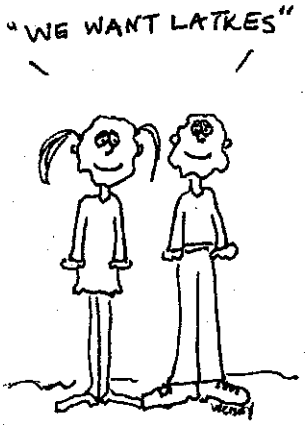
LAMENT OF THE LATKE MAKER

by Rissi Zweig

What do you mean, No Latkes????

Just the other day, my husband and our 3 children began discussing possible ideas for Chanukah. They worked on me as a team until it was finally agreed that it was our turn to invite everyone to our home. As the discussion turned into plans, the kids (ages 11, 13 and 15) took it upon themselves to instruct me about the menu, the time, the length -- they were very thorough. In fact, they thought they had all the plans just right, until I announced that I wouldn't be making latkes (fried potato pancakes) this year. Oh, I might buy them, but, if I had my way, we would try serving something crusty and perfect for dipping into the necessary oil. I can make a tasty olive oil dip, with favorite spices, served just so, etc.



The harangue that followed nearly made me cower! Nevertheless, I reminded them of the trans-fats. Why would I want to feed our guests (a large crew) such unhealthy food? Desperately, I recalled for them the lingering smell of oil in the house and that Chanukah is in the middle of the winter. They surely did not want me to be frozen by the open windows necessary to clear the smoke and smell from the kitchen. Besides, I didn't want to be in the kitchen while everyone else was relaxing in the next room.

"I really won't have time," I heard myself whine. "If we must have latkes, I'll get some of those frozen ones."

Oh NO! they pounced, ready with an arsenal of arguments: They aren't real latkes. How can anyone eat them? That's what the school serves. If we don't eat them there, why would we want them here?

The battle ended in a draw, but the war was not over. Even after our battle of "homemade" versus "store-bought," latkes danced in my mind..for days and nights. I recalled the first Chanukah bash we had together, and the annual tradition it had become. I fried for hours. Each year my repertoire of flavors grew. I've served plain potato and sweet potato. The white potatoes had their assorted variations: black pepper, red pepper, cabbage, rosemary, dill, carrot, zucchini, and jalapeno pepper. The sweet potatoes were served plain or with carrots, raisins, apples... If I haven't tried it yet, it's only because I haven't thought of it. My latkes are not only un-plain, they are uniquely shaped. I figured early on in my latke-experimenting days that uniqueness could be multi-dimensional. My latkes look a lot like birds nests, and they're pretty crunchy. Undoubtedly, making them only one week each year has added to the joy of seeing and eating them. In fact, I would even go as far as to say one's mouth might water thinking of them.

But not this year, not with all the time and energy involved in latkes from shopping to preparing to cleaning up. I even smiled as I thanked my husband, Steven, for saving me the recipes from the *Times* last Sunday. Why argue about it again? After all, I'm pretty firm in my resolve. I have deliberately *not* started menu planning yet. As you may have gathered, I'm having a hard time with this. After all, making a new plan this year would be in keeping with my entertaining style. Not many have ever seen the same meal twice in my house. Maybe I'm menued out for Chanukah!

Finally it came to me. This whole argument has to do with tradition. Nearly everything we do is traditional and I've often mused over why must we always eat the same foods? The answer: **Because**, or at least that's part of the answer. *Because* we serve what people like to eat. *Because* we remember the last cruse of olive oil (not nearly as much as I would need). *Because* its not so bad to serve unhealthy food once in a while. *Because* my family asked me to. *Because* I get gratification watching people enjoy my latkes. *Because* we like them and they (everyone's) really are delicious. *Because* we don't know what else to serve on Chanukah. *Because* it wouldn't be a proper Chanukah without them!

Truthfully, I guess, I really don't mind making them. If they want latkes, I shall feed them latkes (homemade, of course). Why did I even think I wouldn't make latkes? I always do, even when I say I won't. Perhaps it's laziness, or uncertainty and trepidation. What if they aren't as good as everyone remembers? What if I don't get around to it? What if there isn't enough time? And how awful is it, *really*, to freeze while I'm frying away in the kitchen? The latkes must be fresh! (Timing is everything.) What if I can't make enough? Its happened (no matter how many dozens of eggs and tens of pounds of potatoes). Surely, there have never been any leftovers. Who would want them anyway?

So now I must ask: has anybody got a really interesting latke recipe? Something more to accompany the applesauce, the chutney, the sour cream, the soups and the veggies as well? After all, latkes are a must while we are singing all the favorite songs about the Maccabees. All those same songs and stories, year after year, while the glow of the candles charm our home into a timeless haven of Jewishness.

Happy Chanukah!

Rissi Zweig was involved in the LSS Beginner's Service in the mid-80's. Today, she and her husband Steven are settled in Teaneck with their three children.

CONGRATULATIONS AND MAZAL TOV

ENGAGEMENTS

Karen Blaustein and Baruch Burnham
Mazal Tov to father
Dr. Stuart Blaustein
and sister Rivka Cohen
Jennifer Hammerstein
and Meir Solomon
Janice Lieberman and Steven Gerber

BIRTHS

Libby and Steve Eskin, on the birth of a girl, Jennifer Connie
Hannah (Ney) and Daniel Gitel, on the birth of a boy, Benjamin Ian
Mazal Tov to grandparents Liz and Alexander Ney
Jennifer and Joseph Hoenig, on the birth of a boy, Jonah Isaac (Yitzchak Yonah)
Malka and Michoel Levinson, on the birth of a girl, Rivkah
Yam and David Noll, on the birth of a girl, Chaya Mushka
Hildy and Louis Parks, on the birth of a boy, Samuel Joseph
Laurie and Richard Wolff, on the birth of a boy, Moshe Meyer

BAR/BAT MITZVAH

Ariel (Ari) Aaron Lipkis
Mazal Tov to parents Ellen and Mordechai Lipkis

CONDOLENCES

Dr. Elizabeth Konecky Kronfeld, on the loss of her father, Lewis Konecky
Alex Kotlyar, on the loss of his father, Izrail Kotlyar
Aharon Mocciola, on the loss of his father, Francisco Mocciola
Barbara Reader, on the loss of her mother, Claire Reader

REFUAH SH'LEIMAH (SPEEDY RECOVERY)

Ruth Gutradt
Caryn Heyman

CONGRATULATIONS

Dr. Steven Eskin, for being featured in the New York Post as the "Roc Doc" - songs for healthy living.
Debbie and Mark Rosalimsky who were honored by the Jewish Learning Experience of Bergen County.
Dr. Alexander J. Schloss, upon receiving the Community Service Award from the Kinneret Day School of the Bronx, NY.

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

Sam Sokol

THANK YOU

Richard Kestenbaum, for leading the Beginners Service during the summer when Dr. Leonard Davidman was away.
Mim Senft, for donating the framed artwork of the "Power of the Tongue," a portrait of Loshon Harah.

SAVE THE DATE

Beginners Shabbaton - $30
Fri-Sat, Dec 8-9, 2001
Beginners Shabbat Luncheons
Saturdays 12:30 pm- $15
Jan 5, Feb 2, Mar 2
Beginners Schmooze- Mondays 8:15 pm - Free
March 4
Beginners Chanukah Party -
$20 in advance, $25 at the door
Mon, Dec 10, 7PM
Purim Party
Mon, Feb 25, 2002
Shabbat Across America
Fri, Mar 8, 2002

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sun December 9, 2001 - 24th of Kislev
EREV CHANUKAH
Chanukah Candles after ..... 4:59 PM

Mon December 10, 2001 - 25th of Kislev CHANUKAH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM
Chanukah Candles after ..... 4:59 PM

Tue December 11, 2001 - 26th of Kislev CHANUKAH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM
Chanukah Candles after ..... 4:59 PM

Wed December 12, 2001 - 27th of Kislev CHANUKAH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM
Chanukah Candles after ..... 5:00 PM

Thu December 13, 2001 - 28th of Kislev CHANUKAH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM
Chanukah Candles after ..... 5:00 PM

Fri December 14, 2001 - 29th of Kislev CHANUKAH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM
Chanukah Candles before ..... 4:11 PM
Candle Lighting ..... 4:11 PM
Mincha ..... 4:15 PM

Sat December 15, 2001 - 30th of Kislev *Miketz*
ROSH CHODESH CHANUKAH
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:40, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 3:20 PM
Mincha ..... 4:05 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 5:11 PM
Chanukah Candles after ..... 5:11 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 4:15 PM

Sun December 16, 2001 - 1st of Tevet ROSH CHODESH CHANUKAH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 8:30 AM
Chanukah Candles after ..... 5:00 PM

Mon December 17, 2001 - 2nd of Tevet CHANUKAH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM

Fri December 21, 2001 - 6th of Tevet
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 4:13 PM
Mincha ..... 4:20 PM

Sat December 22, 2001 - 7th of Tevet *Vayigash*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 3:25 PM
Mincha ..... 4:10 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 5:13 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 4:20 PM

Tue December 25, 2001 - 10th of Tevet
ASARA B'TEVET LEGAL HOLIDAY
Fast Begins ..... 6:06 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 8:30 AM
Mincha ..... 4:05 PM
Fast Ends ..... 5:05 PM

Fri December 28, 2001 - 13th of Tevet
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 4:18 PM
Mincha ..... 4:25 PM

Sat December 29, 2001 - 14th of Tevet *Vayechi*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 3:30 PM
Mincha ..... 4:15 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 5:18 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 4:25 PM

Tue January 1, 2002 - 17th of Tevet NEW YEARS DAY
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 8:30 AM

Fri January 4, 2002 - 20th of Tevet
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 4:24 PM
Mincha ..... 4:30 PM

Sat January 5, 2002 - 21st of Tevet *Shemot*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 3:35 PM
Mincha ..... 4:20 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 5:24 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 4:30 PM

Fri January 11, 2002 - 27th of Tevet
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 4:31 PM
Mincha ..... 4:35 PM

Sat January 12, 2002 - 28th of Tevet *Vaera*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 3:40 PM
Mincha ..... 4:25 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 5:31 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 4:40 PM

Mon January 14, 2002 - 1st of Sh'vat ROSH CHODESH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM

Fri January 18, 2002 - 5th of Sh'vat
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 4:38 PM
Mincha ..... 4:45 PM

Sat January 19, 2002 - 6th of Sh'vat *Bo*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 3:50 PM
Mincha ..... 4:35 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 5:38 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 4:45 PM

Mon January 21, 2002 - 8th of Sh'vat
MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY
Morning Services ..... 7:05 & 8:30 AM

Fri January 25, 2002 - 12th of Sh'vat
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 4:47 PM
Mincha ..... 4:50 PM

Sat January 26, 2002 - 13th of Sh'vat *Beshalach*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 3:55 PM
Mincha ..... 4:40 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 5:47 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 4:55 PM

Mon January 28, 2002 - 15th of Sh'vat TU B'SHVAT
Morning Services ..... 7:05 & 7:50 AM

Fri Febuary 1, 2002 - 19th of Sh'vat
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 4:55 PM
Mincha ..... 5:00 PM

Sat Febuary 2, 2002 - 20th of Sh'vat *Yitro*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 4:05 PM
Mincha ..... 4:50 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 5:55 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 5:05 PM

Fri Febuary 8, 2002 - 26th of Sh'vat
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 5:04 PM
Mincha ..... 5:10 PM

Sat Febuary 9, 2002 - 27th of Sh'vat *Mishpatim*
SHEKALIM
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 4:15 PM
Mincha ..... 5:00 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 6:04 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 5:10 PM

Tue Febuary 12, 2002 - 30th of Sh'vat ROSH CHODESH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM

Wed Febuary 13, 2002 - 1st of Adar ROSH CHODESH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM

Fri Febuary 15, 2002 - 3rd of Adar
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 5:13 PM
Mincha ..... 5:20 PM

Sat Febuary 16, 2002 - 4th of Adar *Terumah*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 4:25 PM
Mincha ..... 5:10 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 6:13 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 5:20 PM

Mon Febuary 18, 2002 - 6th of Adar PRESIDENTS DAY
Morning Services ..... 7:05 & 8:30 AM

Fri Febuary 22, 2002 - 10th of Adar
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 5:21 PM
Mincha ..... 5:25 PM

Sat Febuary 23, 2002 - 11th of Adar *Tetzaveh* ZACHOR
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 A
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 A
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 4:30 P
Mincha ..... 5:15 PM
Additional reading of Parshas Zachor after Mincha
Shabbat Ends ..... 6:21 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 5:30 PM

Mon Febuary 25, 2002 - 13th of Adar TA'ANIT ESTHER
Fast Begins ..... 5:25 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:30 AM
Mincha ..... 5:15 PM
Maariv & Megila reading ..... 6:13 PM
Fast Ends ..... 6:13 PM
Late Megila Reading ..... 9:30 PM

Tue Febuary 26, 2002 - 14th of Adar PURIM
Morning Services ..... 6:15 & 7:30 AM
Extra Megila Reading ..... 9:00 AM & 1:00 PM
Early Mincha ..... 4:45 PM
Mincha ..... 5:30 PM

Wed Febuary 27, 2002 - 15th of Adar SHUSHAN PURIM
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM

Fri March 1, 2002 - 17th of Adar
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 5:29 PM
Mincha ..... 5:35 PM

Sat March 2, 2002 - 18th of Adar *Ki Tisa* PARAH
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 4:40 PM
Mincha ..... 5:25 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 6:29 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 5:35 PM

Fri March 8, 2002 - 24th of Adar
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 5:37 PM
Mincha ..... 5:40 PM

Sat March 9, 2002 - 25th of Adar *Vayakhel-Pekudei*
HACHODESH
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 A
Morning Services ..... 7:40, 9:00 & 9:45 A
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 4:45 PM
Mincha ..... 5:30 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 6:37 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 5:45 PM

Thu March 14, 2002 - 1st of Nisan ROSH CHODESH
Morning Services ..... 7:00 & 7:40 AM

Fri March 15, 2002 - 2nd of Nisan
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 5:44 PM
Mincha ..... 5:50 PM

Sat March 16, 2002 - 3rd of Nisan *Vayikra*
Daf Yomi ..... 7:00 AM
Bible Class ..... 8:30 AM
Morning Services ..... 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Talmud & Bible Class ..... 4:55 PM
Mincha ..... 5:40 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 6:44 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 5:50 PM

Fri March 22, 2002 - 9th of Nisan
Morning Services ..... 7:10 & 7:50 AM
Candle Lighting ..... 5:52 PM
Mincha ..... 5:55 PM

Sat March 23, 2002 - 10th 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 ..... 4:55 PM
Shabbat Hagadol Drasha ..... 5:20 PM
Shabbat Ends ..... 6:52 PM
Daily Mincha & Maariv ..... 6:00 PM

Wed March 27, 2002 - 14th of Nisan
TA'ANIT BECHOROT EREV PESACH
Morning Services ..... 6:30 & 7:30 AM
Latest time to eat Chametz ..... 9:20 AM
Latest time to burn Chametz ..... 10:31 AM
REMEMBER TO MAKE AN ERUV TAVSHILIN
Candle Lighting ..... 5:57 PM
Mincha ..... 6:00 PM
Begin Seder after ..... 6:46 PM