

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.

Education Program Thriving in Variety of Congregations

The ISJL Education Program was developed in response to a clear need that existed among smaller congregations. But when we started the project almost four years ago, we had no idea how much demand there would be for it around the region. Today, we serve 35 diverse and unique congregations

and have helped revitalize Jewish education in communities of all shapes and sizes. We are planning to expand the program for next year, adding at least sixteen new communities.

The participating congregations have demonstrated that there are many different recipes for success. The schools in the program vary greatly. Some of them have under five students; others have several hundred. Some have a rabbi, cantor, and educator on staff; others are run completely by volunteer parents. They are Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, and unaffiliated. However, what all of these schools have in common is their understanding that an excellent Jewish education is best achieved through a common body of Jewish knowledge.

We have found that no matter how large or small, our religious school partners are thriving in their use of the curriculum. Perhaps the most successful aspect of the ISJL education program is that all of the communities, while (continued on page 4)



Students of the Beth El religious school in La Grange Georgia. Photo by Jackie Newman.

Hurricane Relief Fund Helps with Rebuilding

After the disasters of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life established a Hurricane Relief Fund

as a conduit for donors around the country to support the rebuilding of the ravaged area. We received some major gifts as well as proceeds from children's lemonade stands. After collecting over \$200,000 for hurricane relief from over 400 contributors, the ISJL Board decided to focus the fund on the mid and long-term needs of the area.

Every donor received a follow up letter describing how the fund spent the money. In keeping with the tradition of southern Jews working to build their larger communities, the Board decided to support both Jewish and non-Jewish causes. One Hurricane Fund donor commended the Institute for this decision, writing that it, "demonstrates that the Institute thought through very carefully its judgments about where it could do the most good. For that I applaud and thank you." As promised, every dollar contributed went toward direct relief, (continues on page 6)

ISJL Board Member Julius Levy presents a check from the Hurricane Relief Fund to Deena Gerber, the Executive Director of Jewish Family Services in New Orleans.



**Message
From the
Institute
Board Chair**



I'll remember 2006 as a special year. For me, there were many things to treasure; eventful for family, for friends, for business, and for the ISJL. Surely I will remember our latest board meeting, held in New Orleans. This was the first of many rebuilding years to come for that city, and our return was some small measure of support for the economy of the Gulf Coast. Thanks to the many donors who entrusted us to direct relief funds, we were able to funnel over \$200,000 to both Jewish and larger community needs. Every affected Jewish community received support, but so did children in Mississippi needing a new playground and students in New Orleans needing new band instruments. A year ago in this space, I wrote about survival. And we've done our best to promote just that.

Survival is a Jewish instinct, honed by millennia of hardship. In many ways, the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life is defined by that word. The survival of our Jewish communities and our ideals impacts the survival of the community at-large. The cultural traditions of the South make it imperative that we serve as living reminders of diversity, tolerance, and social justice. A homogenous community can easily lose sight of the lessons to be learned from those with different traditions. Atlanta's newspaper recently published my letter reminding a minister that different people observe the Sabbath on different days and in different ways. Another minister wrote to me, acknowledging that there are many ways to speak to God. Without such dialogue, I submit to you that America itself cannot survive.

Which of the following survivalist projects touches your heart?

- A small town parent, volunteering to teach religious school for too many years to count, is re-invigorated by a professionally designed curriculum with complete lesson plans, fun activities, and weekly support.
- A young adult, working to connect these teachers with their students, arrives in this town full of enthusiasm and ideas to spend a weekend enriching the Jewish experience.
- A rabbi calls to schedule her second visit this year to offer a lay-led congregation a Shabbat full of Torah, study, and celebration.
- A big city synagogue is paired with a small town and begins to share its abundant resources with those hungry for more.
- A community closes the doors of its shul, but knows that its history is secure and that its Judaica is placed where it will be treasured.
- A distinguished Jewish scholar visits a small city to offer a presentation on Jewish history, literature, or Israel. The secular community responds with overwhelming gratitude.

All of these are the work of the ISJL and there is so much more! All deserve your support. As we move forward to create more memories during 2007, we want you to be our partner. I trust that you will want these traditions, these values, and these children...not only to survive...but to thrive!

L'Shalom

**Message
from the
Institute
President**



2006 was a very good year for the ISJL. Is this a self congratulatory cliché or is there merit to my claim? What does it mean for me to declare that the Institute had a great year? For me, it's not just about our increasing financial stability, nor is it the growing number of individual donors that sustain us, nor is it the press we receive. No! Our success is measured by the number of communities we touch, and help connect to the larger Jewish world. The potential for culture change is in the air. Our programs reach out to communities that have been starving for Jewish content, but have been largely ignored by "national" Jewish organizations that often fail to think outside of their own zip code. We, as a community, can do a better job.

At the ISJL, we regularly receive calls from around the country asking for our help. Congregations or individuals searching for assistance have heard of our reputation and see us as a hope against the decades upon decades of neglect. What do I mean? I believe that resource-rich urban communities do not embrace isolated, underserved, mid-size, and small communities in any meaningful way other than when someone actually moves to the big city. The urban communities are very welcoming after newcomers arrive, but why don't we do real outreach long before someone resettles? If someone who grows up in a small community has received consistent rabbinic visits, an outstanding Jewish education, and access to Jewish cultural programs where they live, they are much more likely to become involved in the community if they later move to a big city. Larger communities need to cultivate their next generations, both native born and those who will settle there. This principle has long been used by recruiters for both sports

and industry. We, as a community, can do a better job.

Just this week, I received two of these calls for help from congregations. One was affiliated with a national movement, the other was unaffiliated, but both were small and struggling to survive. One had an older membership, while the other had a cross section of ages, including children. Even though these two congregations are located in different regions of the country, they both have a desire for Jewish culture and education and a connection to the larger Jewish world. **The sad reality of the Jewish "community" is that we talk community but we act island.** Neither of these communities have had a visit from representatives of national or regional Jewish organizations, except for the congregation in our territory, which has been visited by ISJL staff. While these are actual scenarios, they are also representative of the situation throughout the country and the Jewish "community." We, as a community, can do a better job.

Soon you will see a new initiative coming out of Atlanta, a major Jewish population center today. Several large congregations in Atlanta are in the process of partnering with smaller congregations within a few hours drive. New life and opportunities are about to unfold for the partners. Infusions of energy and creativity will go both ways as the relationships develop. The ISJL is very much an advocate for this endeavor and we believe that this is a moment for the Jewish "community" to do something different and meaningful. Why? Because, we, as a community, can do a better job.

Jewish Cinema South Continues its Successful Run

Another successful season of Jewish Cinema South festivals has come to an end. Jackson, Mobile and Montgomery welcomed audiences to their film festivals in October and November, while Baton Rouge held its festival in January. One of many highlights of this year's festival was in Mobile, where the community had the honor of hosting Sirak Sabahat, a co-star and co-director of the acclaimed film "Live and Become." Sabahat is also one of the 14,000 Ethiopian Jews who escaped during Israel's Operation Solomon. While in Mobile, Sabahat not only enriched the film festival screening, but also spent time meeting with Mobile area high school students, talking about acceptance, inspiring them, and raising their awareness about the Darfur region of Sudan. Sabahat's visit is an example of the powerful impact programs like Jewish Cinema South can have on a community.

The fly-in meeting for communities interested in taking part in the 2007 Jewish Cinema South will be Feb 26-28, 2007 in Jackson, Mississippi. For more information about the film festival, contact Beth Kander at kander@isjl.org.



Right 1: A full house in Mobile awaits the start of the show.



Right 2: (l to r) ISJL Board Member Mary Ann Sternberg, Marcus Hirsch, and Harvey and Paula Hoffman at the Baton Rouge Patron Party.



Right 3: Mary Ann Schwartz and Cheryl Katz enjoy the opening reception at the Jackson Jewish Film Festival held at Millsaps College.

Right 4: (l to r) Reita Franco, Sirak Sabahat, and Rickie Voigt in Mobile.

Below: Post-film conversations take place in the lobby in Montgomery.

All photos by Donald Yule.



EDUCATION PROGRAM:
continued from page 1

During the 2006-2007 school year, congregations in the following communities are using the ISJL Curriculum:

Alabama
Auburn
Birmingham
Dothan
Florence
Huntsville
Mobile
Montgomery
Tuscaloosa

Arkansas
Bentonville
Fayetteville
Fort Smith
Hot Springs
Little Rock

Florida
Pensacola

Georgia
Columbus
LaGrange
Macon

Louisiana
Mandeville
Monroe
New Iberia
New Orleans
Shreveport

Mississippi
Greenville
Greenwood
Jackson

Tennessee
Chattanooga
Memphis

Texas
San Antonio

teaching the same lessons in the classroom, have maintained their own individuality and strengths.

We would like to share profiles of four different religious schools participating in our education project to show how the ISJL curriculum can be tailored to fit most any situation.

Temple Emanuel – Birmingham, Alabama

Temple Emanuel is a Reform congregation, and a first-year participant in the program. A congregation of about 700 families, they have a full staff of two rabbis and a cantor, along with their talented religious school faculty. The curriculum has been successful for their school because it provides a road map for the students and teachers. The curriculum unifies their 150 students and has allowed the teachers to enjoy the support of experimenting with new techniques and materials. Even the rabbis and cantor are using the lesson plans for their classes.

Temple Beth El – Pensacola, Florida

The newly renamed Temple Beth El School for Jewish Living in Pensacola, Florida has been part of the ISJL Education Program since the beginning. Temple Beth El is a Reform congregation with 150 members, and is served by a full-time rabbi. The religious school consists of eleven teachers and assistants in five classrooms, as well as an active youth group for their high school students. During their most recent fellow visit, the students' parents were welcomed into the classroom for Portfolio Day, where they had a chance to see what their students have accomplished throughout the year. They then had a productive discussion with the ISJL Fellow about how they can help support their children's education. After three and a half years, Temple Beth El remains excited to be part of the ISJL program.

Temple B'nai Sholom Synagogue Etz Chayim – Huntsville, Alabama

The religious school in Huntsville, Alabama is a combined institution, formed by the city's Reform and Conservative congregations, that has used the ISJL curriculum since the program's inception. Based in Temple B'nai Sholom's building, there are close to 70 total students. Temple B'nai Sholom has about 200 families and a full-time rabbi. A visiting rabbi comes twice a month to Etz Chayim, which has around 60 families. Both rabbis are actively involved in the religious school. Huntsville's combined

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religious school is a wonderful example of two congregations transcending their differences and coming together for the benefit of the children. Such cooperation is certainly aided by the trans-denominational nature of the ISJL curriculum.

Congregation Beth El – LaGrange, Georgia

The LaGrange community is new to the ISJL program this year since Georgia was not part of the project's original pilot area. Congregation Beth El is a small unaffiliated congregation with 16 families. There are only six children in the religious school, and without a rabbi, the burden of Jewish education is left to the parents. Such small unaffiliated congregations have historically "fallen through the cracks" for national Jewish organizations. The ISJL Education Department is providing this small Jewish community support that it would not receive otherwise. During a recent fellow visit, the students made butterflies for the Houston Holocaust Museum's Butterfly Project, a collection of handmade butterflies to remember the children who perished. Although the Jewish community in LaGrange is quite small, the ISJL is committed to ensuring that they receive the resources to thrive and pass their Judaism on to their children.

The ISJL Education Program has had a significant impact on the congregations who have taken part. We look forward to expanding the program's reach and influence in the future, and modeling the possibility of creating a common body of Jewish knowledge for Jews everywhere.

Education Fellow Greg Weisman examines the Torah scroll with students from Congregation Etz Chaim of Bentonville, AR during Simchat Torah.



Postcards from the Road

By ISJL Rabbi
Batsheva Appel



Since the last issue of CIRCA, I have visited several communities, gotten lost a few times and had a few adventures. Every trip is different and I have enjoyed each community visit, but I wanted to share with you a few words about two very different experiences. For Chanukah, I traveled to the northwest corner of Arkansas and Oklahoma and had the chance to lead services, teach, eat at potluck dinners, make home visits, and sightsee. It was a delight to meet everyone.



Rabbi Appel with the Chanukah lights in Fort Smith.



Members of Muskogee's Temple Beth Ahaba who helped prepare the potluck dinner. Photo by Rabbi Batsheva Appel.



(l to r) Rabbis Eric Wisnia and Batsheva Appel with Michael Harris, Mary Ann Smith, Rev. Carl A. Smith, Varina Howell Davis. Photo by Bethany Zwick.

I spent the first two nights of Chanukah in Fort Smith, Arkansas. When I called before my trip and asked about their Shabbat services, they said they use a CD because there wasn't anyone to do the music. When I was getting ready for services I found that not only did I know the CD that they use, but it was the one developed and recorded by Cantor Stuart Binder for use at Congregation Beth Chaim in Princeton Junction, New Jersey, which is where I used to serve. It is said that you can't be in two places at once, but if Cantor Binder is on the bima at Beth Chaim AND United Hebrew Congregation in Fort Smith, Arkansas every Shabbat, maybe you can!

For the third night, I went to Muskogee, Oklahoma, the first time someone from the ISJL has visited this small but lovely community. The members of Temple Beth Ahaba hosted a delicious potluck dinner, which we followed with services for Chanukah. I had a chance to speak about the different programs which the Institute offers and hear about the history of their congregation. Fayetteville, Arkansas was the fourth night of Chanukah and the last night of my trip. It was a pleasure to meet Rabbi Jacob Adler and to hear about the new synagogue that Temple Shalom is in the process of building.

A very different type of trip was an unveiling I did in Brookhaven, Mississippi on January 14 for Mr. Elias Bowsky, 1848 – 1896. In the autumn, I received a call from the Sons of Confederate Veterans in Brookhaven asking if I would help with the dedication of a marker for a Jewish Confederate soldier as well as another memorial that had been created by the brother of the deceased for the remains of 23 unidentified Confederate soldiers. This wasn't anything that I could have expected before coming to Mississippi. I invited Rabbi Eric Wisnia of Congregation Beth Chaim of Princeton Junction, New Jersey to assist me. Rabbi Wisnia is a colleague, a friend, and a Civil War buff since the fifth grade. He sent me "The Prayer of the Confederate States Soldier" by Rev. M. J. Michelbacher, Minister of the Jewish Congregation Beth Ahabah of Richmond, Virginia. Jewish Confederate Soldiers often carried this prayer with them during the war, and so we included it in the unveiling service.

The ceremony itself was very different than any that I had previously participated in. Present were members of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, Daughters of the Confederacy, re-enactors, citizens of Brookhaven, and members of the Mississippi Jewish community. We were able successfully to combine elements of a marker dedication usually done by the Sons of Confederate Veterans with a Jewish unveiling that included some of the words read at the original unveiling in 1897.

As I continue my travels and adventures in the coming months, I look forward to meeting new people and building new bridges throughout the South.

**HURRICANE
RELIEF:**
continued from page 1

with no money used to cover administrative expenses.

The Hurricane Relief Fund was a one-time emergency project that has been dissolved after donating all of its funds. We sincerely hope that the Gulf Coast never faces another disaster of Katrina's magnitude.

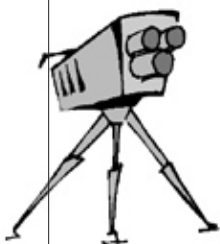
The following organizations were beneficiaries of the ISJL Hurricane Relief Fund:

- Congregation Beth Israel, New Orleans was totally destroyed. They are currently developing a new strategy to restart at a different location.
- Congregation Beth Israel, Biloxi, MS sustained major damage.
- Congregation Beth Shalom, Baton Rouge, LA sustained major damage.
- Spring Hill Avenue Temple, Mobile, AL sustained roof damage.
- Shir Chadash, Metairie, LA had flooding throughout the building.
- Touro Synagogue, New Orleans had flooding in its basement.
- Temple Sinai, New Orleans sustained wind damage.
- North Shore Jewish Congregation, Mandeville, LA sustained wind damage.
- Gates of Prayer, Metairie, LA had flood damage.
- Jewish Family Services - to cover the salary of a social worker for one year.
- Henry S. Jacobs Camp played a tremendous role through the Jacobs Ladder initiative. Thirty tons of relief supplies went through the camp, which

also provided temporary shelter for dozens of people. The camp also had significant damage, primarily to the lake, where the dam was breached, thus rendering the lake useless this past summer.

- Jewish Children's Regional Services provided scholarships for Jewish campers and college students. Because of the storm, significant additional requests were made to JCRS.
- Tipitina's Foundation, an offshoot of the famous New Orleans music establishment, set up a foundation to replace musical instruments which were destroyed in the storm for New Orleans school bands. Many of the great musicians that come from New Orleans got their first musical education in school bands.
- Long Beach, MS Parks and Recreation Department. The eye of the storm passed four miles to the west of Long Beach. Their entire Park and Recreation Department was destroyed. They are rebuilding their main city park, and needed a "jungle-gym" for the children.
- Mississippi Coast Interfaith Disaster Task Force (IDTF). IDTF will use these funds to purchase building materials that are identified as needed to help homeowners reoccupy their homes. These funds will be used to restore hope, homes and lives of the most vulnerable populations affected by the storms.
- Boys and Girls Clubs of the Gulf Coast - to help rebuild five of the seven Boys and Girls Clubs that were destroyed by the storm.

*Sanctuary of
Congregation
Beth Israel,
New Orleans
after the flood.
Photo by Lori
Stiefel, courtesy
of Katrina's
Jewish Voices:
An online col-
lecting project
of the Jewish
Women's
Archive,
katrina.jwa.org.*



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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

ISJL Historian Featured in Two New Books

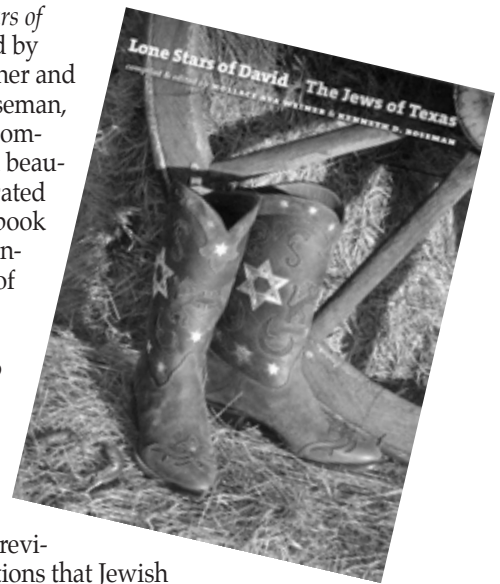
The field of southern Jewish history has been attracting growing interest from scholars and publishers. In recent years, several books have examined the history of Jews in the South. ISJL Historian Stuart Rockoff has contributed essays in two recently published books, *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History* and *Lone Stars of David: The Jews of Texas*.



In *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, edited by former ISJL employees Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark Greenberg, Rockoff's chapter, entitled "The Fall and Rise of the Jewish South" looks at the demographic changes that have shaped southern Jewish life since World War II. Along with the incredible explosion of Jewish communities in places like Atlanta and Houston, we have also seen the decline of many small town Jewish communities as Jews have largely left the merchant class to pursue professional opportunities in big cities. Despite all the attention given to these dying congregations, more Jews live in the South today than ever before. In his essay, Rockoff examines these concurrent changes and suggests they will have significant long term implications for the Jewish South. *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil* is a collection of original essays by a new generation of scholars that seeks to update and recast the field of southern Jewish history.



Lone Stars of David, edited by Hollace Weiner and Kenneth Roseman, is a unique combination of a beautifully illustrated coffee table book and a substantive history of Texas Jews. Rockoff's essay, "Deep in the Heart of Palestine: Early Zionism in Texas" challenges previous assumptions that Jewish nationalism did not have a significant following in the lone star state during the first half of the 20th century. Much attention has been devoted to anti-Zionism in Texas, but few have looked at the strong statewide Zionist movement that existed from the founding of the Texas Zionist Association in 1905. Rockoff offers much needed historical context in understanding the fight over Zionism that split Houston's largest Jewish congregation in 1943. *Lone Stars of David* also includes several fascinating essays about the many colorful characters that have led Texas' Jewish communities.



Both of these books are available on the ISJL peddler's cart. See p. 18 for ordering information.

Kander Rejoins ISJL as Program Director



The board and staff of the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life are excited to announce that Beth Kander has accepted a position as the organization's Director of Programming. Beth will assume her new position on May 1, 2007.

Beth has a long history with the ISJL. She served as one of the ISJL's first Education Fellows, moving to Jackson in May 2003 after completing her undergraduate degree at Brandeis University. She stayed on with the ISJL through the summer of 2005, then began graduate studies at the University of Michigan. This April, Beth will graduate with a Master's in Social Work, with concentrations in Management and Community & Social Systems. In addition to her MSW, Beth will earn two

certificates, one in graduate Judaic studies and one in Jewish Communal Leadership, through the Sol Drachler Program.

As part of her graduate experience, Beth had two year-long internships. Her first year she worked in the Development & Marketing Department of a senior citizens' center, and her second year internship was working under the executive director of the Covenant Foundation. This past summer she worked as a Development and Program Associate for the ISJL.

Beth is thrilled to be returning to Jackson and the ISJL. She brings tremendous energy and enthusiasm to her work, and is particularly glad to have the opportunity to put her love for arts and culture to use in her new position. Beginning in May, she can be reached at kander@isjl.org.

Museum News

The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience recently acquired two significant new collections.

The gates of Agudas Achim's last synagogue, which closed in 2002. Photo by David Sampliner.



Torah crowns from the Agudas Achim collection recently acquired by the MSJE. Photo by Kate Lubarsky.

Congregation Agudas Achim, Corsicana, Texas
Thanks to the assistance of Babette Samuels, the MSJE recently received artifacts from the former Congregation Agudas Achim of Corsicana, Texas. Previously stored by Navarro College in Corsicana, the collection represents the history of an Orthodox

Jewish congregation that once thrived during the oil boom in East Texas.

Congregation Agudas Achim was officially organized in 1915 after a group of Jews split off from Corsicana's Reform temple, Beth El. The promise of the oil boom brought Jewish settlers to the area, eager to capitalize on the growing economic opportunities. Like many towns throughout the south, Corsicana's Jewish population played a central role in the town's cultural and business communities.

Congregation Agudas Achim expanded throughout the first half of the twentieth century, outgrowing its first two synagogue sites and building its final location in 1957. During its later years, the congregation began to shift its practice from Orthodox to Conservative. In 1968, with the membership of both Jewish congregations in Corsicana dwindling, Agudas Achim and Beth El entered in to a unique agreement to jointly hire one rabbi to serve both congregations. When Beth El closed in 1980, its remaining members began to worship with Agudas Achim. A few years ago, Agudas Achim closed its doors as well. The

MSJE has previously received many artifacts from Temple Beth El, and its bimah chairs and menorah are currently displayed in the museum's Utica site. We look forward to displaying artifacts from Agudas Achim in the near future.

Jane Mendel Papers

Jane Mendel was a longtime activist and community leader in Little Rock, Arkansas. After her death in January of 2006, her surviving children decided to donate many of her public papers to the MSJE which cover her work in support of school integration and public education. See below for a description of Mendel's heroic public career.

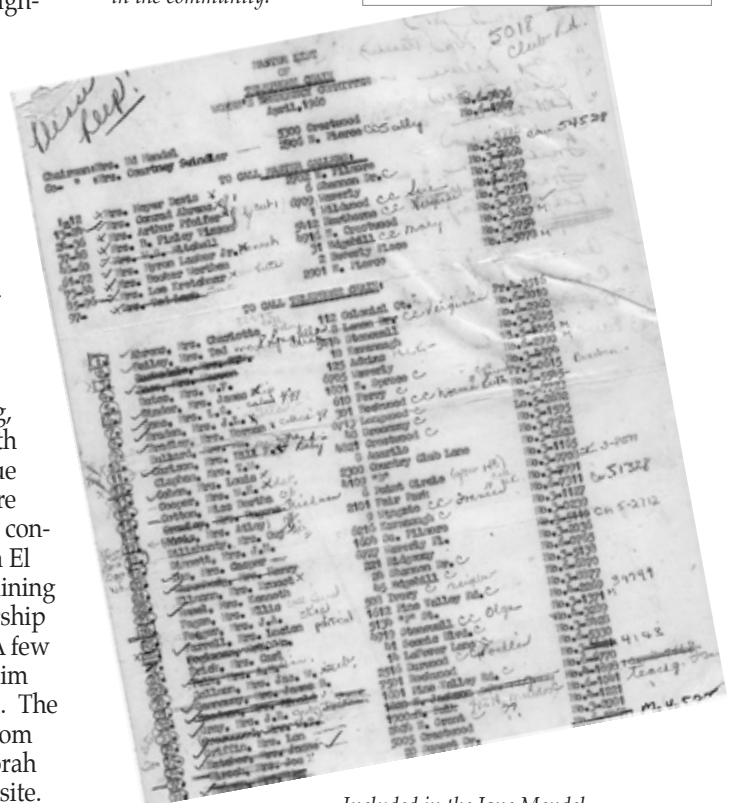
From the story of a small East Texas community that sustained an Orthodox congregation deep into the twentieth century, to the civic leadership and progressive action of Jane Mendel, both collections will provide exciting new material for future exhibits. The MSJE looks forward to using these donations to continue our mission of preservation and celebration of the Southern Jewish Experience.

The Little Rock Israel Bonds Committee "roasted" Mendel in 1983 in celebration of her work in the community.

For the past 39 years, this woman has begged, nudged, inspired, cajoled, politicked, argued, persuaded, wrangled, outfoxed, and twisted more than a few arms to get her way.



NOW, IT'S OUR TURN.



Included in the Jane Mendel collection is an original copy of the WEC's secret telephone chain list.

From the ISJL Archives:

Jane Mendel a Pioneer for Social Justice

In 2006, the ISJL was honored to receive archival papers from the public career of Jane Mendel, a longtime community activist and leader in Little Rock, Arkansas, from her children. The papers have been accessioned into the collection of the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience. Below is a short description of her efforts to bring progressive social change to Little Rock.

In 1957, the nation's eyes were focused on the once sleepy southern capital of Little Rock, Arkansas. The court-ordered integration of Central High School was the first serious test of the Supreme Court's recent *Brown v Board of Education* ruling. Led by Governor Orval Faubus, the forces of resistance pulled out all the stops in their efforts to thwart the court's ruling. For Jane Mendel, staying on the sidelines was not an option. Born and raised in Toledo, Ohio, Mendel moved to Little Rock at age 19 after she married local boy Edwin Mendel. When the governor shut down Little Rock's public high school in September of 1958 rather than integrate, Mendel and other women created the Women's Emergency Committee to Open Our Schools (WEC) to fight against it. Their initial efforts to gain public support for integrated public education failed at the ballot box, though Mendel and her colleagues continued to fight. They were later successful in electing three moderate members to the Little Rock school board.

The WEC became the public face of the fight for integrated public schools in Little Rock. They became lightning rods, and attracted many threats from arch-segregationists. As a result, the group's membership list was a closely held secret. When the state demanded that the group turn over the list, they refused. Mendel was the keeper of the WEC's top-secret telephone chain master list. When they needed the group's membership to mobilize, Mendel would activate the telephone chain, in which women would call other members to inform them

of important plans and activities. Through this system, over 2000 members could be reached in a short period of time. In 1960, when the state senate threatened public education, Mendel swung the chain into action, contacting all 112 callers, each of whom had 20

members to call. With Mendel at the helm, the WEC phone chain was able to quickly rally public opinion against the senate's proposal.

When Governor Faubus tried to fire a group of 44 teachers and administrators who supported integration, Mendel joined forces with other activists to form Stop the Outrageous Purge, or STOP. They organized a successful recall campaign against the segregationists on the Little Rock school board. Mendel and the rest of the WEC worked hard to turn out the pro-integration vote. This successful recall election was the turning point in the Little Rock crisis, and the city's high schools reopened as integrated institutions in August of 1959. Mendel was one of many Jewish women in Little Rock who were active in the WEC. While their story has been often overlooked, these women were important moderate voices for change during a difficult period of social upheaval.

Even after the WEC disbanded in 1963, Mendel remained committed to public education and social justice. She worked with the Panel of American Women, an interfaith and interracial group of women who would speak to audiences about their own experience with prejudice. She was also involved in the Arkansas Council on Human Relations, which sought to aid in the transition to a racially just society. In 1972, Jane founded the Little Rock Volunteers in Public Schools, or VIPS, program that sought to build community support for public schools and help teachers and administrators through the use of trained volunteers. VIPS created the "Jane Mendel Award" in her honor.

Due to her work with VIPS and other causes, Mendel was named "Woman of the Year" in Little Rock for 1973 by the *Arkansas Democrat* newspaper. This was only the first in a string of similar awards celebrating Mendel for her lifetime of public service. She was honored by Rotary International and the National Conference of Christians and Jews in Arkansas for her longtime support for public education and civil rights. An active member of the local Jewish community, Mendel was honored by the Little Rock Israel Bonds Committee and the Arkansas Jewish Federation for her work. The Jewish Federation created the Jane Mendel Tikkun Olam Award in 2003 to honor Jewish community leaders who fulfill the mitzvah of repairing the world.

Jane Mendel died on January 20, 2006, after a lifetime of working to make her community a better place for everyone. The ISJL is honored to receive papers from this remarkable woman's career.

Jane Mendel receiving the award as "Woman of the Year" in 1973 from the *Arkansas Democrat*.



Travel the South as an ISJL Education Fellow

As the ISJL Education Program continues to grow, we are looking for new Education Fellows. The Education Fellowship is an opportunity to get involved in a variety of aspects of Jewish communal life. Based in Jackson, Fellows travel throughout the South, visiting congregations to assist with the implementation of the ISJL religious school curriculum. Fellows also lead a variety of

community programs. Fellows gain extraordinary experience serving a diversity of congregations and communities. Be a part of raising the level of Jewish education in the South with this full-time, two-year position. The complete job description can be found at our website, www.isjl.org. If you or someone you know is interested in the fellowship, contact the Institute at (601) 362-6357; information@isjl.org.

Spend the Summer at the ISJL

The ISJL is now hiring summer interns for the History Department and the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience.

History Internships:

The ISJL History Department is dedicated to documenting, preserving, and interpreting the history of Jews living in the South. You can be a part of this exciting process of preserving the stories of past generations. Summer interns will organize and archive the ISJL history files, travel to southern communities to collect documents and information, assist in putting archival data on the ISJL website, transcribe and index oral histories, and compile and write original research on the southern Jewish experience. Interns will reside in Jackson, Mississippi and receive a stipend. For more information, contact Dr. Stuart Rockoff at (601) 362-6357; rockoff@isjl.org. To apply, send a resume and cover letter to Dr. Rockoff at the ISJL.

Museum Internships:

The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience seeks incoming college juniors or seniors for an exciting, educational, and diverse internship experience in Mississippi. MSJE interns will help manage the museum collection and catalog new acquisitions, develop and run museum-related educational programs for children, lead group tours, and assist with MSJE traveling exhibits. This broad-based

experience is ideal for students interested in southern and Jewish history, Jewish education, museum studies, or arts administration. Interns will receive free room and board at the Henry S. Jacobs Camp in Utica, Mississippi, as well as a stipend. Interns will also work at the ISJL office in Jackson and the MSJE's site in Natchez. For more information, contact Kate Lubarsky at (601) 362-6357; klubarsky@isjl.org.

Rabbinic Internship

The ISJL offers a Summer Internship to rabbinical and cantorial students to assist its Director of Rabbinic Services in a broad range of areas, including congregational, educational, and organizational work. Rabbinic interns will travel to underserved congregations in a multi-state region to lead services, teach, and provide pastoral care and develop educational materials, including divrei Torah and Torah study outlines. Interns will also assist the Director of Rabbinic Services in establishing a regional network of rabbinic services and programming.

Intern will work under the supervision and mentorship of the Director of Rabbinic Services. This position offers a uniquely challenging and rewarding opportunity to serve the needs of an often-overlooked segment of the American Jewish community. Send resume and references with a letter of interest to appel@isjl.org. For more information, call (601)362-6357.

ISJL Receives Second Grant from Natan Fund

The Natan Fund is a network of young donors seeking to inspire philanthropy among other young Jews and to fund innovative projects that help effect change in the Jewish community in the United States and Israel. In 2005, the ISJL was fortunate to receive a \$25,000 grant to underwrite one of our Education Fellows. We are extremely pleased that the Institute was chosen to receive a \$65,000 award in December 2006, again in support of our education program. This was the largest single grant given by the Natan Fund in North America in 2006. The ISJL was doubly honored as one of only two recipient organizations that were

asked to address Natan Fund philanthropists and recipients at the December awards gathering in New York.

The Natan Fund was created to honor J.J. Greenberg (1965 – 2002) who was loved and admired throughout the Jewish communal service world in the United States and Israel. It's particularly gratifying that an ISJL program can be associated with his memory.



natan

Make Future History

The first Jewish congregation in the South, and only the third established in this country, was Mickve Israel, founded in Savannah, Georgia in 1734. Since then, Jews have settled throughout the region, establishing communities and congregations and making the South their home. At the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life we are committed to building on this long and distinguished legacy of Jews in the South. *With your help, we can ensure that Southern Jews continue to make history in the future.*

We have just recently closed our 2006 annual Friends Campaign, and we deeply appreciate the generous gifts received from more than 800 supporters. Your support enables us to provide our ground-breaking educational program, our rabbinic outreach services, and a growing museum and cultural development program.

This year, simple good planning requires us to begin our campaign in February and to complete our annual fundraising drive early in October, soon after the High Holy Day season. In order to plan for the following year and to honor the growing list of requests we receive from communities that depend upon our various programs, we need to know what's possible well before year-end. With your help and continuing support, we can reach communities that are today beyond our grasp. For example, we can develop new programs in family and adult education that our research has shown are wanted and needed throughout our twelve-state region.

Each issue of CIRCA includes a contribution envelope and we welcome and need your gifts. You will also be receiving some additional campaign information throughout the year. Certainly, we hope to inspire your philanthropy. We also want to encourage you to share our mission and services with friends, family, and communities that might benefit from our programs.

Our history is rich and worthy of study and preservation. Our future can be equally exciting with your help. Please consider making a gift to the ISJL in 2007. If you are one of the hundreds of our long-time supporters, please consider a slightly larger gift this year – for our history and for our future.

New Giving Groups

In recent years, we have thanked our donors by listing their generous gifts in one of five categories that use popular Yiddish terms on endearment and accomplishment. While they have served us well, we will adopt new categories in 2007 that do more to preserve and tell the Southern Jewish Experience. Our new "giving clubs" include:

Immigrant	For gifts of \$100 - \$499
Pack Peddler	For Gifts of \$500-\$999
Wagon Peddler	For gifts of 1,000 - \$4,999
Dry Goods Store Owner	For gifts of \$5,000 - \$9,999
Merchant Prince	For gifts of \$10,000 and above



2006 ISJL Contributions

The ISJL Annual Campaign has been a great success since its beginning and our donors have helped us set another record year for the Institute in 2006. 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.

With great appreciation, the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life extends gracious thanks to all those who have made contributions between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2006 to support the mission of the ISJL.

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Carol & Marvin Breen's anniversary
-Eleanor & Albert Fraenkel

Lila Paige Brody's 1st birthday
-Goldie & Marvin Brody

*Daniel Broniatowski-Guest violin
soloist with Poland Philharmonic
Orchestra*
-Karolyn & Jack Grundfest

Jeremy Brook's birthday
-Sue & Maury Brook

Sylvie Bella Brown's birth
-Kim Frumin

Susan Raphael Calman
-Harrylyn & Charles Sallis

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Rita Chouinard
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*Jeanie Comley becoming a Bat
Mitzvah*
-Vera Davis

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-Alice & George Copen

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*Mark Fijman becoming a Bar
Mitzvah*
-Vera Davis

Andrea Fish becoming a Bat Mitzvah
-Vera Davis

Justin & Max Franco
-Reita Franco

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-Rose Marie & Sam Ginsburg

Charlett Frumin's birthday
-Susan & Macy B. Hart

*Lou Ginsberg's birthday/Happy
Chanukah*
-Nadine & Joe Cracraft
-Lynda & Don Yule

Larry Goldstein's birthday
-Susan & Macy B. Hart

*Corky & Mace Goodman's an-
niversary*
-Celia Goodman Leventhal

Mace Goodman's birthday
-Celia Goodman Leventhal

*Joann & Bill Gordon becoming a
B'nai Mitzvah*
-Nonnie & Butch Wright
-Lynda & Don Yule
-David Zemel
-Vera Davis

Lee Gotthelf's recovery
-Betty England

Melissa Grimes becoming a Bat Mitzvah -Miriam Grimes	Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Horowitz -Hannah & Harlan Pollock	Janie & David Levy's anniversary -Susan & Macy B. Hart -Jay L. Wiener	Lynn Schusterman's election to the OK Hall of Fame -David Zemel
Blair Grundfest becoming a Bat Mitzvah -Bettie B. Kahn	Barbara Ingram -Pamela Ingram	Marty Litwin's birthday -Susan & Jay Marx	Mr. & Mrs. Aaron Shankman -Aileen Burson
Juliann Grundfest -Bettie Kahn	Debra Jacobs becoming a Bat Mitzvah -Vera Davis	Sandra & Steve Liverman & Family -Vera Davis	Lou Shornick -Philippa Newfield & Phillip Gordon
Mrs. Carol Hart -Ina & David Orange	Susan Jacobson's birthday -Betty & Mac Lyons	Barbara Mandelstein becoming a Bat Mitzvah -Leda & Michael Karchmer	Leanne & Alan Silverblatt -Lynn & Woods Eastland
Ellen Hart becoming a Bat Mitzvah -Nonnie & Butch Wright -Lynda & Don Yule -David Zemel -Vera Davis	Caleb Abram Joseph -Sandra & David Ginsburg	Jake Maziar's birthday -Cookie & Butch Frank	Miriam & David Solomon -Alice & David Elgart
Ellis Hart's birthday -Isabel & Gerald Posner -Jay L. Wiener	Cele Keeper's Birthday -Suzanne & Mel Rockoff	Jean Mosow's birthday -Susan & Macy B. Hart	Freida Stein -Star & Estan Bloom
Frank Hart's birthday -Marilyn & Ronald Winston	Elena Juris & Kristan Markey's engagement -Kim Frumin	Russel Neiss -The Goldberg Families	Jay Tanenbaum for dedication/service to ISJL -Harry D. Kahn
Hannah Hart & Will Martin's wedding -Rabbi Lewis & Renee Kamrass -Kim Frumin	Nancy & Herman Kohlmeyer -Lynn & Woods Eastland	Lynn Koff & Marty Nislick -Francine & Fred Pevow	Taste of Torah -Sylvia B. Kruger
Leah Hart & Eric Tennen's wedding -Ann Bennett -Kim Frumin	Dr. Harry Kolodney becoming a Bar Mitzvah -Vera Davis	Carol & Jack Olden -Jay L. Wiener	Inez & Samuel Tenenbaum -Walton & Jeff Selig
Macy B. Hart -Mary Ann & Bobby Kaplan -Joseph W. Boston -Miryam & Samuel Tarica -Susan & Laurence Schor -Wendy & Edmund Case -Lisa Gurwitch & Martin Fleisher	Dr. Carol Kossman becoming a Bat Mitzvah -Vera Davis	Philip Benjamin Opper -Lori & Gary Opper	Honoring our Veterans -Vera Davis
Reva Hart's recovery -Jay L. Wiener	Jessica & Josh Kreiser's anniversary	Shirley Orlansky's birthday -Isabel & Gerald Posner	Adele Weiner's birthday -Beatrice & Leon Marks
Reva & Ellis Hart -Carson Hughes	Mr. & Mrs. Ellis Krinitzsky -Deborah Krinitzsky	Susan Rockoff becoming a Bat Mitzvah -Nonnie & Butch Wright -Lynda & Don Yule -David Zemel	Mr. & Mrs. Efreim Weinreb -Lynne & Stephen Weinrib
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Mrs. Max Hirsch -Martha & Charles Alman	Samuel Lack becoming a Bar Mitzvah -Betty & Mac Lyons	Tammy Rubinsky becoming a Bat Mitzvah -Vera Davis	Megan & Rachel Weiss -Gayl & Arthur Weiss
The Stan & Dorothy Hoffman Family, LA -Ward Emling	Betty Lee & Ben Lamensdorf -Stuart Rothenberg	Rose Rustin's birthday -Laura & Terry Rustin	Kathryn Wiener -Judy & Bud Robinson
	Betty Lee & Ben Lamensdorf's anniversary -Susan & Macy B. Hart -Miriam Cohn	Betsy & Joey Samuels' birthdays -Miriam Cohn	Neola Young becoming a Bat Mitzvah -Nonnie & Butch Wright -Lynda & Don Yule -David Zemel -Vera Davis
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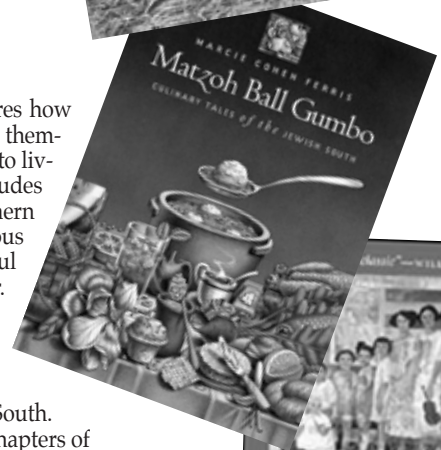
Lone Stars of David: The Jews of Texas,

edited by Hollace Ava Weiner and Kenneth D. Roseman.
Lone Stars of David is an essay collection of lively written, lavishly illustrated, and well-documented narratives on the history and culture of Texas Jews written by historians, journalists, and rabbis who have experienced Texas firsthand, including ISJL Historian Dr. Stuart Rockoff. They tell the stories of Jews who ventured to Texas before the battle of the Alamo, who fought for the Confederacy, who herded cattle up the Chisholm Trail, who drilled for oil, and who forged Jewish communities far from New York's Lower East Side. Jews make up only 0.6 percent of the state's residents, yet their impact has been widespread. This anthology explores the resiliency, diversity, and adaptability of Jews in the Lone Star State, a place with its own powerful sense of identity. Hardcover. **Price: \$35**



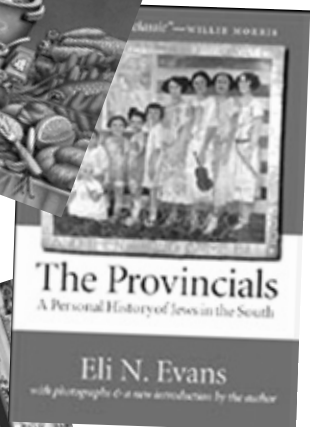
Matzoh Ball Gumbo: Culinary Tales of the Jewish South,

by Marcie Cohen Ferris
In a culinary journey through the Jewish South, Arkansas native Marcie Cohen Ferris explores how southern Jews embraced, avoided, and adapted southern food and, in the process, have found themselves at home. Ferris demonstrates how southern Jews reinvented traditions as they adjusted to living in a largely Christian world. Featuring a trove of photographs, *Matzoh Ball Gumbo* also includes anecdotes, oral histories, and more than thirty recipes to try at home. Ferris's rich tour of southern Jewish foodways shows that, at the dining table, Jewish southerners created a distinctive religious expression that reflects the evolution of southern Jewish life. Jonathan D. Sarna calls it "a bountiful feast brimming with well-researched history, loving memories, and unique recipes." Hardcover. **Price: \$30**



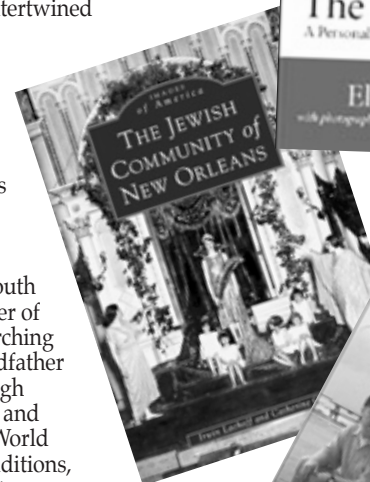
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Newly reissued by the University of North Carolina Press with a new introduction by the author, this seminal work was the first to take readers on a journey into the soul of the Jewish South. Evoking the rhythms and heartbeat of Jewish life in the 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**



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