

# *Der Bay*

## *The International Anglo-Yiddish Newsletter*

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### **The Yiddish Club Phenomenon: An Editorial**

The Yiddish club, as we know it today, is a relatively new type of organization. There have been Yiddish groups before of intellectuals like di Yunge or fraternal groups like Der Arbeter Ring. However, organizations of laymen, specifically meeting to enjoy Yiddish—that is another matter. Yes, the premiere Los Angeles Yiddish Culture Club has been in existence for well over 70 years.

There was not a need for Yiddish clubs when everyone around you spoke Yiddish. In America we have no need for English clubs when almost everyone around us speaks some English.

*Der Bay's* database lists over 250 Yiddish clubs in the United States. There are probably close to double that number in the U.S. alone. All of the non-listed ones are small groups meeting in homes or temples. The exception would be seasonal areas like southeast Florida. Most of them go from Thanksgiving to Peysakh, or start after January 1. The Circle of Yiddish Clubs has somewhat of a handle on this group.

There are other wonderful clubs around the world especially in Israel, Australia, England, Spain, Uruguay, etc. Canada (Friends of Yiddish in Toronto), Winnipeg, Vancouver and Montreal but this editorial is meant to discuss only the U.S. Phenomenon.

Why is this so important? Why for the first time is the front page of *Der Bay* being used for an editorial. The column to the right sets out the rationale for the world-wide Yiddish club growth and the role of the IAYC.

The International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) was founded in order to have a forum where groups of Yiddish lovers could meet and share ideas, experiences and learn. It has been far more successful than any of the original founders could have ever dreamed.

The founding tates un mames realized that cooperation is the basis of success. Thus, from the beginning IAYC has echoed the theme that clubs must reach out to all other groups that foster Yiddish and support their efforts. Every club should have at least one member belong to the major organizations that foster Yiddish and report on articles in their publications.

In line with this The Ninth IAYC Conference will be held from Thurs., June 2nd to Sun., June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005 in beautiful Minneapolis, Minnesota only a several hour drive from Lake Itaska the headwaters of the Mighty Mississippi River.

The Minneapolis Yiddish Vinkl co-chair, Roz Baker is coordinating the conference. Her committee is one of the finest that anyone has put together. This should result in another dynamic and vibrant event that will run as smoothly as the Mississippi itself.

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