

# פרץ פאפירן Peretz Papers

Newsletter of the Peretz Centre for Secular Jewish Culture

May - June 2009



I.L. Peretz

The next issue of Peretz Papers will be published in late August. Have a great summer!

## The Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir's

Searle Friedman, Founder



### Annual Spring Concert Sunday June 7, 2:30 PM

Conductor: David Millard; Accompanist: Elliott Dainow

This year, the Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir is singing a program of three Yiddish pieces: the cantata *Oyfn Fidl*, based on a Sholem Aleichem story in commemoration of his 150th birthday; *Yomervokhets*, a Yiddish translation of Lewis Carroll's *Jabberwocky* set to music by the choir's conductor, David Millard; and *In Amerike*, arranged by Sid Robinovitch, based on excerpts

from Sholem Shtern's poem *In Kanade*.

The choir is very pleased to announce that this year's special guest artists will be Congregation Beth Israel's Cantor Michael Zoosman and Ba'alat Tefillah (prayer leader) Debby Fenson.

Tickets: \$15.00. Reservations advised.

*The choir always welcomes new members.  
For information, phone Donna, 604-325-1812*

## Special Summer Fraytik tsu Nakht: Friday, July 17

Generally, the Peretz Centre doesn't have a FTN in July and August. However, when we learned that Bennett Muraskin was going to be in town for the month of July, we decided to hold a special summer FTN with Bennett and his wife as our guests of honour.

Bennett writes regularly for *Jewish Currents*, *Humanistic Judaism* and *Outlook Magazine*. He is the Adult Education Director for the Jewish Cultural School and Society in New Jersey. He will talk to us about his book, *Humanist Readings in Jewish Folklore*.

## Fraytik Tsu Nakht

You are invited to join us in honouring our Jewish traditions at our monthly secular Shabbes observance: Candle lighting, wine, challah, a fabulous potluck meal, and a talk by a guest speaker.

To attend, you may bring a dish (couples please bring double-sized dish or two dishes) or pay \$10/person.

Please RSVP Gallia:

604-322-6077

### Guest speakers/topics:

**May 8, 6:30:** Prof. Claudia Cornwall will talk about her book, *Letter from Vienna: A Daughter Uncovers Her Family's Jewish Past*.

**June 19, 6:30:** Excerpts from *Bobbe Mayses* (Grandma Tales) – true and funny stories written in the early '90s by members of the Sholem Aleichem Seniors.

**July 17 6:30:** Bennett Muraskin (see left)

# Lag b'Omer/Mother's Day French Toast Brunch: Sunday May 10, 11:00



As Lag b'Omer falls on Mother's Day this year, in addition to being a bit early in the season for a beach picnic, our Sunday School teachers invite you and your children to a French toast brunch celebrating both holidays.



The brunch will take place here at the Peretz Centre, and, weather permitting, the children will be taken to the park across the street for some Lag b'Omer games and activities.

The brunch will be pot luck, with Sunday School parents contributing the bread, eggs, milk and maple syrup and the Peretz Centre providing tea, coffee and juice. The brunch is open to all families, even if the children are not enrolled in Sunday School.

**If you would like to attend, you must call or email by May 6 to make a reservation and find out what you can bring:  
604-325-1812/info@peretz-centre.org.**

**To reserve a space for your child in B'nai Mitsvah class of '11 or Sunday School starting in September, please contact the office.**

## THE 30-HOUR FAMINE

*For the past three years, the Peretz Centre has donated space for the 30-hour famine. The participating students solicited sponsorships and spent 30 hours in the Peretz' Ben Chud Auditorium, consuming nothing but water or juice. B'nai Mitsvah '08 grad Amanda Krystal coordinated the event for the first two years. Here is what she wrote about it:*

During the 30-hour famine in 2007 and 2008, 13 kids from Osler Elementary School, grades 5-7, managed to raise over \$1500 each year. This fundraiser was sponsored by World Vision to help the less fortunate in Africa. The money went to buy food, clean water, and to



free child soldiers. (Child soldiers are children kidnapped and forced to kill others, sometimes their own families.) The 13 students (with parent chaperones) fasted together for 30 hours at the Peretz Centre. Without this facility we wouldn't have been able to get this many volunteer participants.

It was also a great place to break the fast.

This past April, 20 children from Livingston School participated in the 2009 fast. Jonathan Frydman, who coordinated the event this year, said, "It was a great experience. I hope we can hold it at the Peretz Centre again next year."



# A Sheynem Dank!

I think everyone knows how much work I do to make it possible for 190 people to enjoy our Community Third Seder, but maybe you aren't aware of how many volunteers it takes. SO, thank you, thank you, volunteers! As I often say, We couldn't have done it without you! So that everyone can see who you are, I'm listing your names below. (If I've missed you, please let me know so I can acknowledge you in a future issue.)

**Organizing committee:** Arlene Jackson, Bluma Field, Claire Osipov, Dena Dawson, Judy Nicol-Smith, Louise Miller. **Set up:** Bluma Field, Claire Osipov, Colin Nicol-Smith, Gloria Diaz, Horacio, Eviatar and Nitahi Bach, Irene Dawson, Judy Nicol-Smith, Yakov Chudnovsky. **Clean up:** Alan Le Fevre, Annie Olafson, Ben Taub, Gyda Chud, Patrick Keogh.

**Shopping:** Sylvia Friedman. **Seder plates:** Kerry Dyson, Ben Neuman, Mark Neuman, Tammy Neuman.

**Baking:** Arlene Jackson, Bluma Field, Claire Osipov, Gallia Chud, Gyda Chud, Karen Kaplan, Louise Miller, Yvonne Green. **Kitchen:** Anna Karachan, Annie Olafson, Arlene Jackson, Bluma Field, Chloe Smith, Ella Levitt, Karen Kaplan, Lena Sverdlova, Marta Shtrambrant, Samantha Scott, Stacey Kettleman, Tammy Neuman. **Other cooks:** Ben Taub and Annie Olafson (tsimmes), Bluma Field (hard boiled eggs), Louise Miller and Sylvia Friedman (kugel), Tammy Neuman (charoses). **Vegetarian:** Bernice Kastner (main dish and grain), Karen Coulter (chopped liver), Leslie Dyson (soup). **Vegetarian server:** Leslie Dyson.

**Door:** Yvonne Green, Lorraine Isaacson, Gallia Chud, Al Stein, Katherine Headrick, Shane Dyson.

**Readers:** Gyda Chud, MC, and Erica Luce (Anne Frank), Genia Kobylivker (née Heather MacLean), Gerald Krystal, Judith Vosko, Kerry Dyson, Mark Neuman, Paula Mines, Richard Green, Samantha Krystal (The Butterfly), Seemah Berson (Yom Hashoa). **4 questions:** English: Devon Jackson, Hebrew: Noah Berson, Russian: Rachel Shtrambrant, Spanish: Bram Marriott, Yiddish: Sheldon Jackson. **Music:** The Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir.

If you didn't volunteer this year, maybe next year you will join this illustrious group!

(I would also like to thank our professionals, who are very much a part of the seder's success: **Sound:** Adriana Byrne, **Choir conductor:** David Millard, **Accompanist:** Elliott Dainow.)

—Donna Becker, Program Coordinator

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I am writing this just after the Community Third Seder. I know you will join me in expressing our thanks to all those who made this event possible. Simply put, it was awesome. Everything – the food, the readings, the choir – was great. I hope those who were present will spread the word to their friends and relations that the Peretz Centre offers a great deal to individuals and families and that on such occasions we rise to a spectacular level. Once again, thank you for all your contributions.



Two years ago, we held an important retreat. Many of you were able to attend and found it a very worthwhile experience. The following important priorities, in descending order, were articulated by the participants:

- ◆ Committee to develop programs for youth/young adults/university students
- ◆ Begin search for *vegvayzer* or executive director
- ◆ Education program for non-Jewish partners
- ◆ Provide resources for life cycle events and offer to conduct these events
- ◆ Increase visibility / publicity for specific programs
- ◆ Youth Lounge returned to members 13+ to use and adapt as they wish
- ◆ Offer an adult B'nai Mitzvah program
- ◆ Bring in teachers with professional training for adult programs
- ◆ Provide Peretz youth with community service/arts scholarships

Most of these priorities have not yet been achieved even though their importance has been acknowledged. Those of us on the executive are making sure that immediate needs are being met but that leaves little attention for the long term concerns identified above. We could certainly use everyone's help to start implementing these important priorities. Let us know how you can help us to make a start.

— Richard Rosenberg

# Peretz Centre Schedule, May – June '08

No classes May 17

## Youth

- ⊗ B'nai Mitzvah '10: check with teacher
- ⊗ Sunday School: every Sunday, 10:30–12:30
- ⊗ Lag b'Omer/Mothers Day brunch: May 10, see p. 2

## Adults and Seniors

- ⊗ Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir rehearsal: Tuesdays, 7:30–9:30 PM
- ⊗ Yiddish Class: Wednesdays, 7:00–9:00 PM
- ⊗ Fraytik Tsu Nakht (Friday night Secular-Humanist Shabbes celebration): May 8, 6:30 PM: Prof. Claudia Cornwall, talking about her book, *Letter from Vienna: A Daughter Uncovers Her Family's Jewish Past*. June 19: Excerpts from *Bobé Mayses* (Grandma Tales). July 17: special guest Bennett Muraskin will speak on his book, *Humanist Readings in Jewish Folklore*.
- ⊗ Sholem Aleichem Seniors: Fridays, 10:30 AM. May 1: Lorna Gantry, BC-STV: *BC-STV: What is it all about?* May 8: Peter Prontzos, Langara Political Science: *Kyparissa: The history of a Greek village; slide show and talk*. May 15: Jennifer Wade, Amnesty International: *The awareness of thinking about native issues*. May 22: Current affairs discussion group facilitated by Ralph Levy. May 29: Documentary film *Super Amigos*. June: closing luncheon June 26. Remaining June programs TBA. Summer Film Festival: July 17 – August 28.



To Irene Dawson, on the birth of her granddaughter.

To Gallia Chud, Rita Chudnovsky and Stan Rosen, on the birth of Rita and Stan's first grandchild, Evan James Rosen—Gallia's third great-grandchild.

To Claire Osipov, on the marriage of her daughter Lisa to Gabe Milton and the bas mitsvah of her granddaughter, Sarah Vernon.

## Special Events

- May 8, 6:30 PM Fraytik Tsu Nakht
- May 10, 11:00 Lag b'Omer/Mother's Day Brunch
- Jun. 7, 2:30 PM Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir Spring Concert. Feature work: *Oyfn Fidl*, honouring the 150th birthday of Sholem Aleichem.
- Jun. 19, 6:30 PM Fraytik Tsu Nakht
- Jul. 17, 6:30 PM Special Fraytik Tsu Nakht with Bennett Muraskin



\* Time to be confirmed

*Letter from our friends Rikki and Howie Hoffer, who moved to Florida:*

Hey, Donna, Hope all is A-O-K with you!

We miss all our Peretznik friends, and your email updates are so very important, so please, keep 'em coming!

I'll be doing some library shows re: my book, *Are Flowers Jewish?*; my new trio, "Roz & Friends" is getting bookings; The Granny Rapper is being sponsored by Barnes & Noble; and, we are members of FAU Judaica programming, films, lectures and discussions e.g. Yiddish, Jewish-content stuff.

Won a trip to the Berkshires in mid-May, going on an ab/fab European river cruise down two rivers, starting in Budapest, ending in Amsterdam, taking a train to Paris for another week. Gone most of July. We're very excited.

Keep us posted and pass on our info when you get a chance.

Hugs, Rikki

Our beautiful building is available for rental for your meeting or simcha. We'd love to help you work out the logistics of your baby naming, bar/bas mitsvah, wedding, memorial service. Contact our Rentals Manager, Sylvia Friedman, 604-325-1810, [sylvia@vcn.bc.ca](mailto:sylvia@vcn.bc.ca).