

# *Der Bay*

## *The International Anglo-Yiddish Newsletter*

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December 2006

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### **IAYC 11<sup>th</sup> Conference Comes to Cleveland**

This is the first in a series of reports on the IAYC XI Conference August 3-6, 2007 at the Marriott Cleveland East Hotel. Each month there will be an update and a report on another phase of this great Conference.

These conferences are only one facet of membership in IAYC. It is through group organizations of this sort that we can network and gain information that will make our clubs more knowledgeable and successful. It is at these conferences that we meet others who love Yiddish, and with whom we can share our Yiddish activities.

#### **Why We Selected Cleveland**

This might more accurately be, Why Cleveland Selected IAYC.

It is written that there is a time to sow and a time to reap.... Almost from the first IAYC conference there has been a higher than expected attendance of Clevelanders at the IAYC conference. When asked if they would host the next conference there was always a hesitancy. We believe in hungry ballplayers. If a person is not eager and fully committed it is not a good sign for leadership.

This time we have yet another winning combination of leadership and a strong conference committee. Harold Ticktin, the chairman, stepped forward. He is a retired attorney with extensive community and organizational contacts and a keen writing ability. We shall discuss more about the fabulous committee in detail in future issues.

#### **Selection Requirements**

For a conference to be successful it must have the right location and the right date. For the Cleveland conference we have a wonderful Marriot hotel that was built only 3 years ago—with all of the latest amenities. The committee chose the first weekend in August so that attendees would have the added advantage of attending the famous Concert in the Park. This Annual Klezmer Event in Cain Park has been an outstanding tradition in the Cleveland Jewish Community with almost 2,000 attending. Since the leadership of this event is also on the IAYC committee, it means that we have experience and ideal arrangements

#### **Conference Locations**

This is the third time that IAYC is returning to the mid-west. Each time it has alternated with one on the East Coast. It was Milwaukee (the home of our IAYC President, Paul Melrood) to Baltimore, back to Minneapolis then to Teaneck, NJ. We are currently looking at San Diego as a possibility for the following one.

IAYC is the only major Yiddish organization that meets in different cities. Other future sites include Chicago, Detroit, Montreal, and Miami.

#### **Contact Information**

**Chairman: Harold Ticktin, Ph: 216-272-3969**  
**E-mail: ticktin@visn.net**

**Registration: Pauline Leber, Ph: 216-831-4177**  
**E-mail: paulsam@adelphia.net**

## The Yiddish Network in Action

You sent me some times ago a complete list of all the persons whom I could try to contact in my area (Strasbourg, France).

This list has been of great use and as you asked to let you know how these people responded, I take the liberty to write to you again on this subject.

I contacted by email only four persons from the list you sent me:

- Pascal Curin F-67790 Steinbourg +33 (0)3 88 71 80 45 <mailto:CurinP@aol.com> has been of a great help in providing a lot of good information with all necessary links.
- Rafael Goldwaser F-Strasbourg 67000 +33 (0)3 69 57 43 37 [goldwaser.rafael@neuf.fr](mailto:goldwaser.rafael@neuf.fr) answered this very morning. He is a comedian of some renown (Luftheater in Strasbourg). The Luftheater organizes also Yiddish courses. So I shall join! Their Website: <http://luftheater.free.fr/>
- Richard Doust's e-mail address is no more valid I did not try the postal address
- Ulrich Kopetski at the Medem Center (Yiddish Library in Paris) was a great help for the ordering Yiddish manuals, dictionaries and - for people living in Paris - courses in Yiddish), [medem@yiddishweb.com](mailto:medem@yiddishweb.com)
- Their addresses:

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F-75011 Paris  
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Fax : +33 (0)1 47 00 14 47  
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**Editor's note:** The Yiddish Network (TYN) is a free service of *Der Bay*. Members are in every state in the U.S., in 17 major cities in Canada and in 34 other countries. When you travel or relocate, they can be of assistance letting you know what Yiddish activities are occurring in their area—if any. Their names are not given out for commercial purposes.

## Stanford Leyen Krayz

The 'leyen krayz' is an informal gathering of Yiddish readers, from students and faculty to community members of the San Francisco Bay area. We meet two to three times each academic quarter to 'khop a shmues' about a short work of Yiddish literature, which is provided to participants several days in advance.

Our readings can range from short stories to poetry, and even Yiddish theater.

Readings are approximately 10-pages. All levels of Yiddish readers are welcome!

Our first meeting was:  
Friday, October 20, 2006, 1:30 PM

We meet in Library/Meeting Room, Building 240  
At this initial meeting, we will schedule the remaining meetings for this academic quarter.

The text for the upcoming meeting is a hilarious short story by Sholem Aleikhem, entitled "Beim Doktor." Copies can be picked up at the Taube Center for Jewish Studies, Bldg. 240.

If you have any questions, please e-mail, or call Dan Heller at 650-862-1573.

**Editor's note:** Dan recently came from Toronto and is pursuing his studies towards a Ph.D.

## Pen Pals

I know only words and phrases at this point, and can't really form complete sentences yet. That's the problem with trying to learn a language yourself, I suppose! Everything ends up sounding very dry and staccato until you're able to learn from interaction.

That's why I'm interested in a Yiddish pen pal, hoping it will pull me past that point and hopefully introduce me to some parts of the language that I simply would not be able to teach myself from a book.

I feel I know very little, but I am very eager to learn! Very excited to have found your website, as well!

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## *Der Bay* in 2006

In reviewing the successes and shortcomings of this past year, there is much to tell. For me the best part of being an editor of an International Anglo-Yiddish newsletter is the very large number of Yiddish lovers with whom one comes in contact—all over the world.

Support for this newsletter comes in different amounts. Some cannot afford chai and send what they can—others more than make up for them. **On the label is the date when you last contributed. If you have been supportive, my appreciation is deep and from the heart. If you have forgotten, won't you please send your share?**

Using the computer and the telephone are indispensable tools. On an average day I interact with 9-14 readers, potential readers, people who call or write with a question, and people who are potential conference presenters, entertainers vendors, advertisers and donors.

*Der Bay* has been a resource for the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC). As one of its founders, I have felt the importance of getting its message out along with all other groups fostering Yiddish.

The coverage of the 2006 Conference in Teaneck, NJ and the role of the Teaneck JCC Yiddish Club with its leaders Gregg and Stephanie Hudis were to show what a local group can do with the help of the IAYC.

Each month the front page was utilized to update the ongoing plans and to cover a key aspect of the Conference. Starting with this issue we shall do the same for the next Conference in Cleveland that will prove to be a real winner and not to be missed. The centerfold gave the complete program and then to show photos of the Conference.

Our original Chelm stories are in most issues and some have two. There are over 50 on the website. They all will be published in future issues. This will be part of a book some day that will include them, Chelm of pre WWII and the Chelm of today.

Oystsugn fun briv in der redaktsye (excerpts from letters to the editor), continues to be the most popular feature. About 18 of the 150 letters are excerpted each month along with the names and city of the sender. If writers wish to be contacted, then their mailing addresses, e-mail addresses or phone numbers are included.

Accompanying the hardcopy is *Der Bay's* website: [www.derbay.org](http://www.derbay.org) Everyday *Der* internatsyonaler kalendar is updated. There are calendars for 13 regions and major organizations worldwide.

Members of *Der Bay's* The Yiddish Network (TYN) contribute many articles. The TYN is made up of over 240 worldwide who are a resource for *Der Bay*, and for our readers when they travel or relocate.

The briv fraynd (pen-pal) section is adding new people each week and has well over 400 listed.

Feature articles over the years have included many names from the Yiddish list of Who's Who.

### Notable articles this year include:

Issue	Author	Title
1	Frank Handler:	The Jewish Bund and Its Children
1	Helen Lewison:	Growing up Jewish in Waco, Texas
1	Murray Meld:	Whose Yiddish Is It Anyway?
2/3		The Workmen's Circle Building
2/3	Harold Ticktin:	Of Tshotchkas, Mavens, Schmattes and Other English Words
4	Joel Samberg:	Benny Bell: Lost Legend of Elton St.
4	Philip Schoenberg:	My Mother's Lower East Side
4	Jack Berger:	The Translation of Holocaust Memorial Books into English
5	Andrew Firestone:	Yisroel Shtern Project Online
5	Arnold Leibowitz:	Great Yiddish Literature: Course Outline
6	Leo Summergrad:	Yiddish Music Books
6	Gerald M Siegel:	The Road to Chelm
7	Prof. Raphael Finkel:	A Sude
7		Photos of the IAYC Teaneck Conference
7	Binyumen Schaechter:	The Jewish People's Philharmonic Chorus
8	Ari Davidow:	Jewish Radio Shows on the Internet
8	Goldele:	Libe Khaya Berman
8	Murray Meld:	Japanese Yiddishist Visits Seattle
9	Sidney Rosenfeld:	The Vilnius Yiddish Institute Newsletter Online
9	Tamara G. Selden:	Translation of Emanuel Verschleisser's A Field and a Scarecrow
9	Paul Glasser:	YIVO Institute For Jewish Research Max Weinreich Center Fellowships 2007-08

10 Tamara G. Selden:: From Where and Whereto  
(Poem in Yiddish and English)  
10 Ruth Goodman: *The Jewish Pope*  
10 Fishl: A Jewish Affair

# A Jewish *Affair* by Philip Fishl Kutner

Year's ago we went to Jewish affairs—today we go to Jewish Life Cycle Events (LCEs). We may have a gay time, but we do not say so.

Sally and I went to our oldest granddaughter's khasene. For that we shall write later in this article. Meanwhile many things needed to be done and said on planning for the *affair*.

For one's first *affair* (excuse me) life cycle event, everyone is happy, that is, except the honoree. She is crying. Well, wouldn't you, if someone gave you a patsh on the, you know what?

From then on all of these LCEs are happy. The person is happy and all the invitees (guests) are happy. That goes until the final LCE. At that point all the invitees are unhappy and the person.... I can't finish the sentence, because I do not know. However, let's get back to going to an *affair*.

For many months beforehand, all kinds of preparations need to be made. There is the airline reservations, hotel accommodations, the ride to and from the airports and, of course, the clothes—the tuxedo. Weinreich, Harkavy, Coldoff and Gavin do not have a Yiddish word for tuxedo. Is it a tukside or a malpe kostium?

Among all the hectic preparation for the affair is Macsine, the lovely Mac G4 computer. Each morning I wish her a lovely day, and each evening she is affectionately tucked in. All day I caress her keys and look into her eyes. She flirts back at me, and they are constantly changing with each touch of her keys.

As the days approach for our departure to Orlando, Florida for the affair, she somehow senses that she will be losing me for 6 days and she is unhappy. She is moving slower and her eyes are not twinkling. Maybe she overheard Sally say, "You will not be playing with Macsine for almost a week, heh, heh."

No, I do not own a tuxedo, but this arrangement is wonderful. You walk into a store, get fitted and the measurements are sent to another store near the *affair*. You pick up the tuxedo the day before, and it is returned there. Imagine, not carrying the tuxedo on the plane to the *affair* or back again.

No, there will be no description of Sally's, saga of getting a gown, handbag, shoes, jewelry, etc. After all it is our first grandchild's khasene. Our Melanie is getting married. She was born on our wedding anniversary, so that makes her even more special.

## THE KHASENE

An editor is like an open book, for much of one's feelings go into the articles. Unfortunately, all of the readers did not attend the khasene, not most of them, not many of them—only a very few. So all of this is nayas.

To say that the grandmother and mother of the bride were beautiful, and that the bride was radiant, is to tell only half the truth. To tell how exhilarated the grandfather was, is also something that cannot be put into words. Only poor Macsine was sad. Sally says, "Fishl acts like a bigamist. Meksin iz zayn tsveyte vayb."

The wedding was in the Orlando Florida Mall Hotel which is attached to the huge mall. One does not need to go outside to visit the seven department stores or 250 stores.

Since daughter, Debbie, is an award winning quilter, she made the khupe. It features a centrally located Celtic Design mogen dovid. Radiating out between each point of the star are points of varying height. Encircling the star are the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, each shaded to complete the spectrum in 22 shades of color.

In front of the khupa Debbie made an appliquéd banner with the verse from Shir HaShirim (The Song of Songs), Kol Sasson V' Kol Simkha, Kol Khassan V' Kol Kallah."

An unusual part of the wedding ceremony occurred just prior to the couple going under the khupa. The rabbi was seated at a table with the two witnesses and the couple nearby. He thoroughly explained the contents of the ketuba and had the four sign it. Hearing the explanation and witnessing the signing was a very moving experience to us all.

We kveld throughout the reception, the ceremony and even afterwards. To say it was a high is to minimize the feelings. Every bobe and zeyde should shep such nakhes.

Safely home and tired, it was time to catch up on the e-mail, hardcopy mail, der internatsyonaler kalendar on *Der Bay's* website and get this issue ready for the printer. Macsine was sluggish and pouted all day.

So maybe you would like to share your nakhes or sadness at one of the life cycle events you have attended or been the *chief of party*.

## *The Jewish Pope*

The Jewish Pope is a blend of history and fiction. Legends and fiction have grown up around this bizarre Papal reign which took place in the eleventh century. The telling sticks to many of the historical facts. The story of the Jewish Pope is much too intriguing to dismiss. It caused a schism in the church when some backed the Pope in France and others backed the 'anti-Pope' in Rome.

### About the Author

The book was first written in Yiddish in 1947 by Yudel Mark (1897-1975) who was a foremost Yiddish lexicographer of the 20th century and editor-in-chief of The Great Dictionary of the Yiddish Language. He was born in Palangna, Lithuania and was educated at the Vilna Gymnasium and the University of Petrograd. He is the author of many textbooks, essays, short stories and translated the works of Thomas Mann, Rilke, and other major European writers into Yiddish.

He was the editor of The Folksblatt, a daily Yiddish newspaper in Kovna, and one of the founders of YIVO. Mark immigrated to the U.S. in 1936, where he became the founding editor of Der Yiddisher Shprach. In 1970, he relocated in Israel where he received Israel's top literary award, the Manger award in 1973. He died in 1975.

### About the translator

Ruth Fisher Goodman, a professional translator of Yiddish books, documents and letters, was educated at the Workmen's Circle Yiddish School in NYC where her Jewish History and Yiddish Literature teacher was Yudel Mark. She is a retired reading specialist and teaches Yiddish and American Jewish History at the Academy of Lifelong Learning, a division of Professional and Continuing Studies/ University of Delaware.

She is the author of the award winning juvenile fiction book: Pen Pals (What it Means to be Jewish in Israel and America). Her second book Easy Steps to the Hebrew Alphabet (Teach Yourself Hebrew) was published in 2000. She serves on the Advisory Council of Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), is a docent at the National Museum of American Jewish History and is the founder of a Delaware tutor-mentoring program.

You can purchase copies from:

**Ruth Goodman**

**2806 Bodine Dr.,**

**Wilmington, De 19810**

**\$17.45 includes shipping & handling—**

**add 50 cents extra for each additional copy.**

## Save Those Yiddish Books

As a zamler for the National Yiddish Book Center (NYBC), I am continually reminded of how important this is. We zamlers are the soldiers on the front lines of retrieving and saving our Yiddish treasured books.

Aaron Lansky's name is the most recognized in the modern-day Yiddish community. His effort to collect Yiddish books has been monumental and his achievements have matched his work. Amherst is second only to New York City as a must see for all of us.

Yes, but what is it like being a zamler. What are the positive and negative aspects that go along with this prestigious title? The positive is easy. It is a deep sense of accomplishment. For me it is like finding a treasure in the bottom of the sea. It is like retrieving gold bullion in the chest of a sunken Spanish ship.

But what are the everyday challenges? It usually starts with a call from someone who has contacted the National Yiddish Book Center and asked what one should do with some old Yiddish books. Your name is in the database as a zamler for your area, and your phone number is given.

Now comes the delicate part. How do we get the books from the donor's home to your place—before packing labeling and shipping. In many instances the donor will deliver the books—especially if there are only a few and the donor is a younger person who is cleaning out a home of a parent who is down-sizing.

There have been times when a sizeable collection was donated and it was necessary to bring boxes and do the hauling. In many cases you are asked questions because the donor assumes you are a Yiddish maven.

The NYBC has this down to a science. You are sent shipping labels with your return address listed. Book rate is the cheapest way to ship at the U.S. Post Office. My boxes run between 25 and 30 pounds and the shipping charge is a little over ten dollars a box.

So call the NYBC and become a zamler. Contact Catherine Madsen, zamler coordinator at: [bookdonations@bikher.org](mailto:bookdonations@bikher.org)

The NYBC is located at:  
1021 West Street,  
Amherst, MA 01002

## The Yiddish Fork in the Road

by Philip Fishl Kutner

What should you do when you come to a fork in the road? In jest someone said, "Pick it up."

Seriously, decision-making is an art for some people and a science for others. We need to make decisions. Most are of little consequence. What to do at a light is important, but whether we should have scrambled eggs or sunny side up is of little importance.

A fork has tines that usually range from two for the large barbecue form to three for some fish and four for most of them. When we speak of a fork in the road we normally think of two choices, but most roads are intersections that give us three choices. Of course the right direction might be behind us, for we already may have passed our destination.

What are the Yiddish forks in the road, or more accurately what is our destination. Yiddish is all around us. It is in our very soul if we heard it as children.

Nostalgia is a strong force. It draws us back to the comfort of our childhood and all that we demand is to hear a Yiddish word, listen to a Yiddish melody or see a Yiddish film or show. It makes us feel warm and cozy. This fork is the easiest to take it demands little of our time or money. Remember, Nostalgia is Neuralgia. It leads to pain, for it is not fulfilling. If one were to use another analogy, it is like visiting the beach. This fork is like sitting on the beach sand and sunbathing.

The second possible path is like dipping your toes in the surf or even going into the water up to your waist. It feels good as the waves pass you and roll up on the shore. The water is cooling. It gives the feel of the water, the sand and the wind. Here you attend a Yiddish club meeting once a month, go to a klezmer concert, or hear a Yiddish lecture.

The third choice is study, practice and participate. You read a Yiddish paper, you take a Yiddish class, you attend an institute, conference, start a Yiddish group and even possibly teach a Yiddish class. In the small towns with maybe only one shul you may be the only "maven" available.

Finally, swimming out into deeper water gives the thrill of the waves and invigoration that comes with swimming. Here is where surfing, sailing, snorkeling, and deepwater fishing occur. Once you are away from the water's edge and get involved with the deeper water activities, the challenges, pleasures and rewards occur.

## My Neighbor, Mame-Loshn

by Philip Fishl Kutner

There were no fenced in back yards on our block in Fair Lawn, New Jersey. Our back yard was part of a large grass-covered area where our 3 children played. It was safe—even the few dogs were friendly.

On our block out here in San Mateo, California everyone has his back yard fenced in and his front lawn open. Our block is truly a United Nations. We have them from all the continents except Australia and Antarctica. I know most of the neighbors on both sides of our block, but not the one that shares my back fence.

My back fence neighbor is Mame-Loshn. If I want to speak with her, I need to go all the way to the end of our block and then along the side road all the way to the street on which Mame-Loshn's house is located.

It was only after many years that I ventured one day to the end of the block and made two left turns and walked all the way to her house.

As I stood there looking at the house, my first impression was that it looked rather plain and not much different than the other houses on the block or even the ones on my block.

However, as I stood there my nostrils were enchanted by an aroma I had not sensed since my farm days and mama's home-cooking. Not only was there a nostalgic inner glow, but a sense of warmth and comfort.

Shortly there were sounds emanating from Mame Loshn's house. It was the sound of a clarinet and a woman singing. I could not make out the words, but they were beautiful and reminded me of mama's singing Unter fishls vigele.

I walked up to the door, rang the bell and waited. Soon Mame-Loshn came to the door and welcomed me in. She served me hot tea in a saucer with a lump of sugar. We sat and talked for a long time. Actually, I did very little speaking because my Yiddish was only a few words that I remembered from my childhood. Mama was very understanding and offered to spend time teaching me—and she did.

My neighbors are not Jewish, and my backyard neighbor, Mame Loshn, is a figment of my rich imagination, but wouldn't it be wonderful if we had a neighbor like my imaginary Mame Loshn?

## Yiddish in the Wintertime.

Just as the weather changes so does our use of words. We replace warm and hot with cool and cold. We do not speak of sweating but rather of goose bumps and shivering. Here are a few of our wintertime words.

This gives us a chance to use different new words throughout the year. We shall follow this with a unit on Spring and Fall with planting and reaping, and with blossoms and falling leaves.

If your group has a special wintertime activity, please share it with us.

Shney foygl: A snowbird (one who goes to Florida for several months)

Shneyele: A snowflake (one who goes to Florida for only a few weeks)

Boots: Shtivl (singular and plural)

Freeze: Aynfrir

Frigid: Krirerdik

Frost: Frost

Galoshes: Kaloshn

Glove: Hentshke

Mittens: Kuliklekh

Scarf: Shal, Sharf

Skid: Oysglitshn

Sled: Shlitn

Shiver: Tsiter

Sleet: Ayzregn

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Please make checks for chai, payable to *Der Bay*.

If you're blessed, Please send a LITTLE extra

**Label date is when you LAST contributed.**

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

## Mama Used to Say

Each of us remembers certain words or phrases that mama used to say. One of these my mama used when we boys did a particularly foolish thing or came home with a B on our report card.

TUM TAM, you are a tum tam (perhaps you galitsyaner heard (tim tam) or tamavate. When these childhood memories come back to me, I go to Weinreich or Harkavy or Niborski to see what the dictionaries say. Would you believe there is no tum tam listed? There is the Hebrew word "tam" (tof, shlos mem) meaning a jerk or moron.

I hope you will dig into your childhood memories and see if there are any pet words or phrases that your parents used that maybe are not even in the dictionary. Perhaps you could share them with our readers.