

Continued from front page

isting earthenware dishes and cooking utensils and purchase new ones. This act symbolizes a break from the past thereby starting afresh and moving forward into a new life. The Seder table is decorated with unique Ethiopian Jewish folk crafts brought all the way from Israel. Women in Afula located northern Israel, make hand-embroidered matzah covers, table runners, mezu-zahs and other decorations. While preparing homes for the festival, the houses are cleaned and searched in every corner and thatch for any remaining crumb of chametz. They prepare matzah from wheat or legume flour mixed with water and salt. The Seder meal is more like a springtime celebration for the Ethiopians. The head of the family, known as kes (rabbi), leads the gathering by reading out the events from the Torah, such as the slaughtering of the paschal lamb, the ten plagues and the exodus. Traditionally, the Haggadah has no significant role in the Ethiopian Seder meal. To add on, the drinking of the four cups of wine was also introduced after a group of Ethiopian Jews visited Europe in the 19th century and incorporated this into their ceremony. These festivities were confined to households only. In recent times, the Ethiopians have started celebrating in public by organizing Ethiopian Seder's open to everyone thereby creating a casual Seder atmosphere which blends with the Ethiopian Jewish lifestyle.

The Indian Jews celebrate the festival with similar rituals and customs. One can feel the wonderful amalgamation of Indian and Jewish traditions during Pesach. Jews have existed in India for more than 2,000 years. The oldest known Jewish colony in India is Bene Israel located on the Malabar Coast. History says that the Jews came to this place sometime in the 2nd century B.C. However, their ship was destroyed at Konkan on the Malabar Coast. Luckily, some seven men and women survived the destruction and hence, started the establishment of the community in India. To date, a memorial is

known to have been standing in the memory of the people who lost their lives in the sea. A second group of Jews in India is known as Cochin Jews. They are believed to have landed in India after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. Eventually in the later centuries, Iraqi and European Jews came to India. Until recently, the Bene Israel and Cochini Jews were not known to the Western World. It was only when they started making exodus from India to Israel and the United States that the world became familiar with them. Today, one can find Indian Jews settled in Los Angeles and New York. However, the customs and traditions followed by Indian Jews are similar to Hindus both temperamentally and linguistically. Even the delicacies prepared are a blend of Indo-Jewish flavors. Unlike the chopped liver, potato pancakes, brisket of beef and matzo ball soup found in a Jewish home, the food is typically different in India. For Passover, the Indian Jews prepare *molagachi* (mahogany chicken with black pepper), *ellegal* (spice-rubbed fish in cool herb salsa), *masalachi* (mutton braised with garlic and coriander) and *ap-pam* (coconut crepes with date sauce). The men put on the *mondoo* (the Malabari sarong) while the women dress up in flowing silk saris and sparkling jewelry. Soft songs of exodus are hummed to the tunes of Indian melodies while women engross themselves in preparing the Seder platter. Six ritual foods, namely, lamb bone shank and roasted eggs, romaine lettuce, celery, date jam with walnuts, lime juice, and matzah are neatly arranged on the plate. Since Indian Jews are fond of rice, the innumerable delicacies definitely include rice right from meat pilafs and casseroles to puddings, muffins and cakes.

To read about more Pesach traditions, see the bulletin board outside the Weston Multi-Purpose Room.



THE LESTER SENIOR HOUSING COMMUNITY

903 - 905 ROUTE 10 EAST

WHIPPANY NJ 07981

973-929-2700

WE'RE ON THE WEB WWW.JCHCORP.ORG

**THE LESTER SENIOR
HOUSING COMMUNITY
905 ROUTE 10 EAST
WHIPPANY NJ 07981
973-929-2700
WE'RE ON THE WEB
WWW.JCHCORP.ORG**

**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:**

BIRTHDAYS

**NOTES &
REMINDERS**

**FOR YOUR
INFORMATION**

**ADMINISTRATOR'S
CORNER**

**NEW RESIDENT
WELCOMES**

FYI

**CREATIVE WRITING
CORNER**



The Lester Chronicle

APRIL 2011

Pesach Around the World

By Jessica Kolton

Pesach is a common denominator to Judaism around the world. In Diaspora, Judaism exists in even the most remote of places. While the Pesach Seder is recognizable no matter the location, there are many traditions we as American Ashkenazi Jews are not familiar with. The Seder celebrated in Katmandu, Nepal, is considered to be the largest in the world. It has now become a favorite spot for Jews during Pesach. Around 2,000 Jewish people arrive early in the tiny mountaintop kingdom of Katmandu in Nepal to witness this Seder. This tradition began sometime in the mid-1990s by Jewish travelers and trekkers. Numerous Lubavitch rabbis are assigned at the Beth Chabad, Jewish religious center, in Thamel in Katmandu to prepare for the Seder that will be witnessed by thousands of Jewish backpackers on Pesach. Hundreds of pounds of kosher matzah, fish, meat, wine and Haggadahs are brought along for the Seder. Jews from all across the world, including Israel, America, Australia and Europe arrive early in India and trek up the Himalayas to reach Katmandu for the festive celebrations. Apart from the Orthodox Jews, there are other Jews who visit this place to experience a unique religious carnival. Many enthusiastic visitors volunteer for the Seder meal preparation. The Pesach night is arranged in a huge army tent

decked up in front of the Israeli embassy. Long tables are lined up decorated with Haggadahs, bottles of wine and Seder plates. Every Jewish person gets a chance to connect with his religion and know its true meaning. While the largest Seder is celebrated in Katmandu, the second largest can be experienced in Pokhara. This place is considered to be even more breathtaking than Katmandu since it is located in natural beauty. Pokhara, termed as Nepal's center of adventure, witnesses around 500 Jewish spectators from all over the world on Pesach. The Lubavitch World Headquarters delegate additional rabbis and food to organize the Seder at this place. Truly, Nepal is a wonder to watch on the holy festival of Pesach - illuminated with the lights of spirituality and religious meaning.

Pesach is doubly preserved by Ethiopian Jews as they consider their story similar to that of their Israeli ancestors. During Operation Moses in 1984-85, over 8,000 Jews fled to safe-haven in Israel from Sudan. Most of the Jews trekked from Ethiopia to Israel through Sudan. Hence, Passover marks the freedom of Ethiopian Jews as well. Ever since the American Association for Ethiopian Jews (AAEJ) began making efforts for rescuing and bringing Jews suffering in Africa to Israel in 1974, many Ethiopians have migrated to Israel. With the number starting from 200 about 35 years back, the number has increased to over 1,00,000 Ethiopian Jews becoming Israeli citizens. To commemorate Passover and their past, the Ethiopian Jews break all their old ex-

Continued on back page



Administrator's Corner

April 2011

Spring is officially here and as I write this article, preparations for Pesach are in full swing. The kitchen is undergoing a very meticulous cleaning and the Passover dishes and supplies are being readied for unpacking in the soon-to-be kosher-for-Pesach kitchen.

transportation to a variety of shopping venues, but would like to hear from you with regard to your preference. Additionally, Jessica is also interested in hearing feedback from you with regard to trips in general; if you have suggestions for trips or feedback on past trips, please share this information with her.

Enclosed with this newsletter is the Pesach schedule. As in previous years, if you wish to bring any guests to the *seder*, you must RSVP with the dining office no later than Friday April 8th. A regular dinner will be served at 5:00PM, however, those attending the *seder* should not attend the 5PM dinner. During the Pesach holiday the Administration office will be closed, therefore any urgent items requiring attention should be directed to the Concierge.

This month I would also like to extend a very warm welcome to Ms. Bola Awojobi, RN, who joined the Weston Assisted Living team as the Wellness Nurse Manager. Bola is responsible for overseeing and managing the Nursing Department of the Assisted Living. We wish Bola much success in her new position and are happy to have her join our team.

As you may already know, the Pathmark supermarket next door to us will be closing its doors in the coming weeks. Therefore, this month, Franco will be taking residents on the bus to different local supermarkets so that you can visit each and provide feedback to Franco and to Jessica as to which you prefer. We plan to continue to offer

As always, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions, comments, compliments and/or concerns. I can be reached at 973-929-2747. You should also feel free to stop by the Administration offices if you would like to meet with me.

See you around the halls,
Alex Gross
Administrator

By request of the residents of Lester Senior Housing, In light of our recent "Spring" weather:

Weather or Not by Bea Freiheiter

I'm really quite confused, my thoughts have gone astray
The weather is blowing in such a strange way.
One day its hot, the next it is cool
I'm beginning to dress like a silly old fool.
Should it be pants, a sweater or such
Maybe gloves and a parka, that's much too much.
What about a turtleneck or arms that are bare,
A snazzy suit that will go anywhere?
I love all the seasons Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall
They are like an artist's pallet that captures it all.
But, please put the seasons in their right place
So I can dress accordingly with style and grace!

Originally printed December 2009 Lester Chronicle



New Resident Welcomes

Dorothy Sabel Apt. 5-A

Sam Alewitz Apt. 307

To all of Lester's new residents we would like to wish you a warm welcome, and *Bruchim Ha Ba'im*

Good Reads

This month will be a special Good Reads two-part series

*Mao's Last Dancer, a Good Reads movie will be shown on Sunday, April 10th at 7 P.M. in the Theater

*Followed by a book review & movie discussion of Mao's Last Dancer on Monday, April 11th at 3 P.M. in the Heller Multi-Purpose Room

For more information contact
Shirley Saland

March's Purim Quiz Answers:

1. Written evidence of Purim shpiels in Europe are first found in the 14th century
2. Esther is one of 2 biblical books that does not refer directly to God
3. Seudat Purim is eaten on Purim during the day
4. The Shabbat before Purim is called Shabbat Zachor
5. Beans and peas are sometimes eaten on Purim because tradition teaches that Esther was a vegetarian in the king's court
6. Haman drew lots to determine that the 13th of Adar would be the day he would take revenge on the Jews
7. The name "Purim" is the plural of the word pur, which means lot

Galoshes

When the snow melts I hear laughter from children playing outdoors
 When the snow melts I think of lots of water
 When the snow melts I think of water
 When the snow melts spring is not far away
 When the snow melts I like to see the buds on the trees because they will open up and have beautiful leaves and flowers
 When the snow melts I see clean walkways and think of things that you can begin to do
 When the snow melts, I hope it doesn't turn to ice!
 When the snow melts I like to try to get out
 When the snow melts I think ancient, classical, modern and futuristic, it encompasses all
 When the snow melts the world changes
 When the snow melts things come up from underneath the soil, refresh and change your outlook

Written by the residents of Lester Senior Housing at the
Fun with Poetry class, 3/4/2011

Like what you just read? Join in on the fun: Lets Talk Poetry with Paul
Friday, April 1st at 2:15 P.M. in the Heller Multi-Purpose Room

GET IN THE KNOW

on Services for Seniors in MetroWest

Go to www.ujcnj.org/eldercare and download your copy of the MetroWest CARES Brochure



Call (973) 929-3193 to have a copy sent to your home.

