

The mission of the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life is to preserve and document the practice, culture and legacy of Judaism in the South. The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience operates under the auspices of the Institute.

5th Annual JEWISH CINEMA SOUTH to Run in Four Cities

The fifth annual JEWISH CINEMA SOUTH presents its new season beginning Saturday, November 5th and lasting through Tuesday, November 8th. An exciting array of films will be featured this year, including two from Israel. Guest speakers will be on-hand at each screening to engage the audience in dialogue about the Jewish experience and elements of each film. This year, festivals will be held in Jackson, Mobile, Montgomery and at Virginia Tech University. What a great weekend to enjoy film! Mark your calendars now and share the news with friends.

While there are currently over 60 Jewish Film Festivals throughout the country, the ISJL is the first organization to offer a network format that allows individual communities to sponsor their own Jewish Film Festivals in cooperation with the ISJL. With JEWISH CINEMA SOUTH now in its fifth year, these local festivals have drawn audiences in the thousands. They continue to energize their communities by presenting programs that are usually limited to larger metropolitan areas. JEWISH CINEMA SOUTH has helped launch four other local film festivals in Austin, Houston, Nashville, and Shreveport that are now operating independently of the Institute.

Here are just a few of the films included in this year's JEWISH CINEMA SOUTH. See p. 9 for a complete schedule.



Elvis with Lieber & Stoller



Columbia – The Tragic Loss

COLUMBIA: THE TRAGIC LOSS

A meticulous examination of the 2003 space shuttle disaster, *Columbia: The Tragic Loss* is also a poignant tribute to Ilan Ramon, the Israeli Air Force colonel who became the first Israeli astronaut ever to venture into outer space. The crew of seven died when Columbia broke apart during reentry in the skies over the southern United States. This admiring portrait is told through affecting family interviews and a wealth of archival materials, including never-before-seen footage from the mission, and Ramon's own diary, miraculously retrieved from the crash debris.

GO FOR ZUCKER

Jaekie Zucker is up to his ears in debt, again. This time it's worse than usual for the roguish, wisecracking, hard-drinking Berlin pool shark formerly known as Jakob Zuckermann. Jaekie happily left everything Jewish behind him decades ago, when his mother and brother fled to the West just before the Berlin Wall was built. When word comes that his mother has died and left him a sizeable inheritance, it's a stroke *(continued on page 3)*



In response to the catastrophic Hurricane Katrina, the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life has established a relief fund. We have been gratified by the massive outpouring of support from people of all faiths, and are committed to the long-term recovery and healing of those communities affected by the storm. Please send contributions to: the Katrina Relief Fund, P.O. Box 16528, Jackson, MS 39236.

Message From the Institute Board Chair



A friend sent me an email recently that made me think about a trait common between Jews and southerners. There are a lot of people who wouldn't think the two have much in common. But I've always thought that being Jewish and being southern are quite compatible. I remember childhood trips from my home in Arkansas to New York, which remarkably did not require me to have a passport. When answering questions about my home, the consistent retort was "there are Jews in Arkansas?" They never understood how that could be. I never understood why it seemed strange.

The friend's email noted that a southerner can get away with the most awful kind of insult just as long as it's prefaced with the words, "bless her heart." As in, "bless his heart, if they put his brain on the head of a pin, it'd roll around like a BB on a 6-lane highway." You see, in the South we don't mind being judgmental, but we are, at the same time, sensitive. No sense in being too hurtful.

I think it's the same for Jews. A perfect parallel to "bless his heart" is the Jewish expression, "he didn't quite make it to Mount Sinai." It's best to be a bit respectful when evaluating someone's intellect. Could it be that the little things that are collectively called "southern hospitality" are the same little things that make up a Jewish heart?

Jews and Southerners love their recipes, proudly sharing the family secret for the best biscuits or the best brisket. (Although I have a cousin that once had her cookie recipe published in the *Arkansas Gazette*, leaving out the flour. Imagine the results.) Both will welcome you into their homes and make you king for your stay.

For each, the use of expressive and unique language is almost innate. Using an artful question to make a point is a common trait. Jewish - "Would it have been too much trouble to call your mother?" or Southern - "Do you think your momma would like to hear from you?"

There's nothing more inviting than Hebrew spoken with a southern accent. When you hear it, you realize the miracle that is America. We have our own dialect that connects the spiritual with the blessings of liberty. Where else can you hear embedded in the *Shema* not only the proclamation of monotheism, but a nurturing invitation to family, friends, and neighbors? In the drawl of the southerner, we hear respect, tolerance, empathy, and timelessness.

Perhaps there's a reason for the old joke about the man traveling the country seeking to make a pay phone call to God. Everywhere he went he was told of the expensive long distance charges, until he arrived in the South. There he was told it cost only a dime. It seems that in the South, it's a local call.

This fall, our Board of Directors will convene in New York where we will meet many friends of our vital project. Jews from all over the country now want to know what they can do to support Jewish life in the South and in other areas where Jews are separated by miles. They know that every Jewish life counts. They know that we have both a shared history and a shared future. If someone doesn't quite get it, I'll just respond, "Bless his heart, he just didn't quite make it to Mount Sinai," and you'll understand what I mean.

L'shalom,

Message from the Institute President



Circa was in the design stage when Katrina hit. My original article was a celebratory report of how our organization is in the "thick of things" by bringing more and more Jewish life to communities of various sizes. As we approach our 6th year, we continue to provide high caliber services in education, rabbinic assistance, and cultural programs to many of these communities. Until the Institute created this efficient model of service with its pooling and regionalization of resources, such programs have been almost nonexistent. Our work will continue to grow as we help strengthen Jewish life in communities that are small, isolated, underserved, or neglected.

After one of the worst natural disasters in our nation's history, my thoughts have turned to other responsibilities. The Jewish community that started in this country 350 years ago has grown as America has. Today, wherever we live, we have been integral to community progress, whether in small hamlets or mega cities. We are connected to our gentile neighbors. Our welfare and their welfare are the same. Hurricane Katrina has exposed unimaginable vulnerability in the human condition. After all, we are the wealthiest nation in the world. Katrina has given us Americans plenty to reflect upon as we rebuild homes, businesses, towns, cities, lives, and futures.

Katrina has also given the Jewish community much to reflect upon as we remind ourselves of our responsibility for *Tikkun Olam*, repairing the world. Now is an opportunity for us to examine and strengthen our resolve to be a leader in that work. There is much to do. Our nation's citizenship is to be tested; our Jewish voices

must be heard as we seek to remedy the malady that has befallen.

The Jewish people have been a part of civilization for over 4000 years. In times of persecution, no ruler or aggressor has destroyed us or our spirit. With these struggles come generations of determination, as if inbred, to push for better times, better lives. We seem to be born with the understanding that we should not sit on the sidelines but should be actively engaged in every part of society. And we see that this holds true throughout the world wherever Jews live. Hurricane Katrina has wounded America. Time will heal the wounds, but not fully if the lessons pouring from the devastation are ignored. The examination of who were not able to evacuate should be thorough. What we will more than likely learn is that poor education, housing, economic opportunity, to mention just a few, are problems that our society must fix. We as a Jewish community must help, guide, and even lead the effort to make these changes.

350 years ago when we arrived, we had nothing material, but we did have our Judaism. The values that were brought to this soil have endured and have been in place for four thousand years. This is another defining moment for the Jewish community to be a light unto the nation as we continue with renewed energy to repair and fix the world. Other storms will follow. They will take many forms. The natural disasters can not be controlled. The human ones can. We have a role as individuals and as a people.

Magical History Tour Rolls On with “American Jewish Icons”

The Institute of Southern Jewish Life, in conjunction with the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, is pleased to announce the next two tours in the Southern States Literary Series, featuring Eli Evans and Stephen Whitfield, two of the most acclaimed observers of the American Jewish experience. November 7th through 9th, in Arkansas, the “poet laureate” of Southern Jews, Eli Evans, will share his impressions of the Jewish South. Author of such celebrated books as “The Provincials,” “The Lonely Days Were Sundays,” and “Judah P. Benjamin: The Jewish Confederate,” Evans has spent much of his historical career explaining the unique story of southern Jews to audiences around the country. With a new edition of “The Provincials” being published by the University of North Carolina Press, Evans has once again focused his lens on southern Jews, a community that has undergone tremendous change since the first publication of this classic work. Recently retired as head of the Charles H. Revson Foundation, Evans has been a longtime board member of the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience and the Institute of Southern Jewish Life.

On December 8th through 10th, Professor Stephen Whitfield, the Max Richter Chair in American Civilization at Brandeis University, will travel to Chattanooga, Murfreesboro, and Jackson, Tennessee. Author of numerous important books, Whitfield is one of the foremost experts on the history of American Jewish culture. The topic of Dr. Whitfield’s lectures will be the cultural response to the popular musical “Fiddler on the Roof.” Based on the Yiddish short stories of Shalom Aleichem, “Fiddler on the Roof” became the longest running musical in American history and continues to entertain audiences around the world. Dr. Whitfield will examine how this play about Eastern European Jews transcended religious and cultural boundaries to resonate with audiences of all backgrounds.

A gifted teacher and lecturer, Dr. Whitfield is always insightful and entertaining.

The Southern States Literary Series is an ISJL program that brings leading writers and scholars to communities across the South. Both Evans and Whitfield are also part of the National Foundation for Jewish Culture’s “American Jewish Icons” project, which examines and interprets key texts in American Jewish history through lectures across the country by thirty leading scholars. The ISJL is pleased to be the NFJC’s southern partner on this NEH-funded program. For more information about these programs contact Holly Lange at (601) 362-6357, lange@isjl.org, or see the Institute website at www.isjl.org.



Eli Evans

Stephen Whitfield



(JEWISH CINEMA SOUTH – continued from page 1)

of luck. But there’s a catch: Jaeckie must first reconcile with his long-estranged brother Samuel, who has become an Orthodox Jew in Frankfurt and is arriving, family in tow, for a traditional funeral and *shiva* at Jaeckie’s house. The madcap adventure that follows finds Jaeckie and his equally irreligious wife desperately trying to ‘pass’ as observant, while Jaeckie attempts to ditch the family so he can play in a high-stakes pool tournament.

HITMAKERS: THE TEENS WHO STOLE POP MUSIC

John Turturro narrates this entertaining documentary about the early years of rock ‘n’ roll. The early 1960s saw an amazing convergence of young Jewish songwriting talent at Manhattan’s Brill Building. They worked for Don Kirshner, and all agree that those years were magical. Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller wrote hit songs for Elvis Presley, such as “Hound Dog” and “Jailhouse Rock.” Songwriting team Carole King and husband Gerry Goffin (“Will You Love Me Tomorrow?”) composed in one cubicle; their friends and rivals, Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil (“You’ve Lost That Lovin’ Feeling”) were hard at work



Go For Zucker

in the next. Burt Bacharach, Hal David, and Neil Sedaka could be heard down the hall. The film features extensive interviews and archival footage of performers such as The Drifters, The Shirelles, and The Righteous Brothers. The artists and the 40 songs performed in this film showcase a joyous era in American music.

Message from ISJL Rabbi Debra Kassoff



Photo by Alec Kassoff.

For two years, I didn't officiate a single Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration. This seemed to make sense. As a student rabbi, I had worked with several B'nai Mitzvah students, and I remember thinking that those kids had it pretty hard. Where Hebrew instruction depends on the rabbi, and the rabbi only comes around once or twice a month, as anyone who has studied any foreign language well knows, these are not optimal conditions for learning. How then, I thought, could a community expect to prepare their children to lead the congregation in study and prayer, to stand before the community as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, with anything less than a monthly rabbinic presence?

Weddings, funerals, conversions, Passover seders and of course Shabbat services - these I see plenty of as the ISJL rabbi. I even had the pleasure of officiating at the adult Bat Mitzvah of ISJL Education Fellow Amanda Abrams earlier this year. But the unique challenge and pleasure of working with our youngest young adults at this pivotal moment in their Jewish lives was an experience I thought would have to wait for another time and place.

But, not so fast. Just as Amanda's Bat Mitzvah preparations wound down, I began to receive calls and requests, from Auburn, Alabama; Biloxi, Mississippi; Wichita Falls, Texas. Two children at member-led congregations have been preparing for their B'nai Mitzvah services with devoted tutors. Lay-leaders can officiate, but all agree it would be so nice to have a rabbi present for the occasion. Another congregation's rabbi is working with a boy during his monthly visits, but will be unavailable at the time of year when the family would like to schedule the celebration. Yet another community has had student rabbis in the past but is unsure of its plans for the coming year; meanwhile three girls are in the midst of Bat Mitzvah studies.

Despite what one might think about the pitfalls or pleasures of working with thirteen-year-olds, my experience participating in these Bar and Bat Mitzvah preparations and celebrations has been nothing short of exhilarating. I have witnessed the Jewish maturation of children who have no Jewish peers in their community; whose only Jewish education takes place at camp each summer or at

home with family or in tiny, all-volunteer Sunday schools; who learn to chant Torah and Haftarah from generous and sometimes far-flung Jewish neighbors; who earn their inheritance of Torah through sheer will and determination. These B'nai Mitzvah have every reason in the world to fall away from their Jewish heritage; all the same reasons, in fact, that apply to assimilated Jewish teens and young adults wherever they live in the world, only intensified. I experienced being the first Jew some people had ever seen when I went away to college. These children experience it every day.

One of the reasons we celebrate B'nai Mitzvah so proudly is that they have made a choice that each of us must make continually throughout our lives. As I have said from the *bima* on several of these occasions:

We present a new Jewish person to the world, no longer merely a child, no longer someone who is being raised Jewish, but someone who is Jewish; someone who chooses, who commits to choosing, how, when, and where to express and experience Judaism.

We teach our B'nai Mitzvah this lesson, then we learn it back from them.

I have written in this space before that when I was considering taking my current position, someone told me that for many of the congregations I would visit, my job would be to provide a sort of communal hospice care, to ease that congregation to a dignified end. I challenged this idea then, based on the powerful life force I find still pumping through the veins of even the most elderly congregation—a force composed of eagerness to learn, to grow, to gather for worship and celebration and mourning. Today I put it to rest. Whatever the future of small southern Jewish communities, their present is one still marked by the promise and inspiration of youth.

I've yet to officiate my first ISJL baby naming, but I'm hopeful.

Third Fellow Rounds Out New Education Team



Greg Weisman joined the ISJL in June as the third Education Fellow. Greg joins us from Northbrook, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago, where he was born and raised. After high school, he moved to Boston to attend Boston University, from which he recently graduated cum laude with a major concentration in philosophy and political science and a minor concentration in Judaic studies. While at BU, Greg served his fraternity as President and the Interfraternity Council as Vice-President for Philanthropy.

Greg also brings many years of camping experience, having spent eleven summers at Camp Kawaga for Boys in Minocqua, Wisconsin, both as a camper and a counselor. In addition to the counselor duties of cabin supervision and activity planning/execution, Greg also has directed several all-camp activities, as well as edited the annual camp yearbook. Greg plans to spend his career serving the Jewish community and is looking forward to his two years in Mississippi as an Education Fellow.

Education Conference Sets Stage for Year Three

As the many congregations who use the ISJL Education and Hebrew Curriculum began preparing for the 2005-2006 school year, the 2005 "Go & Teach" ISJL Education Conference was held June 19-21 in Choctaw, Mississippi. Each community using the curriculum sent representatives to the the Pearl River Resort for three days of intensive examination of the newest edition of the curriculum as well as presentations from national leaders in the field of Jewish education.

This year the updated curriculum featured a new Early Childhood Education program, designed for children who have not begun kindergarten but who would benefit from activities and lessons designed to introduce them to Jewish life. In addition, the Hebrew part of the curriculum was completely rewritten, from kindergarten through seventh grade. The curriculum was also updated based on feedback from the communities' experiences last year.

To develop such a comprehensive curriculum, the ISJL has forged partnerships with many national Jewish organizations that sent representatives to speak to the conference attendees. William Rubin, Executive Director of the Community Foundation for Jewish Education of Metropolitan Chicago spoke on the challenges in Jewish education that congregations face across the country regardless of their size. Ilene Alon from the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education stressed the importance of early childhood Jewish education. Leora Schaefer of Facing History and Ourselves discussed how to make Holocaust education relevant to students today. Dr. Kerry Olitzky, Executive Director of the Jewish Outreach Institute, discussed the importance of embracing interfaith families.

Leora Schaefer of Facing History and Ourselves.



Beth Kander, the ISJL's original Education Fellow, leads the group in song session.



Rabbi Kerry Olitzky, Executive Director of the Jewish Outreach Institute, gives a thought-provoking presentation to the attendees.



ISJL Rabbi Debra Kassoff and William Rubin, Executive Director of the CFJE.

Conference participants take a "hands-on" approach to learning about early childhood education.



The conference was also one of transition for the ISJL staff as past Education Fellows Amanda Abrams and Beth Kander completed their fellowships, while new fellows Russel Neiss, Debbie Ovadia, and Greg Weisman got their first opportunity to meet members of the communities using the ISJL curriculum. The new fellows are excited to begin their community visits this fall.

The 2005 "Go and Teach" conference was a great success, and the entire ISJL community is looking forward to a productive and successful school year.

Conference participants and staff pose for a group photo.
Photos by Adam Stein.



Columbus Discovers the Jews: 125 Years of a Small-Town Congregation in Mississippi

by Hannah Farber & Sam Ennis, ISJL History Interns

Temple B'nai Israel of Columbus, Mississippi celebrated its 125th anniversary during the weekend of May 20, 2005. ISJL history interns Hannah Farber and Sam Ennis examined the board minutes of the congregation's first century and prepared the following history of B'nai Israel.



Hannah Farber and Sam Ennis with ISJL Historian Dr. Stuart Rockoff.

B'nai Israel's 1937 Confirmation Class

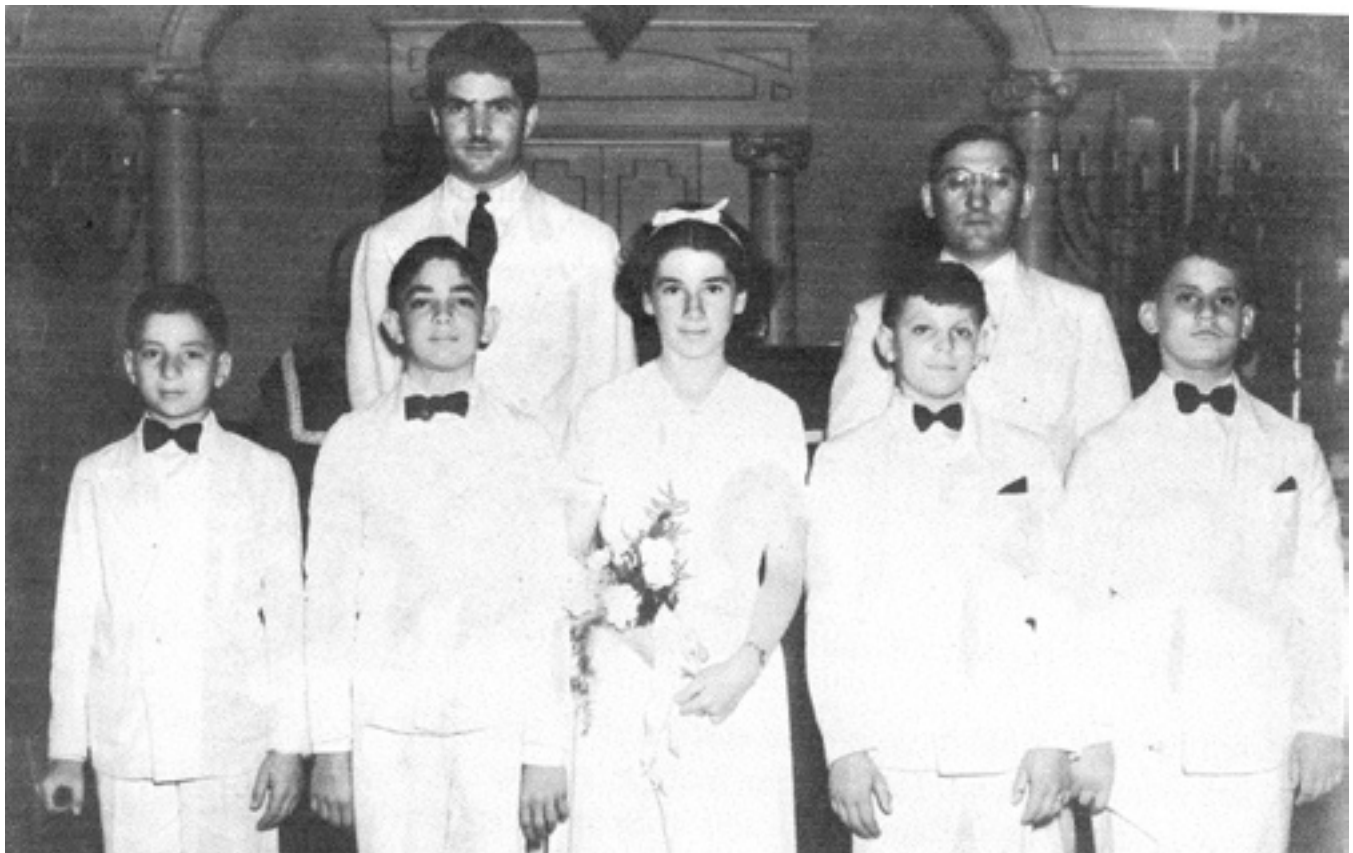
Jewish immigrants from Germany and from Alsace began arriving in Columbus, Mississippi as early as 1836, attracted by the business opportunities offered by this flourishing outpost along the Tombigbee River. The Jewish immigrants assimilated into Columbus society quickly, with many becoming successful dry goods merchants and some fighting for the Confederate Army. Yet it took several years for Columbus' Jews to form a congregation.

The men and women who would eventually found Temple B'nai Israel met for the first time on July 23, 1878 with a vision of organizing the town's one hundred Jewish residents into a congregation. B'nai Israel made its formal debut on September 21, 1879, identifying itself with Isaac Mayer Wise's *Minhag America* and the growing movement of Reform Judaism. During the following months, the members of B'nai Israel elected Julius Nathan

to be their acting president and hired the German-born Joseph Herz to serve as rabbi. B'nai Israel also managed to raise over \$600 in funds by the time of the Temple's gala dedication on April 9, 1880, an event which all of Columbus' Jews, elected officials, clergy, press, and circuit court judges attended.

Although this beginning seemed promising, the congregation was so small that slight fluctuations in membership and dues payments had dramatic effects on the synagogue's fortunes. Julius Nathan resigned from the presidency in July of 1882 during the first of many financial crises. The congregation subsequently cut its dues to attract new members, created a "detailed account" of all congregants in arrears, and suspended those with outstanding debts. In June of 1884, B'nai Israel raffled off a clock in an attempt to raise money, and in 1885 it was forced to reduce the rabbi's salary from \$400 to \$300 a year.

Shortly after the turn of the century, however, B'nai Israel's financial situation stabilized, allowing the congregation to purchase a lot and a building just north of Main Street for \$3600. The expense was partially supported by loans from the International Order of B'nai B'rith, a chapter of which was later established in Columbus by temple members. During the transition period, the congregation temporarily moved its possessions to Simon



and Leopold Loeb's furniture store, and accepted the local Disciples of Christ Church's offer to host its worship services. Friendly interfaith relationships were typical in Columbus, and B'nai Israel would soon pass the favor along by allowing a local Baptist congregation to use its synagogue free of charge.

Despite its small size and rural location, the congregation kept up with global events. In 1915, local businessman Simon Loeb, who led services after Joseph Herz's death in 1909, gave a New Year's address denouncing World War I as a "horrible struggle among the most advanced and civilized nations of the world," which had brought "suffering indeplorable among our ... fellow-men." Loeb urged his congregants to "leave nothing untried" in assisting those displaced by the war. The Jews of Columbus experienced the tragedy of war firsthand in October of 1918, when B'nai Israel member William S. Strauss died in combat overseas.

Although B'nai Israel's members remained committed to their community and charities, the synagogue's financial situation became unstable again during the Great Depression. The Jewish population of Columbus had dropped to sixty. The temple's executive board revoked the memberships of many congregation



Simon Loeb was one of the leaders of B'nai Israel and a prominent merchant in Columbus. Photo courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Temple B'nai Israel today. Photos courtesy of Harriet Foley.



In 1968, congregation leaders celebrated paying off their new building by burning the mortgage.

members, even synagogue trustees, who had simply ceased paying their dues. It implored its remaining members not to renege on their payments and to attend services more frequently. The situation reached its nadir when the synagogue was forced to suspend its choir in 1931 as it was too expensive to maintain.

Finally, the opening of an Air Force base in Columbus in 1942 brought new prosperity to the congregation. Columbus Jews were closely involved in the town's commerce, owning seven retail stores, a shoe shop, two theaters, an insurance agency, and a garment plant that employed over 1,000 people. As a result, the influx of over 8,000 troops to the area proved especially beneficial to the Jewish community. B'nai Israel's recurring problem with congregants in arrears vanished, as years of unpaid dues came pouring into the synagogue. The treasury balance grew from a paltry \$13 in November of 1941 to over \$3,000 in March of 1946. Taking advantage of this newfound prosperity, B'nai Israel revamped its temple building, hired new employees, and purchased new sets of prayer books. The congregation also threw its support behind the Zionist movement. Following the war, it spearheaded a food drive for Jewish settlers in the fledgling state of Israel.

A new challenge emerged in March of 1946, when the congregation voted overwhelmingly to fire their unpopular rabbi and replace him with a new one. The hiring committee took a year and a half to find a new rabbi; it finally hired Dr. Louis Kuppin in November of 1947. To avoid another such extended period without professional rabbinic services, the Congregation subscribed to the Student Rabbi Program offered by the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Congregation B'nai Israel continued on rather quietly until 1960, when the old temple was torn down to make way for a new building. The structure that stands today was erected using the bricks of the original. While the Temple was being built, services were held in Columbus' Episcopal Church, thus reaffirming the ties between B'nai Israel and its neighbors of all religions that had existed since the synagogue's foundation.

Despite the difficulties that have befallen the members of B'nai Israel over the decades, their dedication towards providing Columbus with an active synagogue never faltered, and the congregation remains today as a testament to their hard work.

ISJL Hosts Operation Understanding

The highly publicized trial of Edgar Ray Killen for the 1964 murder of civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner forced the American people to confront one of the darkest moments in our history. As the nation watched the trial unfold and relived the events of Freedom Summer, Americans wondered what had been done since then to improve race relations. In one positive step towards harmony, an innovative project called Operation Understanding has sought to take urban African-American and Jewish high school students on a trip throughout the United States to learn about their mutual histories and hardships. Most recently, two groups of students from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C. visited sites of the civil rights movement and of Jewish history, bringing them to places such as New York City, the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., and eventually to the Museum of Southern Jewish Experience in Utica, Mississippi.

While Operation Understanding's primary goal is to encourage cultural understanding between Jews and Afri-

can-Americans, there is always room for self discovery. "I have a couple cousins who live in Georgia and in Alabama, but I really don't know anything about Jewish life in the South," said Michael Loeb, one of the group leaders.

MSJE intern Arielle Doochin gave the group a tour of the museum's "Alsace to America" exhibit. The students viewed artifacts such as a ketubah, clothing, and photographs of the Alsatian immigrants and reflected upon the difficulties faced by the French Jews as they attempted to survive in their new home. "I really enjoyed learning about Southern Judaism," said Molly Ashodian. "I really had no clue about anything other than from Washington, D.C. up."

The next day, the Philadelphia group attended a panel discussion on civil rights and race relations at Temple Beth Israel in Jackson. Mediated by ISJL historian, Dr. Stuart Rockoff, speakers Gloria Carter Dickerson, Roy Deberry, and Elaine Crystal recounted their experiences during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Carter Dickerson was a member of the first African-American family to attend a previously all-white school in Drew, Mississippi. As a high school student, Deberry was involved in the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party during the Freedom Summer of 1964, while Beth Israel congregant Elaine Crystal headed the Mississippians for Public Education, a group dedicated to supporting public schools in the era of integration. In perhaps the most poignant moment of the evening, Carter Dickerson led the assembled in an impromptu rendition of "Woke Up This Mornin' With My Mind Stayed on Freedom," bringing the group together with a traditional freedom spiritual. Its words of hope and togetherness underscored the message of Operation Understanding, and the song was a fitting end to the group's journey to Mississippi.

The Philadelphia Operation Understanding Group with members of the Civil Rights discussion panel at Jackson's Beth Israel. Photo by Jonathan Larkin.



Museum Teaches Campers About Their Roots

*By Arielle Doochin,
MSJE Intern*



This past summer I had the opportunity to intern at the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience. My summer included cataloging and archiving museum artifacts, leading tours of both Jewish and non-Jewish groups, working with the staff in Jackson, and visiting congregations in smaller towns in Mississippi, such as Natchez. As a southern Jew myself, I expected to have a personal connection to the museum material. However, I had no idea how deep this connection would actually be and how important it would become for others.

The museum tells the story of Jewish immigrants who journeyed to the South and established new lives. These immigrants' families thrived in their new environment and over time many became civic leaders. Historical remnants of Jews and their lasting impact can be found today throughout the south.

One of my favorite parts of the internship was planning and leading programs for the campers of the Henry S. Jacobs Camp, where I lived during the summer. What really hit home for the kids is that the stories of each of these Jewish immigrants are in many ways the stories of their own families.

A few of the programs I designed included crossword puzzles with questions whose answers could only be found in the exhibits. This way the campers had a chance to see and get to know the museum exhibits and to interact with them. At the end, we made memory bracelets that included three symbolic beads so campers could carry with them the compelling stories of so many of the Jewish immigrants. Other programs included relay races that corresponded to the journey of the Alsatian Jews. Campers not only had fun completing each relay, but in the end they felt like they had been a part of the immigration process and were able to retain much of the educational content of the program.

Working with the campers was always a highlight. Instead of having a museum that distanced itself from the campers, it soon became a place to which many campers asked to return. This has been a wonderful experience working with the campers and visitors of the museum, and I feel lucky to have had the opportunity to be a part of the Southern Jewish Experience of Utica, Mississippi.

JEWISH CINEMA SOUTH 2005 CALENDAR

Jackson, Mississippi

Friday, November 4 – 9:00 AM School Presentation – **Marion's Triumph** - St. Andrew's North Campus
Saturday, November 5 – 7:00 PM – **Monsieur Batignole** – Millsaps College Recital Hall
Sunday, November 6 – 2:00 PM – **All I've Got** – Millsaps College Recital Hall
Monday, November 7 – 7:00 PM – **Go for Zucker** – Millsaps College Recital Hall
Tuesday, November 8 – 7:00 PM – **Hitmakers: The Teens Who Stole Pop Music** – Millsaps College Recital Hall

Montgomery, Alabama

Saturday, November 5 – 7:00 PM – **Go for Zucker** – Capri Theatre
Sunday, November 6 – 4:00 PM – **Hitmakers: The Teens Who Stole Pop Music** – Capri Theatre
Monday, November 7 – 7:00 PM – **Monsieur Batignole** – Capri Theatre
Tuesday, November 8 – 8:45 AM School Presentation – **Marion's Triumph** – school
7:00 PM – **Columbia: The Tragic Loss** – Capri Theatre

Mobile, Alabama

Sunday, November 6 – 6:00 PM – **West Bank Story** – Gala Reception, Hank Aaron Stadium Clubhouse
7:00 PM – **Monsieur Batignole** – Hollywood Theater
Monday, November 7 – 8:45 AM School Presentation – **Marion's Triumph** – school
Tuesday, November 8 – 7:00 PM – **Watermarks** – Hollywood Theater
Wednesday, November 9 – 7:00 PM – **Walk on Water** – Hollywood Theater

Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia

Sunday, November 6 – 12:00 PM – **Shalom Y'all** – Squires Center Commonwealth Ballroom
Monday, November 7 – 7:00 PM – Evening of Shorts (**Backseat Bingo, Gossip, The Nuclear Physicist Gives His Son a Haircut, & West Bank Story**) – Squires Center Colonial Hall
Tuesday, November 8 – 7:00 PM – **Columbia: The Tragic Loss with/SKYLAB** – Squires Center Colonial Hall

ISJL Brings Objects of the Spirit to Mississippi

AVODA: **Objects of the Spirit** is a traveling exhibition of Jewish ceremonial artifacts created by the noted painter and sculptor Tobi Kahn. The Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, in conjunction with the Beth Israel Congregation of Jackson and AVODA Arts, is pleased to bring this unique and much sought-after exhibit to the Mississippi Museum of Art this fall.

The exhibition consists of 42 ritual objects, ranging from a traveling Torah Ark to a honey dish for Rosh Hashanah. In conjunction with the exhibition, Kahn and trained teaching artists will offer a series of ritual arts workshops for young adults. By making their own ritual objects, participants are able to reflect on the role of ritual in their lives.

Selected ceremonial objects are

accompanied by meditations written by author Nessa Rapoport. These meditations, profoundly sensitive and contemplative, strengthen the exhibition's commitment to creating a contemporary vocabulary for ritual that is rooted in tradition.

Since making his first piece of ceremonial art in 1984, Kahn has continued to develop his repertoire of powerful sculptural forms to fill the spiritual needs of each holiday, holy day, and family celebration. Several of these pieces, the seder plate, the Hanukkah menorah, and the baby-naming chairs, were created by Kahn for use in his own family festivities in order to interpret venerable traditions for our times. These objects are designed to be handed down as emblems of love and continuity. "I wanted everything in my ritual life to be something that I had created or, later on, something I had helped my children create," said Kahn.

The exhibition will run from September 18 through October 30, 2005. The Museum will close in observation of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. For details, please contact the Mississippi Museum of Art, (601) 960-1515 or the ISJL at (601) 362-6357.

*Rosh Hashanah
Honey Dish
by Tobi Kahn.*



Bentonville & Auburn Dedicate New Buildings

In the face of declining Jewish communities in the South, it is exciting to report that two southern congregations will be dedicating new or renovated synagogue buildings this year: Congregation Etz Chaim in Bentonville, Arkansas, and Congregation Beth Shalom in Auburn, Alabama.

Congregation Etz Chaim was founded on August 4th, 2004 through the collaborative efforts of twelve of Bentonville's Jewish families. Initially Etz Chaim held their monthly Shabbat services at the Boys and Girls Club, while the Sunday school met in the meeting room of Bentonville Advertising and Promotions. On Yom Kippur in 2004, Benton County's first ever High Holiday service was held at Northwest Arkansas Community College. Amazingly, after only one year Etz Chaim has acquired a synagogue. The dedication of their new building was held on September 16th, 2005, with ISJL Rabbi Debra Kassoff officiating and several local political and church leaders in attendance. Etz Chaim is currently searching for a full-time rabbi to serve this burgeoning congregation in the corporate hometown of Wal-Mart.

In Auburn, Alabama, Congregation Beth Shalom has been planning a celebration of their own as the congregation will be rededicating their completely renovated synagogue. Founded in 1989, Beth Shalom is a non-denominational synagogue that serves Auburn and its surrounding communities. Although they do not have a full-time rabbi, Beth Shalom boasts a membership of over seventy people. While the congregation has been able to use their building during its renovation, the September 18th, 2005 dedication was a relief for congregation members. ISJL Education Fellow Deborah Ovadia attended the ceremony. According to Jon Freedman, Beth Shalom's president, "thirteen years ago the building was first dedicated after being purchased by Beth Shalom. Now, with the work that was done, we feel the building and our community is really coming of age. We have a very dedicated group and have high hopes for the future of the Jewish Community in the Auburn-Opelika area."

Both Etz Chaim and Beth Shalom are living proof that even as many congregations close, Jewish life in the small towns of the South continues to thrive.

*Congregation
Etz Chaim in
Bentonville,
Arkansas*



*Congregation
Beth Shalom in
Auburn, Alabama*



Lexington's Congregation Beth El Celebrates 100th Anniversary



On December 2nd and 3rd, 2005, Congregation Beth El of Lexington, Mississippi will mark a century of existence with a weekend of worship and celebration. Founded in 1905 to serve the small Jewish community of Holmes County, Beth El has managed to survive without ever having a full-time rabbi of its own. Founded by Rabbi Abram Brill of Greenville's Hebrew Union Congregation, Beth El has also had its pulpit regularly occupied over the years by the rabbis of Vicksburg and Jackson. They also had several student rabbis, which led to a strong connection between the congregation and Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. It was this connection that led Lexington natives Gus and Cecil Herrman to give the largest ever bequest to the college in 2002. This small temple in a small Mississippi town has made an indelible mark on its community.

In celebration of this occasion, Rabbi David Ellenson, President of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, will be the guest of honor for the weekend. Friday night, December 2nd, Beth Israel Congregation in Jackson will hold a special service in honor of Beth El, which will be followed by a dinner at the University Club. The following morning, Rabbi Ellenson will deliver remarks at a Shabbat service in Lexington, followed by lunch. To make reservations for the weekend, contact Phil Cohen at (662) 834-2083.

Photo by Bill Aron.

My First Southern Jewish Experience

*by Adam Stein,
ISJL Rabbinic Intern*



Picture this: A nice Jewish boy spends his first eighteen years in Palo Alto, California, smack dab in the middle of Silicon Valley. His next seven years are spent in sunny San Diego and Los Angeles, except for a couple in Jerusalem. After spending my first 26 years in such a bubble, you might think I was in need of some culture shock. Well, coming to the South for the first time this summer certainly burst my bubble, and it has been a wonderful learning and growing experience.

I was honored to spend June and July as the first rabbinic intern at the Institute of Southern Jewish Life. Under the superb mentorship of Rabbi Debra Kassoff, I traveled to ten different communities over eight weeks, logging an exhausting 28 days on the road. I was awed during my first Shabbat by the beautiful temple in Natchez, Mississippi. After Shavuot services and meals full of cheesecake and blintzes in Biloxi, I had a sense of the warmth of the Jewish communities in the South, not to mention the warm, wet weather I was to experience.

I want to share the story of my final trip, which was especially meaningful. Education Fellow Russel Neiss and I drove to Huntsville, Alabama, and immediately felt part of Gary Hall's family, as well as a part of the larger Huntsville Jewish community. From Friday morning through Saturday night, we led several events that brought the Reform and Conservative congregations together, as they displayed a sense of unity that has not always been present over the 40 years since they split. Good relations have recently been on the rise, aided by decisions four years ago to form a shared religious school and two

years ago to use the ISJL educational curriculum. It was at this summer's education conference that leaders of both communities, including Rabbi Jeffrey Ballon, decided to join together for services and meals during my visit.

Since Rabbi Ballon was on vacation that weekend, he offered his pulpit to me. From Friday night potluck dinner and services, to Saturday morning's services and joint sisterhood potluck, and even a Torah trope group and education seminar in the afternoon, we had a joyful, spirit-filled Shabbat at Temple B'nai Sholom. Together with the Friday morning minyan and Saturday evening ice cream social and havdallah, the weekend was truly a community celebration.

I wish I could detail more stories here, such as my visits to Auburn, Alexandria, and Pensacola, and all the people I met in all the communities. Suffice to say that you are all in my heart and I will remember (and return to) the South for years to come. I have so many friends who have never been to the South, but they will want to visit soon once they get an earful from me about what a special place the South is, especially its Jewish community.

I want to thank all of my colleagues at the Institute, especially Rabbi Kassoff, for helping to make this such a wonderful summer full of growth and unique experiences. I would also like to thank all of you in the communities who were so kind and welcoming to me. I think of you often, and hope we keep in touch, and I am sure I will see you again one day. May you all have a sweet new year, and be written and sealed into the Book of Life.

New Books on Southern Jewish History

The Jewish Community of New Orleans

by Irwin Lachoff and Catherine C. Kahn:

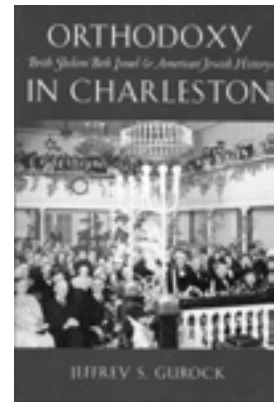
The Jewish Community of New Orleans offers a pictorial journey into the city's history. With over 200 vintage photographs and many interesting stories, the book illustrates the colorful history of Jews in the Crescent City. New Orleans was a wide-open frontier that attracted gamblers, sailors, con artists, planters and merchants. The first congregation, Gates of Mercy, was founded in 1827, and by 1860, four congregations represented Sephardic, French, German, and Polish Jewry. Irwin Lachoff, associate archivist of Xavier University, and Catherine Cahn, the archivist of the Touro Infirmary, know their way around the archives of New Orleans, and have found several remarkable images to document their fascinating history.



Orthodoxy in Charleston

by Jeffrey S. Gurock:

In his new book *Orthodoxy in Charleston*, Dr. Jeffrey S. Gurock tells the 150-year history of the two, now-united Orthodox congregations of Charleston, South Carolina: Brith Sholom and Beth Israel. To piece this story together, Dr. Gurock, the Libby M. Klaperman Professor of Jewish History at Yeshiva University, carefully combed through decades of synagogue newsletters and minute books, over 300 oral history interviews, and untold other documents preserved in the congregations' archives. From this diverse material, Dr. Gurock has drawn an entertaining narrative that weaves together a number of episodes: Erev Yom Kippur fisticuffs over "irreconcilable differences" between congregants in 1925, debates over the status and seating of women in the 1940s, the congregation merger in 1955 that left Brith Sholom Beth Israel with its unusual name, and the all-too-familiar 21st century challenges of Southern Jewish demographics.



Lange to Direct Special Projects

In July, Holly Lange joined the staff of the ISJL as Special Projects Director. Holly's experience in public relations, development, and event planning will be put to use as she helps with on-going and new projects, including *Jewish Cinema South* and the *Southern States Literary Series*. She has helped organize many Jackson area events, including the Mississippi Museum of Art Centennial, Jubilee!JAM, Stewpot's Red Beans and Rice Festival, and the Crossroads Film Festival. Upon graduating from Millsaps College in 1991, Holly served as the Assistant Chief of Staff for the Attorney General of Texas for eight years. She then moved to Washington D.C. to work for a non-profit organization, met her future husband on a flight back to Jackson for a friend's wedding, and promptly returned to Mississippi. Holly is married to Alan Lange and they have two children, Ford and Jake.

"Bagels & Grits" Tops in Trivia

The ISJL trivia team "Bagels & Grits" won the annual Pub Quiz Anniversary Championship at Hal & Mal's in Jackson, Mississippi. These proud experts in trivial knowledge include: (rear, l to r) Stuart Rockoff, Sam Ennis, Russel Neiss (front) Joel Peck, Hannah Farber, Greg Weisman.



Board Profiles

Julius Levy Doctor, father, husband, world traveler, teacher, police officer—Julius Lazard Levy is a man of many hats. A consistent theme, however, among these seemingly diverse titles is his community involvement and his commitment to his southern Jewish heritage. Born and raised in the Mississippi Delta town of Clarksdale, Julius knows from personal experience the need for an organization like the ISJL. After graduating from Clarksdale High School and Tulane University, Julius attended the School of Medicine at Tulane. He is currently a Clinical Professor of Surgery and Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Tulane University Health Sciences Center.



Julius is a longtime member of Temple Sinai in New Orleans, where he has served as President and is currently the Administrator of the Endowment Fund. His involvement in the Jewish community goes far beyond his own congregation, as Julius is active in the Jewish Community Center, the Anti-Defamation League, the Woldenberg Living Center, and the Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans. He is also a Board Member of the Council of Jewish Federations, the Joint Distribution Committee, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, and the United Jewish Appeal. Julius is dedicated to promoting strong Jewish communities in the South and all over the world. To this end, Julius has made 29 trips to Israel and, on behalf of the UJC, has visited Jewish communities in the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Poland, Greece, Italy, Morocco, and Cuba.

In between his world travels, Julius has also found time to be closely involved in his community. He is a graduate of the New Orleans Police Academy and currently holds the rank of Captain in the Reserve Division of the city's Police Department.

Suzy Boshwit How did a high-end jewelry buyer from New York City become an advocate for small Jewish communities in the South? Henry S. Jacobs camp, of course! As a young girl, Suzy Boshwit spent many summers at the Utica camp and “saw so many of my camp friends from the smaller communities not having what I was growing up with.” Raised in the thriving Jewish community of Memphis, Suzy maintains, “I couldn’t have appreciated my strong Jewish community as much until my adult years.” When the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience and, subsequently, the Institute of Southern Jewish Life, were founded, Suzy knew she wanted to be involved with the ISJL.



After receiving a Bachelor of Science in Communications from the University of Texas at Austin, Suzy moved to New York City. Suzy has been with M. Fabrikant and Sons since 1985 and currently serves as the senior vice president of retail and accommodation sales for the Fabrikant communities. In addition to the ISJL board, Suzy also serves on the board of the Eldridge Street Project, a Council of American Jewish Museums colleague of the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience. The Eldridge Street Project is devoted to preserving the Eldridge Street Synagogue as a site of Jewish heritage, culture, and historical preservation. Suzy is a member of the Women’s Jewelry Association and is a former Big Sister with the Jewish Children Services in New York City. When not working, Suzy enjoys traveling, researching her family genealogy, shopping and, of course, jewelry.

Surf’s Up! ISJL Website New & Improved

Since the ISJL first designed its website, the Institute has significantly expanded its staff and activities. Because we have outgrown our old web page, the Institute is pleased to announce its newly redesigned site, scheduled to go online in October. With detailed information about all of the Institute’s programs and activities, community

and congregational histories, our list of southern Jewish mayors, as well as resources for congregations using the education curriculum, the new website has something for everyone. Check it out at www.isjl.org, and let us know what you think.



Need an anniversary or birthday gift for the family member who has everything? Why not give the gift that will last forever? The ISJL can help.

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your ancestors for your family and helping the Institute to continue to capture the history of our southern Jewish heritage before it is lost forever. For more information, contact us at 601-362-6357 or information@msje.org

2005 ISJL Contributions

The 2005 ISJL Annual Campaign is in full swing. We are pleased to report that gifts to the Institute are at an all time high. Within Circa, you can see our success and feel the positive impact that we are having across the South. Your contribution will ensure that we can continue to move forward with these exciting programs. *Please take a moment today to make your gift to ISJL with the enclosed envelope.*

With great appreciation, the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life extends gracious thanks to all those who have made contributions between January 1, 2005 and August 20, 2005 to support the ISJL.

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Dr. & Mrs. Leo Abraham's anniversary
-Miriam G. Cohn

Amanda Abram's service to the ISJL communities
-Rabbi Debra & Alex Kassoff

Amanda Abram's Bat Mitzvah
-Betsy, Marc, Josh & Alana Rosen

Adrienne & Julian Brook's anniversary
-Larry, Princess and Doug Brook

Davna Brook's birthday
-Susie & Mel Rockoff

Susan & Leslie Burson
-Aileen Burson

Jeanne Danziger's birthday
-Susan & Macy B. Hart

Jeanne & Harry Danziger's anniversary
-Susan & Macy B. Hart

Camp Dream Street
-Katherine Goldstein & Marc Sternberg

Charlett & Marshall Frumin's anniversary
-Kim Frumin

Lou Ginsberg's recovery
-Betsy & Joey Samuels
-Lynda & Don Yule

Bea Gotthelf's birthday
-Miriam G. Cohn

Sharon & Jerry Hanaw
-Miriam Cohn

Maxine Harris' birthday
-Fay Millstein May

Ellis Hart's birthday
-Flo Selber
-Harriet & Burt Jaeger
-Cheryl & Van Hart

The Macy B. Hart Family & ISJL Staff
-The Ginsberg Family

Macy B. Hart
-Alice & Sander Margolis
-Linda & David Altshuler
-Dr. Samuel Eichold

Susan & Mark Jacobson's anniversary
-Betty & Mac Lyons

L. R. Jalenak's birthday
-Judy & Buck Boshwit

Beth Kander's service to the ISJL communities
-Rabbi Debra & Alex Kassoff

Rabbi Debra Kassoff
-Rabbi Michael Namath & Rabbi Sue Shankman

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-Yvonne Stephan
-Congregation Etz Chaim, Bentonville, AR

-Congregation Beth Shalom, Auburn, AL
-Margaret Sachs

-Ann Cotton & Rayanne Weiss
-Congregation B'nai Israel, Hattiesburg, MS

-Lynn Null
-Congregation Beth El, Anniston, AL

-Alice & Sander Margolis
-Women of St. James Episcopal Church, Jackson, MS

-Temple Sinai, Lake Charles, LA
-Temple Shalom, Lafayette, LA

-Hebrew Union Congregation, Greenville, MS

Sylvia & James Katz's anniversary
-Pam & Lee Rubin

Sylvia Kirschner's recovery
-Judy & Buck Boshwit

Eve Kirschner's 1st birthday
-Kim Frumin

Rabbi David & Dori Kirschner
-Kim Frumin

Lynn & Bobby Kline's anniversary
-Phyllis & Sumner Levine
-Aileen Burson
-Judy & Buck Boshwit

Alvin Koplin
-Morris Purcel

Jeri & Jay Labov's anniversary
-Amy & Jordan Estra

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-Trish Miller

Phyllis & Sumner Levine
-Aileen Burson

-Judy & Buck Boshwit
-Susan & Macy B. Hart

-Betsy & Joey Samuels

Joel Newman
-Bess & David Crane

Steve Orlansky's birthday
-Susan & Macy B. Hart

Dr. Charles Plesofsky's birthday
-Judy & Buck Boshwit

Dr. Stuart Rockoff
-Temple Emanu-El, Providence, RI

-The Center for Jewish Living, Ithaca, NY

Suzi Rosenzweig's birthday
-Susan & Macy B. Hart

Lee Rubin's birthday
-Dan Cohn

Pam Rubin's birthday
-Dan Cohn

Gerald Rubinet's birthday
-Susie & Mel Rockoff

Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin
-Carol & Robert Nemo

Honey & Rudi Scheidt
-Aileen Burson

Barry Schneider's birthday
-Susan & Macy B. Hart

Carol Schneider
-Aileen Burson

Sarah & Max Schulman
-Rachel & Chuck Schulman

Shirley Seligman's recovery
-Jackie & Jerry Bendorf

Jay Silberberg's birthday
-Del & Harold Silberberg

Adam Stein, ISJL Rabbinic Intern
-Temple Sinai – Lake Charles, LA

David Steinberg's recovery
-Aileen Burson

Rabbi & Mrs. Alvin Sugarman's anniversary
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Sababa! – Sukkot:

Hey parents and teachers! One of the quirks of the Jewish calendar is that so many holidays are crowded into the first month of the year. *Rosh Hashanah* is followed 10 days later by *Yom Kippur*, and only 5 days after that comes the holiday of *Sukkot* which ends with *Shemini Atzeret* and *Simchat Torah*. This edition of Sababa focuses on *Sukkot*, a time when we sit in the *sukkah*, shake our *lulav* and *etrog* and have a joyful time. In fact, in the *siddur* *Sukkot* is called, *Zman Simchateinu*, “the time of our joy.”

Sukkot word play



Sukkot Word Search

W O I B O D G Z U W X B P I F R I E N D S U D Y D
V I T C B T R E I E N T Z U Y W J L S U K K A H A
V L E H H Z B L B M L S H E M I N I A T Z E R E T
Q V H R W C R N P Z R U X H U H H M T B T E Q X A
B C S U K S I M C H A T T O R A H C Y O A T D B F
R F W P V A Y W I L L O W K P W X L H W L R W L D
A G M M D S U K K O T E Z M N I A D S U I O P W Z
C Q M H L T E L V E C W V W E S U W S X D G Q V Z
H F K I U S T Z G N J P R F A M I L Y Q G N P I Q
O T P L F L T F V N I K C X M R O S C L D O Q I P
T J H L N X V A G C I D Z N W M V Q L U Y D V U G
I I N C C H B I S O K S B G P R W F D L T G U V J
Z M A N S I M C H A T E I N U S S C L A P I V E B
J T J S M P M U V P A L M M C H T G T V G I I T
K L L M Y R T L E Y K D U S H P I Z I N L K Z T W
E P B M P V X S Y I P A D U R H Z G N E V T Q A F
Q H M S M I Z J O X U Q Y E A G W M Q O J T O P Q

ZMAN SIMCHATEINU	SHEMINI ATZERET	SIMCHAT TORAH	USHPIZIN
BRACHOT	FAMILY	MYRTLE	FRIENDS
SUKKAH	SUKKOT	LULAV	ETROG
WILLOW	PALM		

What’s the deal with the Sukkah?

At the focal point of the *Sukkot* celebration stands a small, fragile temporary hut-like structure called a *sukkah*. The *sukkah* links us to our past. Our tradition teaches that our ancestors lived in *sukkahs* during their forty years of wandering in the desert and they built *sukkahs* in their fields during harvest time when they were settled in the land of Israel.

Today during the holiday some people eat all of their meals in the *sukkah*, and some people like to spend even more time in the *sukkah* and spend their nights sleeping in it!

Even if you don’t eat in a *sukkah* this year, you can make a *sukkah* to eat! Just follow these easy directions:

Supplies:

- 3 graham crackers halves
- Peanut butter OR marshmallow fluff OR frosting to use as ‘glue’
- Pretzel sticks
- Other candy or cereal to decorate.
- Popsicle stick or plastic knife

Directions:

- Take your finger/plastic knife/popsicle stick and dip into your ‘glue.’ Apply it to the edge of a graham cracker.
- Attach 2 cracker halves together, then repeat for other side, so that the three crackers stand in a U-shape.
- Glue your pretzel sticks to the top, and decorate your *sukkah* with the rest of your supplies.



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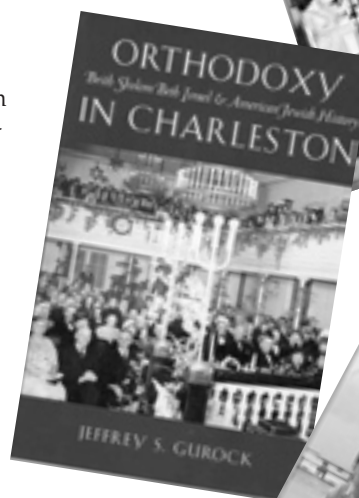
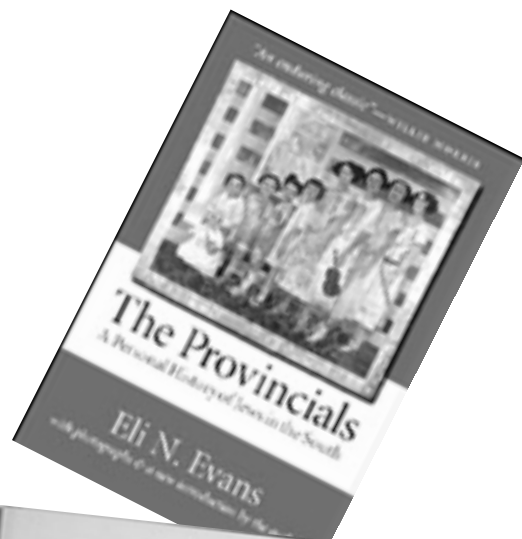
The Provincials: A Personal History of Jews in the South, by Eli Evans
Newly reissued by the University of North Carolina Press with a new introduction by the author, this seminal work was the first to take readers on a journey into the soul of the Jewish South. Evoking the rhythms and heartbeat of Jewish life in the Bible belt, Eli Evans weaves together chapters of recollections from his youth and early years in North Carolina with chapters that explore the experiences of Jews in many cities and small towns across the South. He presents the stories of communities, individuals, and events in this quintessential American landscape that reveal the deeply intertwined strands of what he calls a unique "southern Jewish consciousness." Softcover. **Price: \$22**

Shalom Y'all: Images of Jewish Life in the American South, by Bill Aron and Vicki Reikes Fox
This book tells the unique story of the Southern Jewish Experience through three distinct voices: Bill Aron's evocative photographs, a narrative woven into descriptive captions, and person stories, memories and anecdotes told by southern Jews. The book covers all aspects of southern Jewish life from chopped liver to bagels and grits, from synagogue to civil war cemeteries, from towns named for their Jewish forerunners to the vibrant communities which exist today. A fitting gift for anyone who has southern Jewish roots. Hardcover **Price: \$25**

The Jewish Community of New Orleans
by Irwin Lachoff and Catherine C. Kahn
Irwin Lachoff and Catherine Kahn have gathered over 200 archival photographs to illustrate their fascinating history of this colorful city and its Jewish community. Small as it is in proportion to the population of New Orleans, the Jewish community has made contributions that far exceed their numbers in cultural, educational, and philanthropic gifts to the city. Softcover. **Price: \$20**

Orthodoxy in Charleston by Jeffrey S. Gurock
One of the leading scholars of the American Jewish experience turns his focus to the history of the South's oldest Orthodox congregation, Charleston's B'rith Shalom Beth Israel. This finely crafted, provocative study examines how successive generations of immigrant and native-born Jews sought to keep their ancestral traditions alive as they adjusted to the freedoms and dangers of the world around them. In *Orthodoxy in Charleston*, Gurock uses a small southern congregation as a prism to illuminate national trends in Jewish history. Softcover. **Price: \$18**

"Shalom Y'all"
Shalom Y'all is a documentary feature film about the Jewish experience in the American South as told through the eyes of a native son and the cultural cousins he encounters. At the center of the story is filmmaker, Brian Bain, a third generation southern Jew from New Orleans, searching his cultural roots. Traveling in an old Cadillac like the kind his one hundred-year old grandfather drove as a hat and tie salesman on the same roads, Brian takes the viewer 4200 miles through Delta flatlands, coastal low country, mountain passes, small towns, suburban subdivisions and sprawling sunbelt metropolises to discover a vibrant regional culture that blends the Old World with the New South. Through his search for a balance between modern life and ancient traditions, the filmmaker paints a post-modern picture of American life at the beginning of a new century. Available in VHS or DVD **Price: \$20**



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