

# Yiddish Institute Gathers at Wildacres for Its Annual Conference

By Liz Miller

I had the opportunity to experience my 3rd retreat at the Charlotte Yiddish Institute at Wildacres, in Little Switzerland, NC along with my beloved parents, Charlotte and Jerry Miller, who have been attending for the past 15 years, my sister, Jodi Miller of Bayside, NY, and my boyfriend, Howard Schwartz, of

Boca Raton, FL. This special weekend took place August 15-18 in the spectacular Blue Ridge Mountains. They didn't disappoint either. Really blue.

This is a unique group of people who have been gathering now for the past 35 years. They are the most frailach and colorful bunch coming from all corners of the United States and South America. Their rich roots originate from Brooklyn, NY, Miami, FL via Cuba, Montevideo, Uruguay, and CA to name a few.

What is so personal about these four days is the feeling of community and family? Everyone belongs and we all share a love of the *Mameh Loshen*, Yiddish language that our ancestors spoke in their native Eastern European *kleyne shtetlakh* (small villages).

Incredible entertainers back by popular demand, Eleanor Reissa and her newly debuted "Da Boyes," Charlotte's own wonderful Klezmer group, Viva Klezmer!, featuring Gene and Ali Kavadlo with Queen's College Music Director, Paul (Pesakh) Nitsch on piano, the great Hazzan, Moishe Friedler, and speakers Samuel Norich and Boris Sandler, the Principles of the age old Yiddish, English Forverts/Forward newspaper, were brought in to stimulate this thirsty bunch of Institutniks.

This weekend could not have happened without the generosity, vision, and support of a few individuals who deserve to be mentioned: Rose and Abraham Luski, founding members of the Charlotte Yiddish Institute, their daughter Berta Straz along with



Charlotte Yiddish Institute Committee: Malka Me-Zehav, Menachem Me-Zahav, Baila Pransky, Heshl Spindel, Lillian Bienstock, Irving Bienstock, Adrienne Spindel, Rose Luski, Abraham Luski, Berta Straz, Don Herbstman, Shevi Herbstman. Not pictured: Charlotte and Jerry Miller.



other founding members Baila Pransky and Irving and Leah Bienstock. Without their dedication and endless spirit, this event could not have been possible.

Wildacres. The name denotes excitement, fun, different, rugged. The weekend didn't let us down. It was all that and more. From the opening night, old friends re-acquainted and new ones made to feel at home immediately. One hundred men and women with the love of 200. The anticipation was growing. What talent shows were waiting for us.

The guests checked in, were greeted, and the opening night welcome party was hosted by Adrienne and Herb Spindel and Charlotte and Jerry Miller. Everyone had fun. Thanks to Adrienne Spindel there was a bountiful spread of her home baked cakes

and cookies. There were delicious prepared salads, cheeses, crackers, and wine. For Shabbos Kid-dush everyone enjoyed Jerry Miller's homemade chopped herring specialty. There was something for everyone, it was truly perfect. Shul in the morning and on Shabbos. The family style dining in the dining hall made it special, the two fabulous shows each day were anxiously anticipated. Full of simcha. Classes on Yiddish language and conversation and wonderful classes with our guest speakers. All the performers were full of life. But Da Boyes stole the show. Four very talented young men who played their hearts out during the shows and in the evening, they came out to sit and sing and enjoy with the multitudes who didn't want the day to end. They performed during the day

and on their own time at night. And that's not all – kibitzing, schmoozing, and singing went well on into the late night. The retreat made it special. The people made it special.

I am so fortunate to have been introduced to The Charlotte Yiddish Institute by my parents and have felt compelled to return every summer in August. This is such a special event that you would not want to miss out. It is vital that the younger generation continue the legacy that our parents and grandparents imparted to us by speaking Yiddish.

We'll be back. Was heard by many the day we left. Until next August ...

For more information, email [clyiddishinst@aol.com](mailto:clyiddishinst@aol.com). ✪

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## Keeping Teens Safe

The message was clear: "Parents, talk to your children early and often about healthy relationships and technology, and model the behavior you want them to emulate." So said experts Ann-Kreindler-Siegel, psychotherapist, and Melissa Siegel, Coordinator of LoveSpeaksOut, who led a workshop for parents on how to keep their tweens/teens safe. Co-sponsored by Jewish Family Services, LoveSpeaksOut, and Shalom Bayit, the workshop took place on October 27 at Shalom Park.

Incredibly, one in three teens will experience abuse today. Where abuse does occur, more than 80% of parents are unaware.

"While parents are on top of subjects like alcoholism and STD's, we are just getting into cyber bullying," said Stephanie Starr, Director of Jewish Family Services. "And we are barely talking about the number one form of abuse - teen dating violence."

"Digital abuse is a huge concern now, with teens averaging 4-1/2 hours on electronic devices per day," added Marsha Stickler of Shalom Bayit. "Young people need to know there are rules and behaviors that are appropriate and protective, and hopefully their parents will take the initiative and teach them."

To learn more on dating vio-

lence, digital abuse, and what parents can do, see [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org).

Shalom Bayit's website at [www.shalombayit-nc.org](http://www.shalombayit-nc.org) offers parent and teen information and local resources. ✪



Parent Workshop leaders Ann Kreindler-Siegel, Melissa Siegel, and Marsha Stickler.

### Early warning signs that a teenager might be in an abusive relationship:

- \* Unexplained injuries.
  - \* Excessive emails or texts.
  - \* Your teen seems depressed or anxious.
  - \* Your teen fears their partner.
  - \* Partner checks up on your teen.
  - \* Verbal abuse by the partner, such as name-calling and demeaning comments.
  - \* Your teen gives up things that are important, such as school, friends, time with family, activities, and other interests.
  - \* Your teen apologizes for his/her partner's behavior.
  - \* Partner abuses other people, animals, or things.
  - \* Change in appearance or behavior of your teen or his/her partner.
  - \* Your teen and his/her partner spend most of their time together to the exclusion of others.
- What can you do? See [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org). Local information at [www.shalombayit-nc.org](http://www.shalombayit-nc.org).

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