish group could read them and enjoy them and then the rest of the group could also have a good time! Unless I get material from America, I have no other means of getting items of light, humorous interest. They always say to me that the world is so meshuge, that they want to laugh and don't want to be sad!

Last year we received one Chanukah song on the Internet about Father Christmas eating pickled cucumbers and all the reindeer. I don't know if this is the one you are thinking of. Otherwise I don't have any Chanukah songs. I hope to hold my Chanukah evening on Tuesday, 10th December. We had a wonderful Yiddish evening last week. There were 40 people present and of course I told them about *Der Bay* and they were amazed and surprised to hear all about the groups who meet and also the convention in Milwaukee. Until I told them about all these groups, they really thought that Yiddish was dead and buried! Now they realize that Got tsu danken, Mamaloshen lebt noch! Many of these people have not had contact with Yiddish literature, or theatre, or the language, except from perhaps 40 years ago when their parents spoke it or their grandparents, so with our Yiddish group they can now realize how people are still interested in Yiddish.

There were specific areas in Johannesburg and Cape Town where many Yidden lived and today they often have a reunion when people get together, sometimes from all over the world and they reminisce. We have a Jewish Report, which comes out once a week. This is a national newspaper with items of local and international interest, but of course in English. I have a few copies of Dorem Afrika which I read with great nostalgia as some of the contributors were my teachers at the Yiddish Folkshul in Doornfontein, Johannesburg. Most of the immigrants who came to South Africa lived in that area. I live 2 hours flying time from Cape Town. With a car it takes about 18 hours!

## Let's Play Tennis in Yiddish

By Troim Handler

English	yidish	Line	grenets
15	fufstn	Love	nul
15 All *	beyde fufstn	Make a point	makhn a punkt
30	draysik	Make points	makhn kritsn
30 All	beyde draysik	Net ball	nets balem
45	finf-un-fertsik	Our advantage	undzer forhant
Ace	toyz (di)	Out!	oys!
Backhand	hinterhant	Racquet	di raketke
Ball	balem (der), bal (der), pilke (di)	Scoring	kheshboynes
Ball on court	balem afn plats	Serve	derlangen
Deuce	glaykh	Set	komplet
Did you have a good game?	hostu hanoeh gehat fun der shpil?	Strings	strunes
Do you have both balls?	hostu beyde balems?	Tennis	tenis
Double fault	topl khisorn	The score	shpil-kheshbn
Fault	khisorn	To bounce	opbalenen, opshpringen
Foot fault	fus khisorn	Volley	tsurikshlogn dem balem eyder er falt tsum bodn. (Hit the ball back and forth)
Forehand	foroyshant	What is the score?	vu halt di shpil?
Game (or PPlay)	shpil	Your advantage	dayn forhant
Good shot!	gut getrofn!	Your turn	dayn tshere
It won't help	s'vet gor nit helfn.		
Keep your eye on the ball	halt an oyg afn balem.	YIVO STANDARD PRONUNCIATION:	
Let (net ball)	loz (Nets balem)	Kh --as in (Khanike) Channukah	
Let's rally	lomir praktitsirn	Ey --as in they	
		Ay - as in fine	