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The monthly publication for  
the community of

**Or Chadash,  
The Congregation of  
New Light**

In Chicago ....

**Come Add  
Your Light  
To Ours!**

ק ה י ל ת א ו ר ח ד ש  
CONGREGATION OR CHADASH  
CONGREGATION OF NEW LIGHT



# The New Light

## ***Cleaning Away the Chametz***

***By Marvin Levin, OC Co-President***

As some of you know, author and psalmist Debbie Perlman was a close friend. Until her death in 2002 the Perlman home was where my family regularly celebrated Thanksgiving. And they were regulars at our Pesach Seder table.

For me, her Psalm Eighty-One (see Page 2) beautifully captures one aspect of Pesach: where we clean away the *chametz* from the past and look forward to the future. My family never literally undertook a search for crumbs and remnants of unleavened bread, but we always set aside the everyday dishes and used the lovely china set I had inherited from my Grandmother.

I've read that Pesach is the single holiday that is most observed in Judaism, even more than Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. I suspect part of this is due to the fact that Pesach is celebrated in the home. Almost everyone has some story they can tell you about their Passover

memories as a child. My childhood memories include the sight of my Grandfather's eyes bulging as he bit into a chunk of horseradish, and the taste of the dessert my Grandmother called *kremslach*: a jelly-filled ball of matzah-meal dough liberally seasoned with ginger and cinnamon, then fried in *schmaltz* (obviously in the days before anyone worried about cholesterol).

Pesach begins on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan - midmonth, so we can anticipate it by watching for the approach of the full moon. On the second night at second Seder, we begin the counting of the Omer. We count for 7 weeks to the holiday of Shavu'ot (weeks), where we celebrate the giving of the Torah. According to Judaism 101 at [www.jewfaq.org/holidayc.htm](http://www.jewfaq.org/holidayc.htm), "The counting reminds us of the important connection between Passover and Shavu'ot: Passover freed us physically from bondage, but

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the giving of the Torah on Shavu'ot redeemed us spiritually from our bondage to idolatry and immorality."

One of the ways Or Chadash traditionally celebrates Pesach is by participating in the Maot Chitim distribution of holiday food to those who might not be able to afford it. We'll be doing that this year on Sunday morning, April 13<sup>th</sup>, and urge our members to participate in this mitzvah. Speaking of memories, I'm smiling as I write this article because I'm recalling the time my two sons and I were helping in the preparation of the Maot Chitim packages. My older son had the task of opening the cartons of Israeli wine that went into the boxes. He opened one carton and suddenly called several of us over to look. The carton was short one bottle! And at the bottom of the slot where the missing bottle should have been there was a set of lost keys.

Don't forget - we also will be holding a community second Seder at the East Bank Club. A reservation form for this event should be included in this newsletter.

Finally, a great big *Yashar Choach* to Robin Sampliner for last month's fabulous Or Chadash Gala she planned and organized. Well done, Robin. And *Yashar Choach* also to Matt Simonette for a most incredible purimspiel.

May you all enjoy a wonderful Pesach. Nisan is traditionally the first month of the year (Rosh Hashanah notwithstanding). So best wishes for a wonderful year as well.

**"From the frown of hurried preparations,  
Turn our eyes to greening branches  
You coax from dried stock.  
Let us see again Your creation.**

**Again and again, You hold out spring;  
Again and again, You offer endless  
chances  
To be born in wholeness and healing,  
To move toward You.**

**Searching, we find stale opinions,  
Molding ideas, burnt crusts of  
stubbornness.  
Peeking into corners, our eyes discover  
The crumbled remnants or worry and  
anger.**

**Scraping clean the grime of winter,  
Built of our worries and deficiencies,  
We scour a shining surface, a clean place  
To arrange the season's delights.**

**Sweep us clean, and burn the trite ideas  
That stifle us and shield us from You.  
Burn away these shattered endings  
And start us again on the path toward  
freedom."**

Eighty-One: B'Dikat Chametz  
Flames to Heaven, by Debbie Perlman

## Visions of Kerouac

Or Chadash will be going to see *Visions of Kerouac*, a play by Martin Duberman (a groundbreaking scholar of GLBT, American history) directed by David Zak, artistic director of Bailiwick Theatre. The play brings Jack Kerouac's life to the stage through his relationships with the Beat Generation and many of the preeminent artists of his time.

The performance will take place on Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm at Roosevelt University's O'Malley Theatre, 431 S. Wabash, 7<sup>th</sup> floor. Although tickets are at no charge (thanks to special arrangements with Roosevelt University's Theatre Conservatory), they must be reserved in advance no later than Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup>. To

reserve tickets, please leave a message on the hotline (773-271-2148) or email [Office@OrChadash.org](mailto:Office@OrChadash.org).

Prior to the performance, we will be meeting for lunch at the Exchequer Pub, 226 S. Wabash at 12:15pm. (Reservations aren't needed for lunch, although please let us know if you think you will be coming, so we can reserve a large enough table.)

## April Dine-around

The April dine-around will be at Wing Hoe, 5356 N. Sheridan Rd., on April 11 at 6:15 p.m. No reservations are needed, but try to arrive by 6 p.m. to ensure adequate seating.

## Cycles of Our Lives

### Happy Birthday:

April 8 Daniel J. Amati  
April 14 Jennifer J. Mercer  
April 16 Laurel Grauer  
April 16 Frank Nussbaum  
April 18 Diana Klein

### Happy Anniversary

April 24 Catherine Harvey and  
Diana Klein

### Thanks for the Oneg....

**April 4:** Oneg sponsored by Daniel Amati in honor of his birthday, and in memory of his mother, Virginia Amati  
**April 5:** Lunch still available for sponsorship.  
**April 11:** Oneg still available for sponsorship.  
**April 18:** Oneg sponsored by Frank Nussbaum in honor of his birthday  
**April 25:** Oneg sponsored by Susan Boone in memory of her father, George Boone

### April Service Schedule

**April 4:** Shabbat service with Rabbi Larry Edwards, 8 p.m.  
**April 5:** Saturday morning service, 10 a.m. A light lunch follows.  
**April 11:** Torah service with Marvin Levin and Judith Golden, 8 p.m.  
**April 18:** Shabbat service with Rabbi Larry Edwards, 8 p.m.  
**April 25:** Shabbos Tisch Service (potluck), 8 p.m. Please bring a kosher style side dish (no pork or shellfish, no mixing of meat and milk) or dessert to share.

## UPTOWN CAFÉ

Thank you to the volunteers who donated time at the café in January and February. Guess what, we have another shift coming up on **Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-7:30** for dinner. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Robin Sampliner at [office@orchadash.org](mailto:office@orchadash.org). Four volunteers are needed.

## MAOT CHITIM

We will be volunteering again to make food basket deliveries with Maot Chitim on Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>. It's a great feeling to make someone else's holiday special. Join Or Chadash, perform a mitzvah, and put a smile on someone's face when we deliver Passover holiday baskets to people in the 6400 N. Sheridan building. Please arrive by 8:15. If you have a dolly, please bring it as that will help in getting boxes to the different floors.

### Civil Unions Lobby Day By Marvin Levin

On Wednesday, April 9th, I will be participating in Lobby Day, an effort sponsored by Equality Illinois and other gay rights groups to lobby state representatives and senators for recognition of civil unions in Illinois.

HB 1826, the Civil Union bill, recently passed the House Human Services Committee and now is waiting for a vote on the full House floor. The bill conveys many of the rights and responsibilities to couples who can not have a civil marriage. Among those rights are the ability to participate

in healthcare visitation and decision making for one's partner, survivor benefits and the right to make disposition decisions about deceased partner's remains. For more information about this bill, see [www.eqfed.org/campaign/action\\_alert\\_hb1826\\_mar2008](http://www.eqfed.org/campaign/action_alert_hb1826_mar2008).

Advocates for passage of this bill are urging voters to contact their representatives.

The April 9th event starts with people gathering at 7:00 a.m. at the Center on Halsted (Halsted and Waveland), riding buses to Springfield (breakfast supplied), a lunch meeting with the bill's sponsors, lobbying state Representatives and Senators to garner their support, all followed by dinner and a bus ride home, arriving around 10:00 p.m.

To register for Lobby Day and reserve a place on the bus, see [www.eqfed.org/equality\\_illinois](http://www.eqfed.org/equality_illinois).

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Cantorial Soloist: Judith Golden

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Executive VP: Robin Sampliner  
Treasurer: Rick Greenthal  
Webmaster: Steven Joachim

*Rabbi Edwards is available by appointment and can be reached via email:*

[rabbiedwards@orchadash.org](mailto:rabbiedwards@orchadash.org)  
or phone (773) 326-1490



***And Sometimes We Just Have to Celebrate Ourselves***

*The Gala was lovely. As Norman Sandfield said, "They just get better and better." Susan and I had a wonderful time, and I was so happy that my sister and sister-in-law, Rabbi Lisa Edwards and Tracy Moore, were able to join us all the way from Los Angeles. Kudos to Robin Sampliner for so much hard work, and my personal thanks to all who helped out, contributed, showed up and danced!*

*—Rabbi Larry Edwards*

**ONEG  
SPONSORSHIP**

Celebrate a birthday, graduation or anniversary, or honor/memorialize a loved one with an oneg sponsorship. Please contact the Or Chadash office at [office@orchadash.org](mailto:office@orchadash.org) to make arrangements and pick a date. Thank you!



Fresh from being guests of honor at the 2008 gala, Andrew Deppe and Steve Weiser stepped out in their mink and Jackie O sunglasses (respectively) to watch this year's Purim shpiel, "The Girl from P.U.R.I.M.", on March 20. Or Chasdasniks, led by foxy super-spy Esther (Kat Ramsey) once again defeated Haman's (Larry Posen) nefarious plan to destroy the Jews of Shushan. In the accompanying photograph, Mordecai (Rabbi Edwards) hits on Haman's wife, Zeresh (Reuben Lewy).



## What a difference five days makes!

### Consultation on Conscience

Two preeminent Jewish scholars will discuss the connection between Jewish thought and social justice when they appear as keynote speakers during a conference on social action and justice this April in Highland Park.

Addresses by Rabbi Lawrence Kushner, widely regarded as one of the most creative religious writers in America and Rabbi David Saperstein, Director and Counsel for the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism, will bookend the Chicago area Consultation on Conscience, "Moving from Ideas to Action." The event will be from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., April 27, at Lakeside Congregation for Reform Judaism, 1221 County Line Road in Highland Park, IL.

The day's activities will be open to congregants from any

of the 60 local URJ affiliated member congregations; it is coordinated by the Union for Reform Judaism-Great Lakes Council.

Several Or Chadash members are planning to attend this event. We hope for a large Or Chadash turnout.

Register on your own, but please contact Marvin Levin who will try to coordinate car-pooling to Highland Park.

### WALK FOR ISRAEL

Please save the date of May 4<sup>th</sup> and plan on joining Or Chadash at the annual Walk for Israel. Last year we had a beautiful day for the walk. And this year we will be celebrating Israel's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday! The walk will take place on the lakefront starting at McCormick Place commencing at 10:00am. If you plan on registering the day of the walk, get there VERY early. When Israel celebrated her 50<sup>th</sup>, there

were thousands of people walking and registration was a bit hectic. It would be best to register ahead of time online at [www.juf.org](http://www.juf.org). See you on May 4<sup>th</sup>!

### TZEDAKAH COLLECTION

We will be collecting tzedakah boxes during the month of April. The beneficiary will be announced at Friday night services.

### Thanks for the donation!

Thank you for the donations from the following individuals: Sandfield Challenge Grant donations from Lee Griesbach & David Miller and Norman Sandfield. Donations in memory of Herbert Salinger from Joseph Shure and Frank Nussbaum.

## Our Mission

To provide a warm and affirming community where all Jews can feel welcome. To accomplish this mission, Or Chadash will:

**Remember** that it was founded as an answer to the prejudice that gay and lesbian Jews experienced in other synagogues;

**Strive** to ensure that no Jew experiences prejudice within our community;

**Maintain** affiliations with the Union for Reform Judaism and the World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations;

**Build** strong ties within the greater Jewish community of the metropolitan Chicago area;

**Dedicate** itself to the basic obligations of Jewish life, including:

- **Respecting** the contributions of people of all generations
- **Sharing** the life-cycle events of its members
- **Celebrating** Shabbat and the holidays
- **Fostering** prayer with sincerity
- **Visiting** the sick
- **Comforting** the bereaved
- **Encouraging** the study of Torah

Congregation Or Chadash is a not-for-profit organization that is largely supported by contributions from its members and friends. Please remember us generously.

## Remembering Herb Salinger By Rabbi Laurence Edwards

On February 27 a group of us gathered to say farewell to Or Chadash's oldest member, Herb Salinger. There, in Rosehill Cemetery, we shared a few recollections, and paid tribute to his long life and his love of opera:

Herbert Salinger loved God, but right next to God was Giuseppe Verdi. After Verdi, Puccini, and then everyone else. ... He had long since lost count of how many productions he had seen, of Verdi operas alone, though it seemed as if he remembered – and had an opinion about – every singer. He was an opera queen all right. His favorite was *La Forza del Destino*. A funeral is certainly a moment to contemplate destiny, how, in the course of life, circumstance conspires with choice to shape a life.

Herbert was a veteran of World War II. That makes him automatically a hero in my book, but he would dismiss such talk. He had an aptitude for languages, and the Army sent him to Carleton College to become fluent in German. He went in France on D-Day + 7 (or 9, I can't remember exactly) as an interrogator. He was also pretty fluent in Italian. Usually the people he had to question were willing to talk. That probably makes him sound tougher than he actually was. I think they really were just willing to talk.

A South Side native (Congregation Isaiah Israel), Herbert loved the White Sox. That he lived to see them win a World Series was a blessing, and all the months since then he recognized as extra icing on the cake of life.

Frank Nussbaum remembers Herbert's dramatic reading – a la Gielgud – of the Book of Jonah on Yom Kippur afternoons. Carla Cenker remembers Herb as an enthusiastic and opinionated member of the Or Chadash Ritual Committee. Carol Goldbaum visited Herb in the hospital last Rosh Hashanah in order to sound the shofar for him. Herb called out – *Tekiah! Shevarim! Teruah!* Herb expressed his fundamental piety by reciting the Shema every day, and a verse from Psalms that is part of the Kedusha prayer: *Yimloch Adonai l'olam, Elohayich Tzion l'dor va-dor. Halleluyah!* Adonai reigns forever and ever, your God, O Zion, from generation to generation. Halleluyah! They were among his very last words.

We concluded with a verse from *La Forza*, his favorite: Do not curse: humble yourself before Him who is just and holy, who leads us to eternal joys by a path of tears ...