



# Kehila Kedosha Janina

Synagogue and Museum

280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002

**August 2011 e-mail newsletter**

**Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,**

**We wish our friends continued health. Both in Greece and, here, in the United States, the heat and the economy have exhausted our bodies and spirits. Let us take comfort in the friends and institutions that have sustained us. For 84 years, Kehila Kedosha Janina has replenished the souls and spirits of a small congregation of Greek Jews in New York. For that we are continuously grateful.**



**Traditional Romaniote decoration donated by Morris Yomtov  
Kehila Kedosha Janina Collection**

This newsletter, our 43<sup>rd</sup> will, as always, cover news regarding Kehila Kedosha Janina and news concerning Greek Jewry. We hope you find our newsletter interesting. Your feedback is of utmost importance to us. If you missed previous issues, they can be accessed on our website ([www.kkjsm.org](http://www.kkjsm.org)).

We now reach over 5000 households worldwide, with our community of 'friends' continually growing with each newsletter. If you know others who wish to be part of this ever-growing network, please have them contact us at [kehila\\_kedosha\\_janina@netzero.net](mailto:kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net).

As always, you are all invited to attend our Saturday morning Shabbat services. Just give our Shamas, Sol Kofinas, a heads up ([papusoup@mindspring.com](mailto:papusoup@mindspring.com)) so we are sure that our Kiddush (traditional Greek Jewish Kosher foods) is sufficient. If you wish to sponsor a Kiddush for a special occasion or an Adara, contact Sol.

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### Passings

On June 19, 2011, Simon Frances of Miami FL passed away suddenly at the age of 77. Simon was from Larissa. He was married to Regina (Velelli) for nearly 46 years. Our condolences to his family.

### Celebrations

#### Births

On May 16, 2011, Gilad Ya'ir Weisberg was born. He is the 16th great-grandchild of Emily Velelli, formerly of Patras, now living in Baltimore.

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### Special Birthdays

Alex Samuels celebrated his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday.



Alex Samuels with his daughter Risa

On June 29th, 2011 Yvette Levy, widow of Morris Levy who was the son of Rabbi Jesula Levy, one of the first leaders of the Kehila congregation, celebrated her 90th birthday. She was surrounded by family and friends at a luncheon at the Gideon Putnam resort in Saratoga, NY. She even led the group in a Greek dance! How wonderful is that!

On June 27, 2011 Emily Velleli celebrated her 98th birthday. Emily is from Patras, and has been in Baltimore since 1956.

### Weddings

We extend our warm congratulations to a special lady on her recent wedding. On June 27<sup>th</sup> Sarah Aroeste married Jeffrey Blaugrund. We wish them joy.



Sarah and Jeffrey

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### Upcoming Museum Events

Things tend to slow down in New York during the summer. The Museum will be officially closed on Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup> but there will be a special concert by "Kol Dodi" a group led by singer Yaron Hanukah from Salonika, who combines Hebrew and Greek music and includes a bouzouki in his arrangements. Avraam Pengas will be performing with the group. The concert will start at 8:00 and the Museum will be open from 7-7:45 for viewing. Tickets will be priced at \$18 each and include pre-concert Museum tour. Tickets will be sold at the door but please let us know if you are planning to come. Space is limited.

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### News of Interest

#### **BERKLEY STANDS WITH GREECE ON DECISION TO BLOCK GAZA FLOTILLA EFFORT**

(July 5, 2011 – Las Vegas) Congresswoman Shelley Berkley today praised the efforts of the Greek government to promote peace by preventing the advancement of an illegal "flotilla" seeking to breach Israel's legal Gaza blockade. Berkley's statement appears below:

"I want to thank the government of Greece for its courage in the face of extraordinary pressure in helping to stop an act of reckless and potentially dangerous international provocation. The world community must recognize that these 'flotillas' are nothing more than an attempt to embarrass Israel while helping Hamas, a terrorist organization. They harm the cause of peace in the Middle East and make negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority even more difficult. The Greek government has shown great strength and courage and has unequivocally stated that they will not be a party to such efforts. As the granddaughter of Greek immigrants to the United States, I am particularly proud of my Greek-American heritage and I applaud this courageous effort in support of peace. I look forward to continuing our close relationship as we work together with Greece to advance peace in the region and stop extremists out to push their own hateful agendas."

**Dear Marcia,**

**Many thanks for the Janina newsletter which is always filled with interesting, and often touching, news.**

**I would like to invite you to check newspaper Makedonia in Thessaloniki, which in Sunday's newspaper (July 3, 2011) carried a story on the organization I am now directing, CHI - Circle for Hellas and Israel / International Friends for Greece-Israel Alliance. To go to the organization website, [www.chicircl.org](http://www.chicircl.org) . The newspaper link, <http://www.makthes.gr/news/politics/76504/>**

**We should bring this relationship to the level where it will continue long term, regardless of who is in power in Greece or Israel, and regardless of outside conditions.**

**Best regards,  
Charles**

**Charles Mouratides**

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**News from Jewish Greece**

**On July 11<sup>th</sup> there was a special event at *Restion* (the Jewish Senior Home outside of Athens). The event was a musical evening in honor of Greek Jews who survived the concentration camps. The event was organized by Marios Soussis, President of the Organization of Decendants of Holocaust Victims, along with other members of the Association ( Anna Kabeli, Pavlos Zadik and Ester Franko). Highlighted was the music of David Nachmias.**



**Marios Soussis**

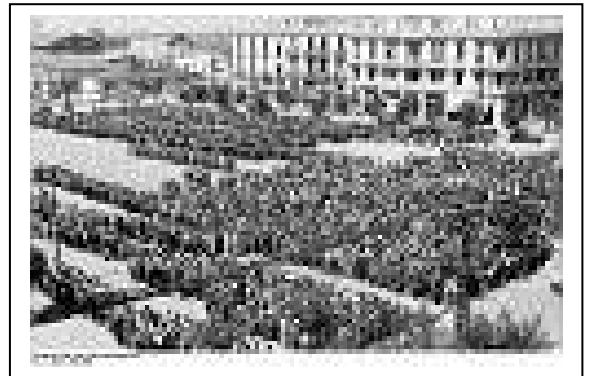
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**There was a recent release of photographs from the German Federal Archive that further document the round-up of Jewish men in Salonika on July 11, 1942.**

**Dr. Paul Isaac Hagouel wrote about that day: "...This period of relative «calm» and «normalcy» is shattered by an announcement of the German Authorities, published in the newspaper «Apogevmatini» {Afternoon} edited by a collaborator, calling all adult male Jews in the age group 18 to 45 years old to appear (assemble) for registration at Plateia Eleftherias {Liberty Square} on Saturday, July 11, 1942 [The goal was to register the pool of available men for forced-labor work]. .... Nine thousand [9000] adults gather in the square. The Germans did not allow them to cover their heads or drink water in the sweltering heat, made them stand for hours under the blazing and scorching sun, and some Germans even forced many to perform calisthenics! This was the first major omen of worse things to come..." . [Dr. Paul Isaac Hagouel, "History of the Jews of Thessaloniki and the Holocaust", West Chester, Pennsylvania, November 14th, 2006, [http://www.wcupa.edu/\\_academics/holocaust/Salonika.pdf](http://www.wcupa.edu/_academics/holocaust/Salonika.pdf) ]**

**After the completion of registration four thousand [4000] of them were lead to forced labor, ordered to construct a road for the Germans, linking Thessaloniki to Kateríni and Larissa, a region rife with malaria.**

**These important photographs, documenting the concentration of the male Jews of Thessaloniki on July 11, 1942 by the Nazis were made public, on Wikimedia Commons, by the Deutsches**



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**Invitation to join the Jewish Community of Ioannina for Yom Kippur in October:**

**Αγαπητοί μας φίλοι,**

Τα τελευταία χρόνια, ο εορτασμός του Γιόμ-Κιπούρ στα Γιάννενα, που αποτελεί αναμφισβήτητα το κορυφαίο ετήσιο γεγονός για την ιστορική μας Κοινότητα, έχει εξελιχθεί σε μια άκρως συγκινητική συνάντηση ομοθρήσκων από την Αθήνα, τη Θεσσαλονίκη και τις άλλες Κοινότητες της Ελλάδας αλλά και από το Ισραήλ, την Αμερική και άλλες χώρες του εξωτερικού, οι οποίοι βιώνουν μία μοναδική εμπειρία και παράλληλα ενισχύουν με τη δυναμική τους παρουσία τις προσπάθειές μας, στέλνοντας ένα ηχηρό μήνυμα στα συνεχιζόμενα κρούσματα αντισημιτισμού στη χώρα μας και σε όσους επιβουλεύονται το νεκροταφείο μας, ένα από τα παλαιότερα στην Ευρώπη.

Θέλουμε να σας ευχαριστήσουμε για την αμέριστη συμπαράστασή σας και να σας προσκαλέσουμε και φέτος στα Γιάννενα, το διήμερο Παρασκευή και Σάββατο 7-8 Οκτωβρίου για να γιορτάσουμε μαζί την μεγαλύτερη γιορτή του Ιουδαϊσμού με τη λαμπρότητα που της

αρμόζει. Ο ερχομός σας στα Γιάννενα θα μας δώσει χαρά και δύναμη για να συνεχίσουμε τον δύσκολο αγώνα επιβίωσης της Κοινότητάς μας.

Για τις πολύωρες λειτουργίες του Γιόμ-Κιπούρ, καλέσαμε και φέτος τον αγαπητό μας Ραμπί, κ. Χαϊμ Ισχακή, ο οποίος με το δικό του μοναδικό τρόπο και τα πολύ χρήσιμα -μεταφρασμένα στα Ελληνικά- Προσευχολόγια, έχει συμβάλλει αποφασιστικά στην τόνωση της θρησκευτικής μας συνείδησης και την ενεργή συμμετοχή μας μέσα στη Συναγωγή.

Το πρωί της Παρασκευής 7 Οκτωβρίου, παραμονή της μεγάλης γιορτής, ο κ. Ισχακής θα τελέσει μνημόσυνα στο νεκροταφείο ενώ το βράδυ του Σαββάτου 8 Οκτωβρίου, μετά το τέλος της νηστείας και το σάλπισμα του Σσοφάρ, η Κοινότητά μας θα παραθέσει στα μέλη της και σε όλους τους επισκέπτες εορταστικό δείπνο, όπου θα τιμηθούν για τη μεγάλη προσφορά τους στον Ελληνικό Εβραϊσμό ο τέως Πρόεδρος του Κ.Ι.Σ., κ. Μωυσής Κωνσταντίνης και ο Πρόεδρος του Εβραϊκού Μουσείου Ελλάδος, κ. Μάκης Μάτσας.

Φίλες και φίλοι, κατανοούμε τις οικογενειακές και επαγγελματικές σας υποχρεώσεις, ωστόσο η μέρα του Γιόμ-Κιπούρ, μέρα προσευχής, περισυλλογής, συγγνώμης προς τον συνάνθρωπο και μετάνοιας προς το Μεγαλοδύναμο, είναι η πιο κατάλληλη στιγμή για να δείξετε έμπρακτα την αλληλεγγύη σας σε μία ολιγομελή Κοινότητα που αγωνίζεται να περισώσει ότι απέμεινε από το λαμπρό παρελθόν της, και ταυτόχρονα να φωνάξετε παρών στον αγώνα εναντίον της πρόσφατης αναζωπύρωσης αντισημιτικών φαινομένων που προσβάλλουν βάνουσα τη μνήμη των 67.000 αδικολογημένων θυμάτων και αμαυρώνουν την εικόνα της χώρας μας στο εξωτερικό.

Προγραμματίστε από τώρα τον ερχομό σας στα Γιάννενα, ειδοποιείτε τους γνωστούς και τους φίλους σας και επιβεβαιώστε τη συμμετοχή σας (στο τηλέφωνο 26510/25195) το ταχύτερο δυνατόν ώστε να έχουμε τον χρόνο να οργανώσουμε με τον καλύτερο τρόπο το δείπνο και την εκδήλωση του Σαββάτου. Εμείς από την πλευρά μας υποσχόμαστε να κάνουμε ότι είναι δυνατόν για να διευκολύνουμε την παραμονή σας στην όμορφη πόλη μας.

**Σας περιμένουμε!**

**Ι.Κ. ΙΩΑΝΝΙΝΩΝ**

To summarize the invitation (for those of our readers who do not read Greek), last year there was an emotional gathering in Ioannina to join the Jewish Community of the city for Yom Kippur services. Visitors came from all over Greece, Europe, Israel and the United States. It reinforced the small Jewish Community in the city. This year it is hoped that a similar event will occur and the Jewish Community is inviting all to attend over the weekend of October 7/8. Contact the Community at 26510/25195) so that there is sufficient time to plan the dinner to break the fast.

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Shalom to one and all!  
Gershon Harris  
Hatzor Haglilit, Israel



***A relatively recent story that made the headlines in Israel, made me realize how much many of us take our devotion to Judaism and ability to freely practice our faith for granted. The vast majority of American and Canadian Jewry, not to mention those of us living in the State of Israel, can be as "Jewish" as we want, whether totally unaffiliated or ultra-Orthodox, and everything in between, without having to expend much more effort than to examine local synagogues, schools, community members and institutions to see where we "fit in" or feel most comfortable. And certainly none of us has to worry about being prevented from practicing our Judaism, nor feel guilty or ostracized for doing so. Therefore, to read about 21st century descendants of Jews forcefully converted to Christianity some 600 years ago who never gave up trying to return to their original Jewish faith, made me realize not only how precious and special Judaism really is, but also how much we can and must never take it for granted.***

***I am referring to descendants of forced Jewish converts from the island of Palma de Mallorca, off the coast of Spain. Well known as a world-class vacation resort, Palma de Mallorca, was also the home of a Jewish community, possibly as early as the 5th century, CE. Their situation began deteriorating drastically at the beginning of the 14th century, when anti-Jewish riots erupted in 1305, followed by an anti-Jewish blood-libel in 1309.***

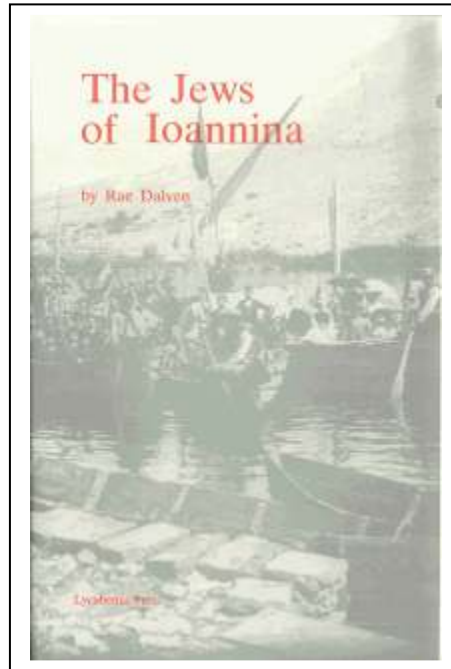
***The real turning point, however, occurred in 1391, when all of the territories destined to become a united Spain were swept with fierce and fateful anti-Jewish pogroms, where the choice was to either convert to Christianity or die. Starting on the mainland, the rioting reached Mallorca on August 2nd of that year, with hundreds of Jews massacred and hundreds more converted. Whoever remained alive was forcibly converted or killed in 1435, marking the official end of Jewish community.***

***Yet despite their official Christian status fact, these new converts were not accepted by the local Mallorca native population and became social outcasts. Referred to derogatorily as "Chuetas" – Catalan for 'pig'- many of them continued practicing Judaism in secret, though they risked their lives doing so. Later, when the Spanish Inquisition was established, it was particularly active in Mallorca and as late as 1691 – 300 years after the 1391 massive conversions – 37 "Chuetas" were executed by the Inquisition for "relapsing" to Judaism.***

***The native Catholic population refused to socialize and marry Chuetas, a phenomenon that continued well into modern times. It may be hard to believe, but only when France captured Mallorca in the 19th century was the Inquisition formally abolished. Yet social hatred and even legal restrictions against the Chuetas continued as late as 1931, when they were abolished as a result of the inauguration of the Spanish Republic. Only since then have Chueta-native Mallorcan "intermarriages" have become more common. Meanwhile, between 15,000 -20,000 Chuetas presently reside in Mallorca, and more and more have expressed interest in their Jewish ancestry and backgrounds, leading to efforts by many Rabbis and Jewish organizations to have the Chuetas formally recognized as being of direct Jewish lineage. Leading these efforts is Rabbi Michael Freund, Jerusalem Post columnist and Chairman of "Shavei Yisrael", which tries to locate and assist "lost Jews" all over the world and encourage them to return to Judaism.***

***Thank God, these efforts have borne fruit, with Rabbi Nissim Karelitz of B'nei Brak, Israel - a leading authority on Jewish law and head of a prestigious "Beit Din" – Rabbinical Court – having recently officially declared the Chuetas as being Jews in the collective sense. That means that anyone who can trace back their uninterrupted lineage can be accepted as fully Jewish, or, in the absence of such evidence, still be allowed to undergo a less stringent conversion process. In either case, the Chuetas are apparently ending a 600-year-long quest to return to Judaism...No THAT's devotion!***

We are overjoyed to announce that Rae Dalven's *Jews of Ioannina* is back in print. When the book first came out it was not digitized and until the issue was resolved it was unavailable. So many in our community lamented this and a number of individuals offered to painsakenly retype the book so that it could once again be available. John Chapple of Lykavettus Press was so moved by this gesture, that he worked on scanning the book. He personally wanted to thank those who gave him the impetus to reprint the book. Let us extend our thanks to Joe Besca, Liz Alderman, and Penny Santiago.



Now available at Kehila Kedosha Janina for \$35 plus P&H of \$5 (only within the continental USA). Contact us at [kehila\\_kedosha\\_janina@netzero.net](mailto:kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net) if you wish a copy.

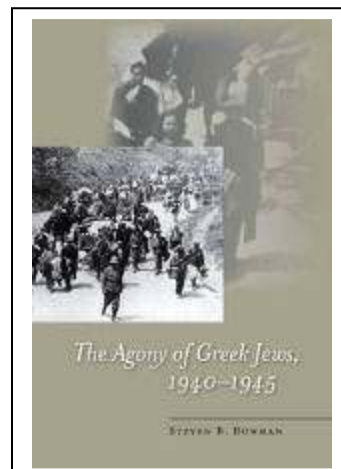
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A recent review of Professor Bowman's "The Agony of Greek Jews" was offered by Aristotle Kallis. If you would like a copy of the review, contact us.

Steven B. Bowman. *The Agony of Greek Jews, 1940-1945*. Stanford University Press, 2009. xiv + 325 pp. \$55.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8047-5584-9.

Reviewed by Aristotle Kallis (Lancaster University )  
Published on H-Judaic (July, 2011)  
Commissioned by Jason Kalman

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## Requests

*Please receive this photos we recently found that you could maybe place them in the newsletter or somewhere as part of records of the Greek Jewish community. They are the only existent photos of my father's family that were killed in the concentration camps. My dear father is the little child standing in the photograph with his mother, father and two little sisters, the separate photo is the other sister that was not in the main photo. They were all killed in Auschwitz.*

*The photo at the cemetery is when thee stone for the grave of Chief Rabbi Isaac Sabetay Pardo was unveiled at the cemetery of Salonika. He was my grandfather's father, David Pardo who appears in the photo holding a prayer book and wearing a hat.*

*I am looking to make these names more public since perhaps is a way of honoring them, to show the world they really existed.*

*Theodor Pardo*

**We are honored to publish these photos.**



**David Pardo**



**Ety Pardo**

**Pardo Family**



**At grave of Rabbi Isaac Sabetay Pardo**

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**Vote to have a Chania story in JTA;  
<http://blogs.jta.org/transatlantic/article/2011/07/27/3088724/vote-transatlantic-contest-final-round>**

**We are looking for the family of Abraham Matza. Abraham died in WWII at the Battle of the Bulge. We know that, at the time of his death, his closed relatives are listed as Eliasaf and Regina Matza of 62 South 10th Street in Brooklyn. The reason we are looking for relatives of Abraham is that we received this moving plea:**

***"My name is Jaime Longoria. My father was a member of the 75th Infantry Division and fought in the Battle of the Bulge in World War II. I grew up hearing the story of how he and Abraham Matza shared the experience of war up to his friend Matza's death. He shared the story of his friends death with me together with the heroic way Matza saved his life in that foxhole. I never forgot the story and always wanted to share my dad's gratitude and that of my family with Matza's next of kin. Dad always felt his friend should have received the Medal of Honor for his deeds that day but was told there was no officer there to witness the act. Please help me to identify Matza's family so that I can share my dad's story with them.***

***Thanks. Jaime Longoria"***

**We know that Abraham did receive the Purple Heart and the Distinguished Service Cross:**

**Awarded posthumously for actions during the World War II**

**Private First Class Abraham Matza (ASN: 32983757), United States Army, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (Posthumously) for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy while serving with the 289th Infantry Regiment, 75th Infantry Division, in action against enemy forces on 6 January 1945. Private First Class Matza's intrepid actions, personal bravery and zealous devotion to duty at the cost of his life, exemplify the highest traditions of the military forces of the United States and reflect great credit upon himself, the 75th Infantry Division, and the United States Army.**

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**When you are in New York, visit us on Broome Street. We are open for services every Saturday and all major Jewish holidays and our Museum is open every Sunday from 11-4 and, by appointment during the week.**

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