

New Cracow Friendship Society, Inc.

3905 Arthur Avenue North, Seaford, N.Y. 11783

CRACOW FRIENDSHIP

A NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW CRACOW FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY



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JOIN US ON DECEMBER 11, 2022
2:00 PM
FOR A PRE CHANUKAH CELEBRATION
AND
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
IN PERSON!

THE ADRIA
221-17 NORTHERN BOULEVARD
BAYSIDE, NY 11361

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE: www.newcracow.org

CONTACT US AT: info@newcracow.org

תחי מדינת ישראל ועם ישראל

LONG LIVE THE STATE OF ISRAEL AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

NEW CRACOW FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

President Steven Radwan

Editor Bernice Slutzman

www.newcracow.org

Email: Newsletter@newcracow.org

EDITORIAL

As I write this we have already begun the month of Mar Cheshvan: Cheshvan, to the uninitiated, but more on that later.

Our first gathering took place on October 2nd at Beth Moses Cemetery to observe our annual Yizkor. Unfortunately the weather was highly uncooperative providing us with a very raw and windy event. In spite of the clouds, wind and threat of rain, several of us met at Block 30 for a meaningful, yet brief ceremony. That's what happens when you have a leap year, which 5782 was. Our gathering was pushed into October when it is usually in mid or early September with more inviting weather. Next year it will be September 10th.

In response to the mailing by the Welfare Committee Chairperson, Renata Farahnik, members sent in generous donations which are listed in this issue. If any of you still wish to donate, it can be done through our website: www.newcracow.org. Please specify that it is part of our annual Yizkor appeal and the names of your loved ones to be remembered.

Antisemitism Over the last years we've written about how antisemitism has been one the rise. Now we say it isn't on the rise, it's continuing on a large, global scale thanks to modern technology: the internet. As we all know, once something has been posted, it exists forever. A most recent example are the posts of Kanye West, aka Ye.

He espouses those same tropes that have existed, some for centuries, saying Jews are in control of everything. Jews control the media and recording industry. They are greedy, money grubbers and control financial institutions world wide. (He even blames us for the failure of his marriage due to his wife's Jewish "handlers.") His rhetoric is not a far cry from The Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

Although his public statements have cost him millions of dollars due to cancellations of contracts with several worldwide businesses, he continues. He has the audacity to claim he's not antisemitic because "he a Jew." Ye is twisting the fact that the Jewish people of the 12 tribes were not white, but people of darker skin. He has also angered the Black community by putting forth the idea that the slaves were slaves by choice! It seems he's been showing this antisemitic side for many, many years, but now as brazenly as now.

We may consider these the ravings of a lunatic, but there are those who listen. It is history that the ravings of a madman on street corners led to the Shoah because no one stopped him. It remains to be seen how long Ye will be allowed to continue. Is violence because of him far behind?

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

As we begin 5783, and the High Holidays have passed, I hope all of you had an easy fast and your names were entered in the Book of Life.

On October 2nd we held our annual Yizkor service at Beth Moses Cemetery. Unfortunately, due to inclement weather, the number of potential attendees was limited. Many members missed a very moving and spiritual experience.

Our membership is increasing. One of the reasons we changed our by-laws was to expand the scope of cities and towns within and surrounding areas of Poland to attract new members. One of the prime reasons we made this change is that landsmanschafts with waning memberships as well as individuals who wanted to join were unable to because our old by-laws prohibited their membership. I am happy to say that we have rekindled talks with one of these organizations who are interested in joining with us. As we make progress, we will report to you. We have some new individuals who have joined us as well.

In other news, the Social Committee will be meeting to schedule our first in-person Chanukah get-together since the Pandemic started. With luck this event will be successful and will be the beginning of other social activities of our society. I look forward to everyone attending and speaking with you regarding your suggestions and concerns about the future of our organization.

Steven Radwan

President

President@newcracow.org

LISTING OF COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Cemetery	Bernice Slutzman brei513@aol.com Leon Hilfstein Leohn74d@gmail.com
Commemoration	Bernice Slutzman brei513@aol.com
Membership	Ida Lewis Membership@newcracow.org
Newsletter	Bernice Slutzman Newsletter@newcracow.org brei513@aol.com

Outreach	Elizabeth Szancer Outreach@newcracow.org
Social Action	Anna Gallegos socialaction@newcracow.org
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Telephone Tree	Leon Hilfstein leonh74d@gmail.com
Website	Simone Scheumann info@newcracow.org
Welfare	Renata Farahnik Teacherspet130@hotmail.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

2022

December 11 General Membership/Chanukah
The Adria 2:00 PM

Board Meetings by invitation to Zoom

2022: 12/13

2023: 1/10, 2/14, 3/14, 4/18, 3/16, 6/13

2023

March 12 Commemoration

May 21 General Membership Meeting

Days of Remembrance 2023

January 27 International Holocaust Memorial Day

April 18 Yom Hashoah

April 26 Yom Haatzmaut

June 26 Holocaust Survivor Day

HELP WANTED

As we move forward we are in need of help from individuals who can do any of the following: are proficient in Zoom, can help create content for our social media or create and format email flyers. Any time you are able to donate would be appreciated. Email us at info@newcracow.org if you are interested.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Dear Members,

Another year's cycle has ended. We're hoping that this coming year will once again allow us the opportunity of in-person meetings, gatherings, lunches and celebrations... events we've had to do without for too long.

As our Jewish year 5783 has just begun, we're also reminded that the Gregorian year 2022 will soon be coming to a close. For our Society's membership, this means that the renewal of membership dues for 2023 will be upon us shortly. Your membership is very important to us and we hope you feel the same way, too. We are certainly linked to the past, the present and our future.

As I peruse the paper files of the New Cracow Friendship Society membership records which my

mother, Regina Lewis, so diligently kept, (some date back to the Society's inception in 1965), I'm reminded of the extraordinary role the Society played in so many of our parents' and grandparents' lives. Hundreds of survivor members congregated at meetings, commemorations, holiday festivities, celebrations, fundraisers and gala parties. These events satisfied a social need and a whole community responsibility to keep our connections strong... lifelong ties with each other and our steadfast commitment to the State of Israel.

Today, our Society is mostly comprised of 2nd generation members, some 3rd generation and unfortunately a waning survivor population. Many of our 2G's and 3G's don't even know each other as "extended family" in the ways our parents/ elders experienced it. However, I hope we don't forget this simple truth... Though new families have been created, raised and grown, we are still an outgrowth of those extended family relationships that were formed so long ago.

We are all connected, in more ways than one can even know. Allow me please to share a true story with you.... When visiting the Bay Area, CA. in 2013, I met a young man at a synagogue Shabbat kiddish. He introduced himself as someone who remembered seeing me back in 2003 when I was in charge of the kosher kitchen at "Jerusalem Camp" during a Rainbow Festival in Utah! As we shared more information, we discovered that not only did we both live in Queens, N.Y., but we both lived in Kew Gardens Hills! Further discussion revealed that we both attended the same *shteibel* shul in Kew Gardens Hills every Shabbat! I had never seen this man before. He explained that immediately after services, he always left shul to make kiddush at home. He graciously offered me an invitation to be a guest for a Shabbat meal at his family home. A few months later, we met again on Main Street in our neighborhood. Once again, the invitation was extended. This time, I could write the contact information. Upon meeting his wife and engaging in friendly conversation, we discovered that her grandparents came from Krakow as well and were also survivors. I asked their last name and when she said "Mandelbaum", I responded "Shymek and Manya?". Yup, you guessed it. Her grandparents were members of the Society from the onset. I only knew their given names because as a young adult still living at home, I had carefully pored over and studied the NCFS membership list of names because each name mattered so much. The following visit at their Shabbat table, I learned that 3 decades before, my parents had attended her parents' wedding!! So you see.... we are family in the Greater Design! I related this story because as far out as it may seem, you never know.

So, please be sure to renew your membership for 2023. Encourage other 2G's and 3G's you know to become members, too. We have changed the by-laws to accept any person of Jewish origin who has family roots in Poland. Let us widen our circle to let the mysteries of our heritage be discovered, shared and revealed.

We send best wishes to you and your families for a happy, healthy, prosperous New Year.

We extend our sincere condolences to the families of members who have recently departed. May they be comforted among the mourners of Jerusalem and Zion.
Lucy Haber Polaniecki
Edward Mosberg, life-long member and friend.

Sincerely,
Ida Lewis, Membership Committee Chair
(718)380-3574
membership@newcracow.org

Maria Helfman, Co-chair
(646)256-2872
membership@newcracow.org

FROM THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Over the course of the many years the entrances to our blocks 10 and 28 have fallen into disrepair. We are now in the process of dealing with the Beth Moses to repair the crumbling entrances.

The cost of the repairs amounts to between \$4,000—\$5,000. We are appealing to the membership to aid in offsetting the cost. Donations can be made by check and mailed to The New Cracow Friendship Society 3905 Arthur Avenue N, Seaford, NY 11783 or by donating through the website and specifying that your donation is for the cemetery repairs.

All donations, great or small, will be greatly appreciated.

MEMORIAL PLAQUES

We are excited to offer our general membership participation in a new memorial project. You now have the opportunity to further honor your departed loved ones by dedicating a plaque with their names on the IN MEMORIAM page of our website (newcracow.org).

Simply scroll down to the bottom of the home page and click on In Memoriam to see examples of the plaques already inscribed. Then go to Donation at the top of the home page and in the Note section write your loved ones name, years of birth and death and yahrzeit. (If you are not sure of the yahrzeit date, give us the date of death and whether it was before or after sundown. We will be able to figure it out from that information). Also indicate whether he or she was were a survivor so that we can put the appropriate symbol on the plaque. The cost of each plaque is \$18.00 and will have one name on it. If you cannot make payment electronically, please send a check for the total amount to the Society's address listed on the face of the Newsletter.

I am looking forward to 100% participation in this worthy endeavor.

Dolores Finder Berkowsky
Development Chairperson

SUBMISSIONS WANTED

We need your help in building our digital archive!

We are hoping to collect a library of photographs and documents to preserve the memory of our society and the lives and Jewish communities of Krakow and vicinity. It could be photos of Jewish artifacts belonging to victims or survivors, photos of past society events, any photos showing the lives of our members from before/ during/after the war or copies of any documents related to the Shoah and your family. View the archive at www.newcracow.org/archive
To contribute, email us at info@newcracow.org

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT THE YIZKOR

On behalf of The New Cracow Friendship Society, I welcome all of you to share this most meaningful and solemn service. We honor and remember our loved ones as we observe Kever Avot, which is traditionally conducted between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

The prayers we recite today are heartfelt. The reciting of the Kaddish and Kel Maleh Rahamin gives us emotional and spiritual feelings. Our experience is deepened as we go our separate ways to place a stone on the headstones of our loved ones.

Though we think of our loved ones often, placing a stone on their headstones is concrete. As a mitzvot, by placing a stone on one of the three monuments our society erected, we are not just honoring a family member, but all those that perished in the Shoah as well. The placing of stones declares that we were here.

As we welcome the year 5783, I hope that we can put the last two years behind us and reunite with family and friends to celebrate. It is promising that Synagogues have reopened their doors and beckon us to worship together.

At this holy time, we wish each other a sweet year, pray for forgiveness and mercy. and perform mitzvot with an open heart and hand. Together with my family, I wish you G'mar Chatima Tova, may you be sealed in the book of life and L'Shannah Tova, for a sweet year.

REMARKS BY THE WELFARE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

This year the dangerous version of the Covid 19 virus appears to have subsided, morphing into less virulent strains. Thankfully they appear to be under control.

Politically the climate has changed. Russia is at

war with Ukraine. China, Russia and Iran have allied against Israel and Western democracies. Iran is on the verge of having a nuclear weapon aimed at Israel. It is arming all the terrorist groups in Syria, Lebanon and anywhere in the Middle East they can get control. Russia is joining in on the fun and poor Israel is besieged with attacks on a daily basis.

In the United States, fuel prices have sky rocketed and the price of food has gone up. In some places there are food shortages and lack of safe water to drink. Echoes of World War II and the Holocaust abound. Whenever the economy is in trouble, a scape goat is created and antisemitism is on the rise. This year, again, the hate is directed against Jews and Asian Americans.

Our sages tell us that the month of Elul is a month of personal reflection. We are asked to fill our time with mitzvot, acts of kindness and compassion toward our fellow man. Chesed, Tzedakah and Teshuvah will change the world.

With the recent passing of Queen Elizabeth II my thoughts have turned to Great Britain. When everyone turned away Jews, including the United States, knowing they would be murdered, Britain accepted the Kindertransport filled with thousands of Jewish children whose lives were saved. Her mother-in-law, Princess Alice of Greece hid an entire Jewish family in her home under the noses of the Nazis. They survived. She is honored among the Righteous among the Nations and rests in Jerusalem.

Each year at this time we appeal to your generosity to support our worthy causes to help struggling Holocaust survivors meet their basic needs in Israel, The United States and wherever help is needed. Many survivors have no one else to whom to turn. Our Society also does outreach to schools and institutions in our communities. We educate them about the Holocaust teaching tolerance and respect for all people. Please give generously as you can to continue our work.

Our society and I would like to wish you and yours a very joyous, healthy and happy New Year. Shana Tovah. May this year bring redemption and peace for all of us and Israel.

Best Wishes,
Renata Fryszman Farahnik
Welfare Chairperson

SEEKING INFORMATION

I am a freelance writer working on a feature story on the newly released documentary film, "Reckonings: The First Reparations," directed by filmmaker Roberta Grossman. The film explores how in the aftermath of World War II, West Germany, Israel, and Jewish organizations negotiated reparations from the German

government for Holocaust survivors of Nazi persecution, and how those reparations made possible the survival of the struggling State of Israel, and the chance for Holocaust survivors who had had everything taken from them, to begin to rebuild their lives.

I am interviewing Long Island organizations/ Holocaust survivors who have been receiving compensation from the Claims Conference. Would it be possible to speak with someone from The New Cracow Friendship Society about this?

Lisa Schiffman
516 532-6649

KRAKÓW GENEALOGY AND RESEARCH RESOURCES KEHILALINKS

JewishGen KehilaLinks is a digital project dedicated to the commemoration of the towns where Jews lived. KehilaLinks provides the opportunity for anyone with an interest in a town to view pages about the history of that Jewish community, including Holocaust resources. These web pages may contain information about the town. Resources related to Kraków are listed below.

For general information about Jewish Kraków:
<https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/krakow/>

Kraków Birth records:
https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/Krakow/kra_evr_births.asp

Kraków Marriage Records:
https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/krakow/kra_evr_marriages.asp

German Jews Registered in the Kraków Ghetto:
https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/krakow/kra_german.htm

Yad Vashem Testimonies by Kraków Survivors
https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/krakow/kra_testimony.htm

Schindler's List
https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/krakowe/kra_schindler/htm

Holocaust Orphans
https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/krakow/kra_orphans.htm

THE DIGITAL ARCHIVE

The Digital Archive of KL Plaszow gathers and provides knowledge about the former Nazi German labor and concentration camp of Plaszow, but above all, it is a token of remembrance for prisoners and victims of the camp. Their names and surnames, sometimes biographies and photographs make up the individual stories and collective history of KL Plaszow.

The archive also contains databases on the camp staff, archives, photographs, and audio-visual materials. The information and documents gathered in the archive are the product of many years of queries, searches, interviews, and the work of scientists and specialists. The archive is open to the public. As new information is collected, its content will be supplemented.

We invite you to use the Archive and cooperate with us in order to expand it. We are trying to document the names of all those who were prisoners in Plaszow. If anyone from your family was at this camp please fill in the following details, including a photo if you have one, and send by email the following address:

archiwumplaszow@muzeumkrakowa.pl

PERSONAL DATA

Surname:

Name:

Family name:

Date of birth:

Place of birth:

Date of death:

Place of death:

FAMILY

Parents:

Spouse:

Siblings:

BIOGRAPHY

CAMP

Was held in the ghetto - city:

In Plaszow from:

In Plaszow to:

Camp number:

Other camps:

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Shalom,

The Ministry of Culture and Heritage in Poland together with the Municipality of Krakow is working to establish a memorial site on the site of the former German concentration camp - KL Plaszow. I am a member of the Planning Committee. If you would like to publish about this, I'll send you more information or you can find it on the net.

In any case, a database is set up on the memorial site where they want to commemorate the prisoners who were in the camp (about 30,000 Jews and Poles). Are there members of the organization who were or their families were prisoners in the camp? <https://ca.muzeumkrakowa.pl/>.

I would appreciate it if you will publish that information and people will update their details. Anyone who does not know how to do this - will send it to me and I will take care of the update.

Lili Haber
+366-4436-54-972

IF YOU WERE A KRAKOW RESISTANCE FIGHTER, OR THE CHILD OF ONE, PLEASE READ BELOW

Sheryl Ochayon the Director of the "Echoes and Reflection" program at Yad Vashem has contacted us to see if we can assist them in one of their projects. Sheryl and her team at "Echoes and Reflections" are currently producing a documentary on Justyna (Yustyna), and the Krakow Resistance Movement. If you have any pertinent information that can be used to enhance the Documentaries production. Please contact Sheryl directly at Sheryl.ochayon@yadvashem.org.il.

Some of you may remember Sheryl from the time she was one of our panelists for our "Women in the Resistance" Webinar. If you missed it, please go to our website newcracow.org, and it will be listed in the Power of Our Stories section.

Thank You.

CLAIMS CONFERENCE NEEDS YOUR HELP

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against German (Claims Conference) aims to locate and contact all Jewish survivors of the Holocaust to provide financial compensation. If you know of any survivors who have not received compensation in 2021, have not submitted a form to Claims, or may not be aware of payment through Claims Conference please email HFSoutreach@claimscon.org or call 646 536-9157.

THE MARITIME BORDER DEAL: TIMING IS EVERYTHING

I don't know how many of you have been following what really is a very big deal in Israel: The maritime deal delineating the marine border with Lebanon. The story is big for a lot of reasons. It has tremendous strategic and economic ramifications. It is an important, some will say historic, agreement with a hostile country, Lebanon. And it is hugely political.

By the time you read this article, it will likely be after November 1st, meaning, after the Israeli elections, the fifth in the past 3 years. We may not yet know what the government will look like as coalition wrangling takes some time. But we will know if there is likely to be a government. The math really is quite simple. If Netanyahu's block (the Likud, the Haredi parties and the National Religious Party) gets 61 seats, he will form a government. Netanyahu will appeal to other parties to join that 61 base, claiming (not without justification) that it is in the national interest to have a wider ranging government. But make no mistake, the base will be the National Religious Party of Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben Gvir (both considered right wing radicals by much

of the population but certainly by the parties not in the Netanyahu block). It is very unlikely that any other party will join this configuration, leaving Netanyahu with a 61 seat fragile coalition made up of people capable of blackmailing it for their own purposes with no less skill than what happened in the last government.

The other option is that he doesn't get 61. In this case, it may take a long time for the process to play itself out, but one of two options is most likely. 1) Someone else will be asked to form the government in a rotation format (maybe Benny Gantz) or no one will succeed and a sixth election will be called, likely for March, and Yair Lapid will remain the caretaker prime minister.

We will see what happens. Either way, it won't be pretty and many people in this country will be unhappy.

But this article isn't solely about the election. I can dissect the outcome in an upcoming article. This article is about the maritime deal with Lebanon. As mentioned above, there are multiple aspects to this deal, all of which carry a tremendous amount of weight. There are the strategic and economic implications of the deal; there are the diplomatic ramifications of this deal; and there are the political aspects of the deal.

Strategic and Economic Ramifications

There was a lot of misinformation about this agreement about its strategic ramifications. The head of the opposition, Netanyahu, called the deal a "dangerous capitulation", a "surrender to Hezbollah's threats", a "creation of a precedent that if we are threatened, we give in", that Israel got nothing in the deal and handed over sovereign territory. Like most arguments, there is always a kernel of truth to them. But in this case, all of these claims were grossly exaggerated and in many cases, downright slanderous. It is important to note that every defense and military leader -the heads of the Mossad, Shaback, and the IDF, all considered this deal to be a good one for Israeli security. As the Chief of Staff, Cochavi put it: The deal doesn't preserve Israeli security, it improves it. (It sounds better in Hebrew). The reason is that by signing this deal, one of Hezbollah's main avenues for mobilizing the Lebanese for open conflict with Israel has been neutralized. He was threatening to attack the Israeli gas rig Karish, which is 100% in Israeli waters and is supposed to start operating any day, but by threatening to attack it unless Lebanese interests are met, he created leverage that the opposition in Israel claims was the catalyst for Israeli capitulation in signing the deal and the government claims by signing a deal which serves Israeli interests diffused a ticking bomb of a potential horrific war. The government claimed the entire time that it would not halt production from Karish in any event, agreement or not, and would care about Hezbollah threats (the government was actually threatening Hezbollah in the past few weeks as well), but that didn't change the narrative that Netanyahu and his affiliate

parties have been promoting. In essence they are handing Hezbollah a victory by making the claim that Hezbollah threats led to this deal which the Netanyahu camp claims to be a capitulation and surrender of sovereign territory. But was it?

Here are the facts. The deal recognizes Israel's self proclaimed maritime border extending west from Rosh Hanikra for 5KM. That was what was important to the security establishment and that is what was recognized in this deal. After 5K, Israel accepted the Lebanese interpretation of the maritime border line which runs south of the Israeli line. This area is NOT Israeli territory. It may have been Israeli economic waters if our claims to the area were accepted (they never were) but in any event, there was no relinquishment of Israeli sovereign territory. The economic waters were disputed at best and for 10 years, no agreement was reached as neither side was willing to budge. In this agreement, pushed by the US and aided by France, Israel maintains its security requirements but gives up some economic waters. However, in return, it will receive 17% of the income of the gas drilling that will be done on the Lebanese side, if and when they actually find gas there. Many experts do not believe there is much there in the first place. But only time will tell.

Beyond that, far from giving in to Hezbollah threats, this agreement forces Hezbollah, who is now taking credit for the deal, to take a step back. Their best excuse to have a war with Israel is now gone. And everyone understands that now the Lebanese will have something to lose. That is the strategic concept here. Win-win for both sides. Let the Lebanese save their country and their economy by drilling gas. What better incentive is there to keep the peace than to have their own gas drilling? Now this deal may not be a peace agreement with Lebanon. But it is an important stepping stone. And there is also a good chance this agreement will drive a wedge between Lebanon and Iran, as Lebanon will be doing what is in its best interest and not giving in to the Iranian interest (promoted by Hezbollah).

Why this is a capitulation to Hezbollah's threats is not only beyond me, it is also beyond the entire military and defense establishment. And apparently this was picked up by the Netanyahu campaign this week. One of the other things that he said to protest this deal was that if he wins in November, his government wouldn't honor the deal. This is a dangerous attack on the democratic process. In Israel, we expect American presidents to honor the commitments of their predecessors. The same applies in over here.

In any event, as one would expect in an election period, the Likud carefully monitored the reaction of the public who for the most part supported the agreement and the latest campaign rhetoric, walked back the possibility of not honoring the agreement. At least that.

The one argument made by the current opposition that does resonate is that this is a major decision to be made by a transition government weeks before an election. There is no doubt that this situation is far from ideal. However, there are extenuating circumstance. For one, Michel Aoun, the Lebanese president, leaves his position at the end of October. Once he is gone, there is a good chance there won't be anyone on the Lebanese side to approve this deal any time in the near future. Secondly, Israel is set to start pumping gas from Karish any day. There is no way Israel would have been able to delay that production once it was ready to go because that would really have been seen as a capitulation to Hezbollah threats. And if that production started without a deal, Nassrallah, already high on a tree with his threats against Karish, may not have had a choice but to attack it, even if only symbolically. The path to a full-scale war with Lebanon would be short. So the deal had to be signed now. Legally, it does not have to be approved by the Knesset, only placed on the Knesset floor for two weeks for review. Given the open hostility between the current government and the opposition, given the poisonous comments made by Netanyahu and his affiliates against this deal (it turned out that much of these comments were made without seeing the full agreement and once it was seen, some of that criticism tailed off because it would have made them look silly), the Lapid government decided to do away with a Knesset vote that probably would not have passed and could have potentially led to war. So this agreement will go through without a Knesset vote. Is this ideal? Not at all. But as we said, timing is everything. In the current situation, there was little choice.

Meanwhile, what has begun to upstage the agreement these past few days is a dangerous escalation in Judea and Samaria. Not a day goes by without a shooting incident. Several soldiers have been killed and civilians have so far been lucky, but luck never lasts in the Middle East. Every night the IDF operates in Jenin, Shchem and the police are busy in East Jerusalem. Hamas and Islamic Jihad, while wanting to keep Gaza quiet, are doing whatever they can to incite the folks on the West Bank, and they have had some success. The genie isn't totally out of the bottle yet, though. The Palestinian Authority is still cooperating with Israel and is making an effort to keep order because they know the alternative will be a major IDF operation in these cities, though that may still be inevitable.

For the purposed of this article, the issue is a political one. Historically, elections have been swayed to the right due to these times of unrest. Everyone knows it. Why would the Palestinians prefer a Netanyahu right wing government you may ask? I'm not sure, but historically, they seem to prefer right wing governments. The more violence and terror there is, an Israeli

population that has already shifted hard to the right over the years, is persuaded to shift even more and in our present situation, one or two seats is all that is needed to bring Netanyahu and the right back to power. I have a theory, though I have no idea if it is correct, but the way I see it, the Palestinians prefer to have a right wing Israeli government in power, one that will inevitably come into conflict with the UN, the EU and the US, for promoting right wing policies generally not accepted by the international community. It makes their lives easier to both justify their violent resistance and to promote their image as victims, something that has worked well for them over the years, though if we are honest with ourselves, has never really brough themselves closer to their goals. If they were honest with themselves, perhaps the situation here would be different.

In any event, the right-wing campaign rhetoric is already pouncing on this issue, claiming there is a total breakdown of control, that the government has lost its ability to protect the population. Again, hardly true, but no one cares much for facts in elections, do they?

So we march closer to November 1st with a lot on the table to push the election in one direction or the other. Will we finally have a stable government of 61 or more seats, led by the Likud with the Haredi parties and the ultranationalist Ben Gvir and Smotrich? Or will Netanyahu fall short for the 5th time, leaving Lapid in power until either some other (currently hard to see) constellation of a coalition comes into power or a sixth election (likely in March) is put on the calendar? Time will tell.

Barry Spielman
Oranit, October 16, 2022

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Donations received after the publication deadline will appear in the next issue.

The World Series

Invented by a Jewish guy?

By Frederic J. Frommer *The Forward*

The Pittsburgh Pirates entered this season as the biggest underdogs to win the National League pennant, which turned out to be accurate as the team finished in a tie for last place in the NL Central. But there was a time when the Pirates were so dominant that their owner, a Jewish immigrant named Barney Dreyfuss, proposed baseball's first World Series as a way to showcase them.

The Pirates won back-to-back pennants in 1901 and 1902. However, both seasons just ended after that because there was not yet a postseason battle between the champions of the two major leagues. In 1903, as Pittsburgh was on its way to a third straight pennant, Dreyfuss wrote to the owner of the Boston Americans, Henry Killea.

"The time has come for the National League and American League to organize a World Series," Dreyfuss wrote. "It is my belief that if our clubs played a series on a best-of-nine basis, we would create great interest in

baseball, in our leagues, and in our players. I also believe it would be a financial success."

Killea agreed, and the two teams faced off in baseball's first World Series that October. But Dreyfuss' hope to show the superiority of his team and the National League didn't pan out. Boston took the series five games to three, with Cy Young winning two games for the victorious Americans (now known as the Red Sox).

Even after the Pirates lost the World Series, Dreyfuss donated his share of the profits to the players, according to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. "He was a mensch," University of Pittsburgh sports history professor Rob Ruck told the newspaper.

Dreyfuss' contribution to baseball went well beyond creating the World Series. He also helped broker a ceasefire between the National and American leagues that helped pave the way for not just the postseason championship, but the coexistence of the two major leagues.

The NL was the established league, the AL the brash upstart. The American League — to this day still sometimes referred to as the "junior circuit" — began operations in 1900, and declared itself a major league the following year. The new league mounted a direct challenge to the National League, raiding the NL for star players, and throwing baseball into a state of chaos.

In 1903, the same year he broached the idea of a World Series, Dreyfuss played a key role in creating a new National Agreement between the leagues. Later, he was instrumental in baseball hiring a commissioner to oversee the sport.

During Dreyfuss' roughly three decades as owner, the Pirates won six pennants and two World Series titles. That's a far cry from the modern Pirates, who haven't won either in more than four decades.

In 2008, more than a century after the first World Series, baseball recognized Dreyfuss' contributions to the sport by inducting him into its Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York.

"Through everything that Dreyfuss did in baseball, he was a fan first," the Hall of Fame wrote in an online profile. "He excelled at building a great stadium, creating the World Series, ensuring equity and fair treatments of the teams, and building a superior team on the field."

Humble beginnings

Dreyfuss' path to baseball ownership was a circuitous one. Born in Freiburg, in what is now Germany, he moved to the United States when he was 19, recruited by his cousins in Kentucky who had a successful bourbon business. Dreyfuss' doctor told him he needed to exercise, motivating him to start playing the game, as a second baseman.

That led him to organize semi-pro teams in Paducah, Kentucky, using players from his brewery. Then he invested in the Louisville Colonels of the American

Association. After that league merged with the National League, the Colonels became a National League team, and by 1899, Dreyfuss was the sole owner.

In its 1932 obit on Dreyfuss, The New York Times called him “one of organized baseball’s most prominent legislative figures” and “the most thoroughly schooled baseball man to be found among major league club owners.”

HOW A POOR JEWISH IMMIGRANT MADE A FORTUNE AS A MADAM – AND WHY WE’RE STILL UNCOMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT IT

On Dec. 10, 1913, a 13-year-old Yidishe meyd arrived alone and almost penniless at Ellis Island. She was to have traveled to America from Eastern Europe with a cousin, who decided to abandon the journey. The new immigrant’s name was Pearl Adler. The oldest of at the time eight siblings, she hailed from Yanow, a shtetl near Pinsk, in what is now Belarus, an area that had seen much antisemitic violence.

Seven years later, Pearl Adler, now Polly Adler, opened her first bordello, across from Columbia University in Manhattan. Before long, she was the most famous madam in New York, her houses of ill-repute frequented by the rich and the notable — the politicians, gangsters, businessmen, celebrities, writers and journalists who ran New York in what was to become known as the Roaring Twenties.

“It is a fact, perhaps a little bit of a scurrilous fact, that in those days Jewish women made up 50 percent of the madams in New York City, while Jews themselves were only 20 percent of the city’s population,” said Debby Applegate, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of “Madam: The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age.” “That’s partly because they were like Polly. Women were trained to be *ballaboostas* — to be able to run the business while their husbands studied Torah. They were earners, not learners, as they liked to say.”

“Polly had a really good head for math. She was very responsible. She had a great memory. Plus she was a hardheaded businesswoman who kept scrupulous books and knew how to negotiate and took no guff from anyone.”

Applegate, interviewed on a Zoom call, noted that, like many immigrants, for several years after arriving in America, Adler had been working at a grueling, low-paying job. She had “been abandoned in the United States among people who were essentially strangers,” the author says. “And she had to make some choices, and unfortunately most of her choices were not going to be good choices.”

But there was nonetheless “some logic” to Adler’s decision, Applegate said. “She was making five dollars a week working in a corset factory. And you could

make \$30 a day, easily, out turning tricks,” as Adler did for a year or two before becoming a madam. “It starts to look almost like a form of self-respect almost to make the choice of not just grinding away as a victim of the system, but that you can take your own fate into your own hands, however that looks.”

For most women, such a decision would be tragic. But, Applegate said that Adler was different. “She falls into that category of exceedingly bright, ambitious daughters, oldest daughters, who are treated like sons by their fathers. And that gives them a level of confidence, ambition and skill and support, that a lot of girls don’t have, and that a lot of sons don’t always get. It gave her a fundamental character and constitution that allowed her to make a path through a world that was really not in any way set up in her favor,” Applegate said.

“The difference between Polly and a lot of the other women who made those choices was that she was not from a broken home. She was not from an alcoholic family. She had all that constitutional strength from her childhood that allowed her to carry through in a profession that just eats people up and spits them out. Polly very quickly became a parent to some of the people in the sex trades. She had a warmth and ability to keep the house together.”

For all those reasons, Applegate says, Adler was “very quickly pegged by a guy named Nick Montana who’s trying to revolutionize the sex trades, to make them a little more orderly, looking a little more like a talent booker, and he sets her up quickly, right across the street from the Columbia University library. I don’t know how deliberate that was, but I’ve got to figure it was conveniently located, for a good reason. She does very well there, and begins to expand.”

A native of Oregon, Applegate, 53, won her Pulitzer in 2007 for “The Most Famous Man in America: The Biography of Henry Ward Beecher,” the mid-19th century abolitionist Brooklyn minister who preached Christ’s love, was a champion of women’s suffrage and temperance, and was the defendant in a scandalous 1875 adultery trial (which ended in a hung jury). She became interested in Beecher, an 1834 alumnus of Amherst College, when she was a student at Amherst. He became the subject of her Ph.D. thesis.

“I vowed I was never going to write another book again after that first one,” she said. “I thought this is a stupid way to make a living — it’s not really making a living — but things had gone well, I was feeling flattered, and my editors said, why don’t you think of something maybe in the 1920s. The Twenties are fun, glamorous. You’ve got vice and virtue and everything all mixed up together. You’ve got a ‘Great Gatsby’ world. And I was just weak-minded enough to think, well, I’ll look around, and I was in the stacks of the Yale library, in the section on the 1920s, the history section, and I saw Polly’s book — she has a memoir, ‘A House Is Not a Home,’ that was published in

1953 and became a big best-seller — it was just a slim little red volume, like a magpie.”

“I picked it up because it was red, I think, honestly, and I read it quickly. It was a fast read, it’s a great read, it’s a really terrific book — it’s a whitewash of course, like so many of these kinds of memoirs, like maybe a lot of memoirs, but she had a great cast of characters even in that narrow story.”

“She was a tiny little lady. Tiny, like so many of the immigrants in those years. Not even 5 feet tall. And I just loved her right away.”

One of the major resources Applegate used for her research, she says, were the “Yizkor books that were put out in Israel in the wake of the Holocaust. There was a wonderful one for her shtetl in what is now Belarus. It was filled with fabulous essays with tremendous detail, some of which mentioned her family, and her father in particular. It really gave a texture of the life she had there.”

Applegate says that timing as well as character was a key to Adler’s success. “She herself would tell you that if her career hadn’t coincided with the beginning of Prohibition, things would have undoubtedly gone very differently. It’s the moment when the bootlegging industry is really exploding. There’s tons of money flowing through the underworld that had not existed before, when the liquor trade was legal. And the mobsters are the guys who make her name. She gets picked up by the Jewish mob, who at that point are dominated by Arnold Rothstein” — the fixer of the 1919 baseball World Series. “He’s not perhaps as famous as Lucky Luciano or Meyer Lansky, although I think more important. And he has a coterie of people around him who are not all Jews, but a lot of them are Jews. Nonetheless, it helps to be Jewish, because Jews dominated the bootlegging trade in New York City and in a lot of cities. They’re the ones who see the value in having her running a place that can be like a little hideout, a hangout that’s private, that’s hidden, that’s kept away from the cops for the most part.”

Adler, she said, “really liked to call her place a speakeasy with a harem. But really it was a full service restaurant and a bar and a gambling house. It was very haimish for the people who came there.”

And so Adler attracted the rich and the famous to the Upper West Side of Manhattan. “In those days, the Upper West Side was a very raffish, not entirely respectable place, despite its gorgeous buildings,” Applegate said.

The members of the Algonquin Round Table — writers, critics, humorists, performers, including Dorothy Parker — were regulars, as were the columnist Walter Winchell, the businessman Walter Chrysler and Harold Ross, the founding editor of *The New Yorker*. When Parker would show up with her Algonquin colleagues, she would sit and chat with Adler while the men availed themselves of the house’s services. The theater critic and playwright George S. Kaufman was such a habitué that he established a credit account and paid by the month.

“It was such a stew,” Applegate says. “One of the things that’s hard not to romanticize about New York City in the 1920s is that it was in a way a very lively small town, for those who want to be mixing and mingling in this culture of speakeasies and the nightlife, who want to be part of this sexual revolution.” In a sense, she said, “everyone is slumming. I can put quotation marks around that, because that’s sort of how they felt. And you see all those humorists and these writers and a lot of wealthy men who look around and say, ‘We are clearly in a new era where there seems to be a lot of young women around who would be willing to have sex with me. There’s a lot of booze flowing around in a way that I’ve never participated in.’ Nobody would have gone to a saloon. None of these big writers, none of the big *machers* that she catered to, would have been going to saloons, working-class saloons, but going to a speakeasy feels glamorous in an underworld-chic kind of way.”

And they all knew, and were reminded regularly, about Polly Adler. “She was in the newspapers all the time after a certain point,” Applegate said. “If you look at the newspapers from that era, including *The New York Times*, she’s all over the place. Walter Winchell,” who in those days was the most widely read columnist in the country, “brings her up constantly until the day she dies,” in 1962. “Even after she dies he’s still talking about her.”

She also often made the rounds of the clubs the city’s movers and shakers frequented, bringing her harem along for public viewing — a successful method of in-person publicity.

Adler could risk the exposure because one of her major expenses was paying off the corrupt politicians, prosecutors, judges and police to look elsewhere and to get the charges dropped when her premises were raided and when she was arrested, as she was multiple times.

One of the things that first attracted Applegate to Adler’s story, she said, “is how

much its outlines look like a lot of other immigrant stories — born at the turn of the 20th century, coming in the heat of the biggest wave of immigration from Eastern Europe, landing in New York City and eventually making her way across the country and ending up in her retirement out in Los Angeles. Frankly, there are a lot of Jewish immigrants who took that path. Much as we might want to say, look how respectable they are, or look maybe even how rich, a lot of those paths wound through less respectable neighborhoods on their way up there — even some of the wealthiest factory owners and film moguls.”

After the success of her memoir, Adler went to Israel. “A good portion of her family had settled in Israel. She has become a rich and famous writer. She loves being part of the literati. She really wanted an education — in that sense she was very much like a typical Jewish immigrant. She really exalted learning. A huge disappointment in her life was not being able to do that,” Applegate said. After she retires in the 1940s, “she goes back to school. She gets her junior college degree. But when she goes to Israel with her book now being printed in Hebrew and she’s kind of a hero, nobody in the family she goes to visit — and who she’s also been sending money to — will talk to her about the book. They’re all so embarrassed. And she left quite insulted that nobody wants to hear her talk about the book.”

What does Applegate think the Polly Adler story — about a woman famous in her time and barely known now — says about American life?

“We are a nation of hypocrites,” she said. “Maybe that’s just humanity. But we love fame. Both Polly and Henry Beecher could see that that is the currency of America. It was so exalted here that they could see that fame was a way to get closer to their dreams. The problem is of course that Americans don’t like to look at the machinery behind our dreams.”

She found herself thinking, she says, “how is it that Meyer Lansky and Lucky Luciano and Arnold Rothstein are treated like ‘Great Gatsby’? Why is ‘The Great Gatsby’ considered one of the foundational texts in the 20th century? Why do these figures, these gangsters, become icons? We spend a lot of time watching ‘The Godfather’ and debating over what it means for America, and somehow Polly, who clearly wanted to have iconic status, who wanted to have her say of what America was too, is ignored?”

For Applegate, the answer is sex. “I think it’s because we are still not comfortable about sex, and especially the idea of women having sex, using sex as a form of power. We may get our mind around sex as a form of pleasure for women, but the idea that women would use sex as a weapon against the world, or as a way to wealth and fame, does not sit well with us.”

We are filled with contradictions, she says. “We will watch women make their name off of their bodies and we will pay to see women make their name and their fortunes off of their bodies,” said Applegate, “But we do not want to talk about it, and we certainly do not want to talk honestly about it.”

WHY *MAR* CHESHVAN?

Of the many months of the Jewish calendar, only Cheshvan has the distinction of having a prefix added. Why is that?

Practically every single month has some sort of an observance in it, be it joyous or somber. **Nisan:** Pesach; **Iyar:** Yom Haatzmaut, Pesach Sheini; **Sivan:** Shavuot; **Tamuz:** Fast of the 17 of Tamuz; **Av:** Tisha b’Av; **Elul:** the prelude to Rosh Hashana, Erev Rosh Hashana; **Tishre:** Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Succot, Shemini Atzeret, Simchat Torah; **Cheshvan:** zip, zilch; **Nisan:** Chanukah; **Tevet:** continuation of Chanukah; **Shevat:** Tu b’Shevat; **Adar:** Purim

Poor Cheshvan not only has no observances, but it is sandwiched between two months that contain some of the most joyous of our holidays. The word *mar* is added to denote this absence. *Mar* = bitter.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE REPORT

HAPPY EVENTS

Anniversaries

September

Joy Wolfe & Douglas Ensor 42

Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Helfman

October

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Banyas 40

Anna Scheumann & Aiden Gallegos 9

Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Gonen 52

November

Mr. & Mrs. George Blau

Annette Insdorf & Mark Toporek 23

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Cagan 44

Mr. & Mrs., Michael Horowitz 377

Mr. & Mrs. Norman Fishman

Mr. & Mrs. Al Lewis 46

December

Jean Kasmer & Charles Jacobs 40

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Moldawer 53

Mr. & Mrs. Marian Keren

Landmark Birthday

A huge mazal tov to Regina Lewis, our lifelong dedicated Co-Membership Chairwoman, who celebrated her 103rd birthday on September 2nd. May her days be easy. They're already long! BH".

Mazal tov to all. Please inform us of your anniversary dates and any other smachot (births, special birthdays, bar/bat mitzvah, engagements, weddings, graduations, etc.) so we can congratulate you in future Newsletters. We love to share good news.

REFUAH SHELAYMAH

To any of our members in need of healing. Continued blessings are extended to members recovering from Covid, other maladies, or ailments. Please inform us of any members who would appreciate their names being mentioned in the Newsletter for healing thoughts and prayers.

DONATIONS:

Paula Fishman- in memory of her dear husband David's yahrzeit- \$200

Elizabeth Szancer- in celebration of the birth of a new grandchild- \$100.

Regina Lewis & family- in memory of 13th yahrzeit of Victor Lewis, beloved husband, father & grandfather - \$108

Ida Lewis- in celebration of mother Regina's 103rd birthday- \$36

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To her Family

Our heartfelt sympathy

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