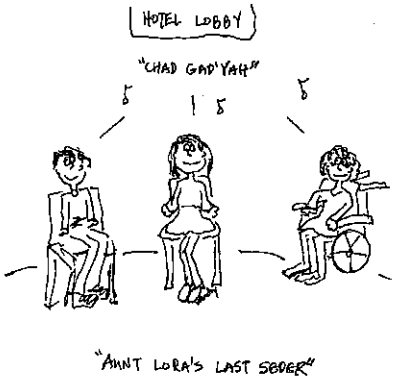
LAST SEDER

by Michael Doppelt

Dedicated to the Memory of Lora Sue Pariser

Last spring, my extended family spent the first two days of Passover and the following Shabbat confined to a rundown old-school Catskill resort. Like so many Jewish families, our levels of observance run a wide gamut, with some of us praying three times a day and others praying less than three times a year. Traditionally, our Seders have been fairly stressful ordeals, as we all seek very different experiences. I can say with full confidence that at our Seders, all four of the fabled sons attend and live up to their reputations. This is the reality of the modern Jewish experience, but, thankfully, it does not remove our affection for one another, nor does it undermine the fabric of our family.



A few years ago, at the age of 54, my Aunt Lora was diagnosed with cancer of unknown origin. Doctors worked extensively to unearth the source of her malady with no success. I am not surprised that my aunt was afflicted by an illness whose source could not be determined. Aunt Lora, with her booming voice, large physical presence and abundance of love, only did things "big." If you did something that bothered her, you can be assured that you would clearly understand the error of your ways. She had five children and was the best cook I have ever known. Her Shabbat and Yom Tov meals were true festivals, and I have never been to a home that rivals either the quality or quantity of her foods.

In 2001, when she was clearly deteriorating, she declared that she wanted to host one last Passover so that the younger members of our family would remember it. In 2002, as her health continued to erode and she became weaker, she rallied for another set of Seders, which she held with the help of her community in Oceanside. By 2003, this once powerful woman, whom the medical community expected to expire long before, could barely move, let alone host a thirty person Seder, which required weeks of baking and preparation.

My grandmother, who was in the process of losing a daughter, was not willing to lose the family Passover. Since our traditional hostess was no longer up to the task, she requested that we all head upstate to share our Seder together as a family at a "resort." Clearly, the hotel needed some work, and my sister and I joked that some of the guests hadn't left the lobby since the 1950s. Although few of us would have chosen to spend Passover there, we were happy to be with the family, especially since it was clear that these would be the last Seders we would share with A[illegible] Lora.

Despite noting that the Seders were to be held in the gigantic dining room, we foolishly expected each table to host their own Seder. We were thus caught off-guard when we discovered that we were sitting in the midst of a giant communal Seder punctuated by a choir. Not exactly what this family was looking for! Needless to say, conducting a dueling rival Seder in the middle of the dining room did not make us a lot of friends, nor, frankly, was it a good experience for ourselves.

On the second night, we got smart. Taking all of the Seder table elements, we set up a nomadic makeshift Seder table in the hotel lobby using couches, cocktail tables and bar stools. In this vast kitschy lobby, Aunt Lora's wheelchair no longer seemed out of place, as we all sat on different chairs. It was the best Seder of my life. Relatives who have never stayed beyond "the festive meal" were present for Hallel, grace after meal and *Chad Gad'yah*. For the first time in our family's Seder history--we all seemed to be rowing in the same direction. On the first night, the Seder we sought was unavailable; on night two we had a sense of urgency and purpose. It was typical Jewish history--once our right to have a Seder was taken away, we would not allow ourselves to miss it! It seems ironic that after so many lavish and stressful Seders in Oceanside, our best Seder performance would be on the floor of a beat-up hotel lobby.

On May 11, 2003, my aunt passed away. I had visited her in the hospital that afternoon and was saddened to see this transcendent person finally transcend. Like everyone who has been touched by someone [illegible] cial, I know that Aunt Lora will always be with us. Sharing her Passover with her, as we had shared so many Seders with her in the past, was deeply meaningful. Indeed, that Passover was all the more special as it was the first time it felt as if we were all really together. That will be Aunt Lora's enduring gift and legacy. We were all there, we were all involved, all because of her.

Michale Dopplt is a resident of the Upper West Side and a member of incoln Square Synagogue. An an investment banker, Michael is also the Co-Chair of the Young Leadership Division of UJA-Federation of New York.

CONGRATULATIONS AND MAZAL TOV

ENGAGEMENTS

Sigalit Dahari and Michael Steiner
Dr. Evelyn Slade and Howard Sickles

WEDDINGS

Ruth Bloom and Joseph Schwarz
Dina Klien and Andrew Kramer
Lorena Orellana and Dr. Ezra S. (Samuel) Moche
Eva Weiner & Larry Katz

BIRTHS

Janice Horowitz and Richard Bookstaber, on the birth of a girl, Anna Jules
Rivka (Lisa Blaustein) and Shia Cohen, on the birth of a girl, Hadas
Mazal Tov to grandfather, Dr. Stuart Blaustein and aunt, Karen Burnham
Lisa and Scott (Simcha) Dunn, on the birth of a girl, Zivi
Yvete and Eric Edidin, on the birth of a boy, Boaz Harris
Regina and Brook Haberman, on the birth of a boy, Z'ev Yosef
Mazal Tov to grandparents Ricki and Rabbi Dr. Jacob Haberman
Elena and Joseph Ohayon, on the birth of a girl, Laetitia Simcha (6/21/03)
Maura and Adam Ruskin, on the birth of a boy, Matan Mordechai
Laryssa and Josh Shainberg, on the birth of a boy, Yehuda Naftali
Aline and Dr. David Smolanoff, on the birth of a girl, Chana Bracha
Daniela Weiss and Dr. Avi Yohananoff, on the birth of a girl, Gabriela Hannah

CONDOLENCES

Dr. Robert Alterbaum, on the loss of his mother, Beatrice Alterbaum
Susan Baron, on the loss of her mother, Adele Burkes
Irv Elias, on the loss of his mother, Evelyn Elias
Lawrence Homer, on the loss of his brother, Donald Homer
Scott Salinger, on the loss of his father, Adrian Salinger
To the family of Evelyn Melnick
To the family of Nathalie Rosen

REFUAH SH'LEIMAH (SPEEDY RECOVERY)

Michael Rose (Hizkiyahu Michael ben Chaya Pesha)

CONGRATULATIONS

Anat (Buiumsohn) and Dr. Gabe Levi, honored at the Annual Dinner of the Young Israel of Hewlett.
Dr. Leonard Davidson, elected President of the Manhattan Psychological Association and Vice President and member of the Executive Board of Disrict Council 37, representing 125,000 NYC civil servants.
Ben Epstein (son of Judy Weil and Lloyd Epstein) upon winning first place in the 215 lb Wrestling Championship, 2003 Wittenberg Invitational Tournament.

TZEITCHEM L'SHALOM/FAREWELL (To live and/or study in Israel)

Michael Steiner

THANK YOU

Judge Enid Langbert, for once again writing and directing our wonderful Purim Shpiel. Spec thanks to the organizers and to all the wonderful shpielers (actors) for their superb performances.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sat April 3, 2004 - 12th of Nisan *Tzav*
SHABBAT HAGADOL
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Mincha ..... 5:10 PM
Shabbat Hagadol Drasha ..... 5:35 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 7:04 PM
REMEMBER to set your clocks forward
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 7:10 PM DST

Mon April 5, 2004 - 14th of Nisan
TA'ANIT BECHOROT EREV PESACH
Morning Services ..... 6:30 & 7:30 AM
Latest time to eat Chametz ..... 10:13 AM
Latest time to burn Chametz ..... 11:26 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 7:07 PM
Mincha ..... 7:10 PM
Begin seder after ..... 7:56 PM

Tue April 6, 2004 - 15th of Nisan PESACH
Morning Services ..... 8:00 and 9:00 AM
Daf Yomi ..... 6:15 PM
Mincha ..... 7:00 PM
Yom Tov Candles after ..... 8:07 PM
Maariv ..... 8:07 PM
Begin Seder after ..... 8:07 PM

Wed April 7, 2004 - 16th of Nisan PESACH
Morning Services ..... 8:00 and 9:00 AM
Daf Yomi ..... 6:15 PM
Mincha ..... 7:00 PM
Maariv ..... 8:07 PM
Yom Tov Ends ..... 8:07 PM

Thu April 8, 2004 - 17th of Nisan
PESACH (CHOL HAMOED)
Morning Services ..... 7:00, 7:30 & 8:30 AM

Fri April 9, 2004 - 18th of Nisan
PESACH (CHOL HAMOED)
Morning Services ..... 7:00, 7:30 & 8:30 AM
Earliest Candle Lighting ..... 6:09 PM
Candle Lighting ..... 7:11 PM
Mincha ..... 6:45 & 7:15 PM

Sat April 10, 2004 - 19th of Nisan
PESACH (CHOL HAMOED)
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 8:00 & 9:00 AM
Daf Yomi ..... 6:20 PM
Mincha ..... 7:05 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 8:11 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 7:20 PM

Sun April 11, 2004 - 20th of Nisan
PESACH (CHOL HAMOED)
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 8:30 AM
Earliest Candle Lighting ..... 6:06 PM
Candle Lighting ..... 7:13 PM
Mincha ..... 6:45 & 7:20 PM

Mon April 12, 2004 - 21st of Nisan PESACH
Daf Yomi ..... 7:15 AM
Morning Services ..... 8:00 & 9:00 AM
Talmud Class ..... 6:25 PM
Mincha ..... 7:10 PM
Yom Tov Candles after ..... 8:13 PM
Maariv ..... 8:13 PM

Tue April 13, 2004 - 22nd of Nisan PESACH
Daf Yomi ..... 7:15 AM
Morning Services ..... 8:00 & 9:00 AM
Talmud Class ..... 6:25 PM
Mincha ..... 7:10 PM
Maariv ..... 8:13 PM
Yom Tov Ends ..... 8:13 PM

Fri April 16, 2004 - 25th of Nisan
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Earliest Candle Lighting ..... 6:11 PM
Candle Lighting ..... 7:18 PM
Mincha ..... 6:45 & 7:25 PM

Sat April 17, 2004 - 26th of Nisan *Shmini*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 6:15 PM
Mincha ..... 7:15 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 8:18 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 7:25 PM

Sun April 18, 2004 - 27th of Nisan
YOM HASHOAH
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 8:30 AM

Wed April 21, 2004 - 30th of Nisan
ROSH CHODESH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM

Thu April 22, 2004 - 1st of Iyar ROSH CHODESH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM

Fri April 23, 2004 - 2nd of Iyar
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Earliest Candle Lighting ..... 6:19 PM
Candle Lighting ..... 7:26 PM
Mincha ..... 6:45 & 7:30 PM

Sat April 24, 2004 - 3rd of Iyar *Tazria-Metzora*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 6:20 PM
Mincha ..... 7:20 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 8:26 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 7:35 PM

Sun April 25, 2004 - 4th of Iyar YOM HAZIKARON
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 8:30 AM

Mon April 26, 2004 - 5th of Iyar
YOM HAATZMA'UT
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:50 AM

Fri April 30, 2004 - 9th of Iyar
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Earliest Candle Lighting ..... 6:21 PM
Candle Lighting ..... 7:33 PM
Mincha ..... 6:45 & 7:40 PM

Sat May 1, 2004 - 10th of Iyar
Achrei Mot-Kedoshim
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 6:30 PM
Mincha ..... 7:30 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 8:33 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 7:40 PM

Fri May 7, 2004 - 16th of Iyar
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Earliest Candle Lighting ..... 6:28 PM
Candle Lighting ..... 7:40 PM
Mincha ..... 6:45 & 7:45 PM

Sat May 8, 2004 - 17th of Iyar *Emor*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 6:35 PM
Mincha ..... 7:35 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 8:40 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 7:45 PM

Sun May 9, 2004 - 18th of Iyar LAG B'OMER
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 8:30 AM

Fri May 14, 2004 - 23rd of Iyar
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Earliest Candle Lighting ..... 6:35 PM
Candle Lighting ..... 7:47 PM
Mincha ..... 6:45 & 7:50 PM

Sat May 15, 2004 - 24th of Iyar *Behar-Bechukotai*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:40, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 6:40 PM
Mincha ..... 7:40 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 8:47 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 7:55 PM

Wed May 19, 2004 - 28th of Iyar
YOM YERUSHALAYIM
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:50 AM

Fri May 21, 2004 - 1st of Sivan ROSH CHODESH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM
Earliest Candle Lighting ..... 6:42 PM
Candle Lighting ..... 7:54 PM
Mincha ..... 6:45 & 8:00 PM

Sat May 22, 2004 - 2nd of Sivan *Bamidbar*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 6:50 PM
Mincha ..... 7:50 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 8:54 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 8:00 PM

Tue May 25, 2004 - 5th of Sivan EREV SHAVUOT
Morning Services ..... 7:05 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 7:57 PM
Mincha ..... 8:00 PM
Maariv ..... 8:46 PM

SAVE THE DATE

Beginners Shabbat Luncheons
Saturdays 12:30 PM- $15
May 1, June 5

Beginners Schmooze- Mon, 8:15 pm - Free
June 7

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Tues, May 25, 11:30 PM - 7:00 AM

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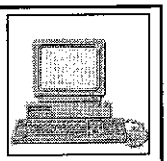
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