

WHY PASSOVER MATTERS

BY STEFAN LONCE + MH FRYBURG



2020 GLOBAL



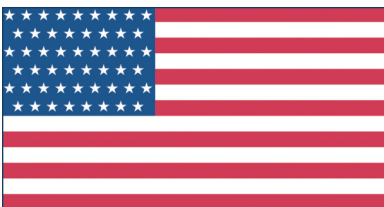
IN HONOR OF THE TREE OF LIFE SYNAGOGUE VICTIMS



SEDER™



GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER™ • APRIL 8 - MAY 10, 2020



HAPPY PASSOVER

חג שמח

www.GlobalPassoverSeder.com



1



2



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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

The GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER™ was inspired by an act of anti-Jewish hatred and bigotry at a town hall held by NY Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney (“SPM”), when a woman, whose name we do not know, told MH FRYBURG, “Everyone hates the Jews!”

LET US EXPLAIN that SPM’s town hall was in Putnam Valley, NY (which has lots of Jewish residents) on January 27, 2019, and was extraordinarily contentious: Many people spoke against the illegal immigrants who are “ruining” America. MH FRYBURG went to the town hall to ask SPM to support renaming the Mid-Hudson Bridge (which connects Poughkeepsie and Highland, NY) the FRANKLIN AND ELEANOR ROOSEVELT MID-HUDSON BRIDGE, which SPM said he would enthusiastically support.

After the town hall ended, MH went to speak with SPM about renaming the Mid-Hudson Bridge after Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, who were the 2 most important and influential 20th century Americans. SPM was speaking with **BIG BIGOT** (which is what we call the bigoted woman, whose name we do not know), telling her, “I’m Irish, and when the Irish came to America in the 1840’s, we were called Micks and discriminated against.” MH then said, “The same thing happened to the Jews,” and **BIG BIGOT** turned to MH, and calmly and casually said, “Everyone hates the Jews!”

Since there is always opportunity in adversity, we decided that the best way to fight anti-Jewish bigotry would be to get as many people as possible to celebrate Passover, which celebrates the universal human values of TRUTH, FREEDOM, FAIRNESS + GRATITUDE. We thought that if **BIG BIGOT** actually attended a Passover Seder, then she would change her mind about hating the Jews.

LET US FURTHER EXPLAIN that Stefan, who is Catholic, attended his 1st Passover Seder at the Putnam Valley home of Carl + Estelle Fryburg



(MH’s parents) in 2006...and he’s been enthusiastically celebrating Passover ever since. In 2016, as Estelle was dying from cancer, Stefan cooked the food for her last Seder, which made her very, very happy because, like most Jews, Passover was her favorite Jewish holiday!



Estelle Fryburg

We decided to call our project the GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER™...which would consist of 3 parts:

- 1 Jews would invite non-Jews to their Seders and explain to them what’s going on, using our (free) mini-book, *WHY PASSOVER MATTERS*;
- 2 Non-Jews would hold mini-Seders using *WHY PASSOVER MATTERS*; +
- 3 We would hold an actual (televised) Seder, at



the Lincoln Depot Museum in Peekskill, NY – we wanted a non-Jewish venue, to prove that Passover is a universal holiday, and Abraham Lincoln was the American Moses, who freed the slaves.

LET US FURTHER EXPLAIN that the plague of 2020, caused by the rapidly spreading and

potentially lethal Covid-19 coronavirus, forced us to rethink the 2020 GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER™, since the pandemic prevents people from gathering together, in person, to celebrate Passover... or for any other reason. Instead, we want to use the 2020 GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER™ to enlighten and entertain people, in the USA, Canada, Israel, and around the world, who are stuck at home (or in quarantine) on Passover, which begins at sundown on April 8, 2020.

LET US NOW EXPLAIN to you *WHY PASSOVER MATTERS*, by telling you that Passover celebrates how Moses forced Pharaoh (the Egyptian king) to let the Hebrew slaves go free, more than 3,000 years ago: God inflicted 10 plagues on the

Egyptians, including the 10th plague – the death of the oldest son in each Egyptian family; the Hebrews marked the fronts of their homes so that the 10th plague would pass over them. After Pharaoh agreed to let the Hebrews go, they had to leave so quickly that they didn't have time to let their bread rise, which is why, during Passover, only unleavened bread, called matzoh, is eaten.

The Passover celebration is called a Seder (which means "order" in Hebrew) because the Haggadah, the book that Jews read during the Seder, stipulates a particular order for the rituals associated with the holiday, beginning with the washing of one's hands. A typical Seder is celebrated by families, at home, and takes about an hour to complete: every1 takes turns reading from the Haggadah... and then you have an amazing meal with special foods, all based on matzoh.

The coronavirus plague of 2020 has forced most people to stay at home, alone with their families or roommates, so Seders this year will be very, very small. To make it simple for every1, let's remember that the most important Passover food is matzoh, which is widely available in grocery stores, but if you can't get matzoh, then you can use crackers instead. The Seder also calls for every adult to drink 4 glasses of wine, but you can use grape juice – or any kind of juice – instead. Each Passover Seder table has a Seder plate, which contains symbolic foods (explained in Part 2), but to make it simple, you can use Stefan's Seder plate (which is printed on Page 5) instead of a real plate. Jews should read, aloud, Part 2 of *WHY PASSOVER MATTERS* before proceeding with their traditional Seders; non-Jews should read Part 2 aloud for their mini-Seders.

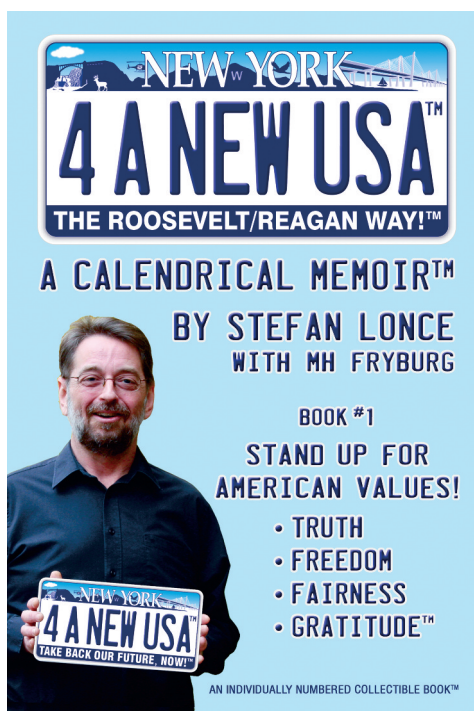
Before we move on to Part 2 of *WHY PASSOVER MATTERS*, LET US EXPLAIN who we are... and why there are so many license plates in *WHY PASSOVER MATTERS*. We are STEFAN LONCE and MH FRYBURG, and we live in Croton-on-Hudson, NY, in Westchester County, just north of NYC. Stefan edits and designs *The Montauk Sun*, a monthly community newspaper which circulates in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and in Montauk and the East End of Long Island. MH is an attorney. We are the world's leading experts on vanity license plates (which have motorists' messages) and special license plates (which have distinct designs and promote causes or organizations); Stefan designed the special plates

used throughout *WHY PASSOVER MATTERS* to be actual license plates to be issued by American states.

We shall be writing about the GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER™ and our other adventures (including the FRANKLIN AND ELEANOR ROOSEVELT MID-HUDSON BRIDGE renaming) in our forthcoming book, *4 A NEW USA THE ROOSEVELT/REAGAN WAY! A CALENDRIAL MEMOIR*. State Senator Sue Serino has introduced a bill to rename the Mid-Hudson Bridge after the Roosevelts, which we hope to persuade the NYS Senate and Assembly to pass, and Governor Andrew Cuomo to sign into law, later this year; April 12, 2020 will be the 75th anniversary of FDR's death.

Finally, in order to make *WHY PASSOVER MATTERS* more fun, we have included 5 riddles (below), and posters (and games!) in Part 3. Here are the riddles (the answers are on Page 7):

- 1 Can you find the 2 hidden **4ANEWUSA** vanity plates in the Pennsylvania special plate on the cover of *WHY PASSOVER MATTERS*?
- 2 Can you explain the order of the 3 special license plates (New York, California, Florida) in the header on page 1?
- 3 Who had the 1st know vanity license plates, and what did they say?
- 4 Why are California's vanity license plates Ronald Reagan's greatest unknown accomplishment?
- 5 How many forms do you think we had to complete before we could start selling our greeting cards, prints, and calendars at the FDR Library gift shop (in Hyde Park, NY)?



Stefan Lonce (L) and MH Fryburg (R)

PART 2: RECITATION

To Be Read Aloud

If Moses had not led the exodus of the Hebrew slaves from ancient Egypt, which is celebrated on Passover, then world history would have been totally different.

That's because, if Moses had not led the exodus from Egypt, then Judaism would not have developed, and humanity would not have the Biblical 10 Commandments, which are the commonly accepted basis for morality, the rule of law, and democracy.

Jesus Christ was Jewish – the Last Supper was a Passover Seder – and if Judaism had not developed as a religion, then Christianity would not have developed as a religion either. Christians and Muslims accept the Hebrew Bible (which the Jews call the Torah and Christians call the Old Testament).

Although Passover is a Jewish holiday, it celebrates the universal human values articulated in the 10 Commandments: truth, freedom, fairness + gratitude.

The GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER™ was inspired by an act of anti-Jewish hatred and bigotry, at a town hall held by New York Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney, when a woman, whose name we do not know, said, “Everyone hates the Jews!” We thought that, if **BIG BIGOT** (which is what we call the woman at the town hall) attended a Passover Seder, then she would change her mind about hating the Jews.

The GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER™ became more important than ever with the advent of the Covid-19 coronavirus – the global plague of 2020 – which has forced most people to stay at home, and prevented Jews from gathering, in large groups, to hold their Seders at sundown on the 1st night of Passover (April 8, 2020). We call this Recitation a mini-Seder; it is intended to be read aloud by every1, Jews and non-Jews alike, before dinner, on any night, between April 8 - May 10, 2020.



LET US BEGIN, as the traditional Seder begins, with all participants washing their hands [the 1st reader then points at the matzoh — or crackers — and says]:

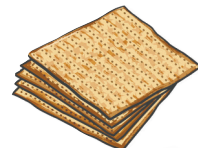
This is the bread of affliction, which the ancient Hebrews ate, after their exodus from slavery in Egypt. Let every1 celebrate Passover as if he or she had been a slave in Egypt.

LET US NOW EXPLAIN how Passover is different from every other night, by asking these 4 Questions:

- 1 Why do we eat only unleavened bread (matzoh) on Passover?
- 2 Why do we eat only bitter herbs on Passover?
- 3 Why do we dip our vegetables in salt water twice on Passover?
- 4 Why do we recline on Passover?

Here are the answers to the 4 questions:

We eat only matzoh on Passover, because the ancient Hebrew slaves had to leave Egypt so quickly after the 10 plagues that were inflicted on the Egyptians convinced Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go, that they did not have time for the dough to rise. We eat only bitter herbs (like horseradish) to remind us of the bitterness of slavery; we dip our vegetables twice, in salt water, to remind us of the tears of the enslaved Hebrews; and we recline in our seats to remind us that we are no longer slaves: we are free!



CELEBRATE! חג שמחה
HAPPY PASSOVER



The traditional Seder table includes:
the Seder plate, matzah (unleavened bread),
a dish of salt water, filled wine glasses, and Elijah's cup.

THE SEDER PLATE

The traditional Seder plate includes the following symbolic foods:

Bitter Herbs, often represented by horseradish, symbolize the bitterness of the lives of the Hebrew slaves in Egypt;

Bitter Vegetable, often represented by romaine lettuce, also symbolizes the bitterness of the lives of the Hebrew slaves in Egypt;

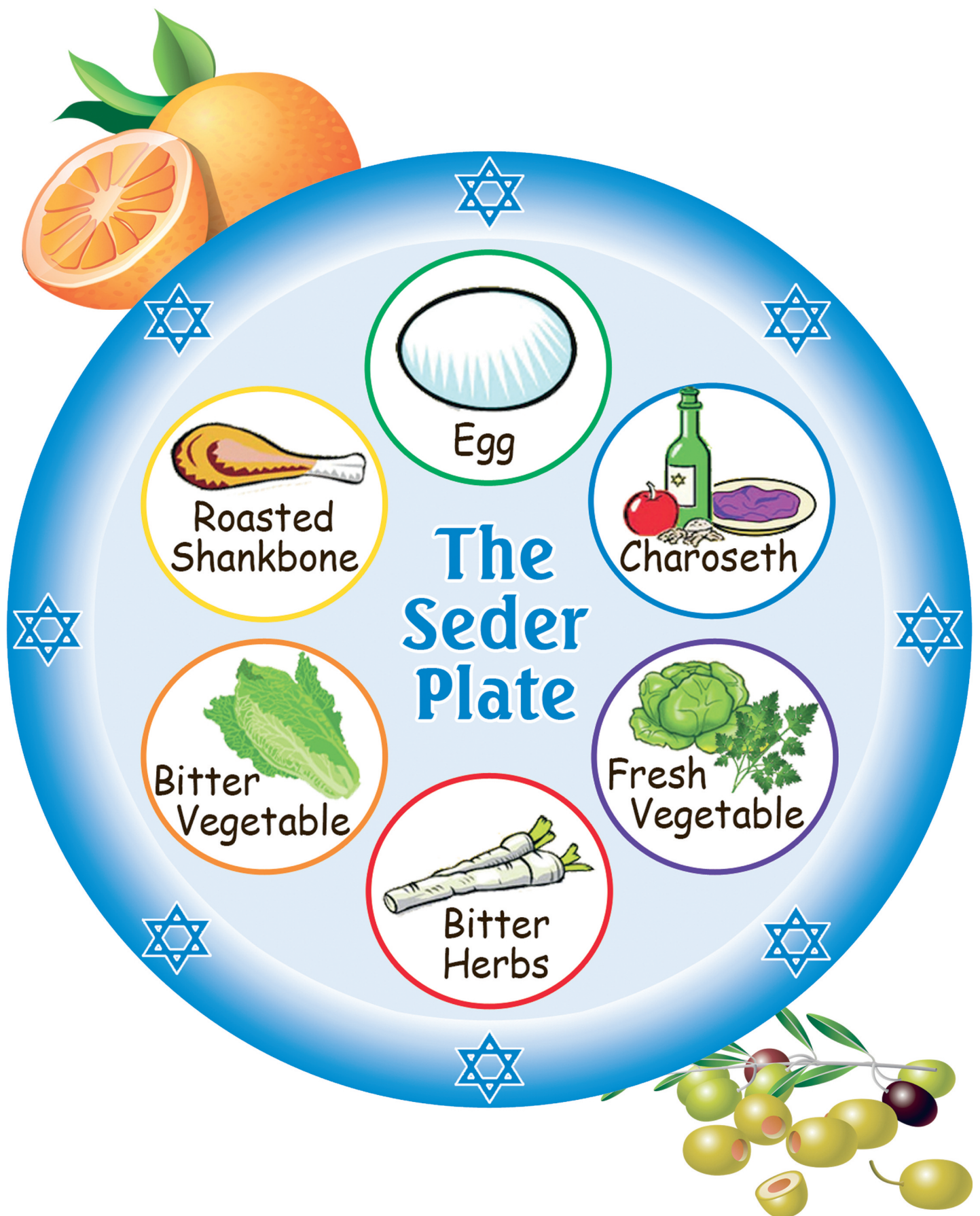
Roasted Shankbone, symbolizes animal sacrifice, which was part of ancient Passover celebrations;

Roasted Hard Boiled Egg, symbolizes Spring and the circularity of life, and is also a reference to ancient animal sacrifice;

Charoseth, a mixture of nuts, chopped apples, and wine, symbolizes the clay the Hebrew slaves used to make bricks and mortar for their Egyptian masters;

Fresh Vegetable, represented by lettuce or parsley, represents hope and renewal; and...

A newer tradition adds an orange (symbolizing liberation and inclusiveness), and olives (olive branches represent peace), to the Seder plate.





These are the 10 plagues that were visited upon the Egyptians:

BLOOD (the water turned to blood)

FROGS

LICE

FLIES

CATTLE DISEASE

BOILS

HAIL

LOCUSTS

DARKNESS

DEATH OF THE 1ST BORN SONS

The traditional Seder includes drinking 4 cups of wine, and eating special foods, but to make it simple, we shall all say a short blessing and then drink some wine (or grape juice) and eat some matzoh (or crackers):

BLESSED ARE YOU, LORD OUR GOD, KING OF THE UNIVERSE, WHO BRINGS US BREAD FROM THE EARTH + THE FRUIT OF THE VINE.

Singing is a big part of a traditional Seder, so we shall all sing *GO DOWN MOSES*:

When Israel was in Egypt land,
Let my people go!
They worked so hard they could not stand,
LET MY PEOPLE GO!

Go down, Moses,
Way down in Egypt land,
Tell old Pharaoh,
LET MY PEOPLE GO!



The traditional Seder ends with these words, "Next Year in Jerusalem!" but we're not quite finished yet. Passover in 2020 will be remembered for the fear of the coronavirus plague that is sweeping the globe, but we must not let fear paralyze us; in the immortal words of Franklin D. Roosevelt, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

The coronavirus plague of 2020 proves that all people are created equal, since every1 is potentially susceptible to this plague, whether we are rich or poor, and regardless of our religion, race, ethnicity, nationality, sex or sexuality.

We must unite to defeat the coronavirus plague, by manufacturing the masks and protective gear every1 needs, by developing accurate tests and effective drugs, and a vaccine. We must each remember that our health is dependent on the health of every1 else, and we must close live animal markets where the animals are slaughtered, since the COVID-19 coronavirus originated in a live animal market in Wuhan, China.

We must also make the most of our time confined at home. Talk with your family members or roommates about how we can get along better during this dangerous and difficult time. Remember that anger is a wasted emotion. Be grateful to our heroic healthcare workers, and hopeful about the future. AMEN!



PART 3: MORE INFO, POSTERS, GAMES + BOOK REVIEWS

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES ON PAGE 2 OF WHY PASSOVER MATTERS;

- 1 The 2 hidden **[4ANEWUSA]** plates are in the upper right hand corner and the upper left hand corner of the Pennsylvania vanity plate that says **[PASSOVER]**;
- 2 The order of the 3 special license plates in the header on page 1 (NY, CA, FL) is because NY has the largest Jewish population in the USA, followed by CA, and then FL;
- 3 Franklin Delano Roosevelt had the first known vanity license plates, on his cars with hand controls that he designed at the polio clinic he founded in Warm Springs, Georgia – the plates said **[FDR]**;
- 4 Ronald Reagan's greatest unknown accomplishment is California's vanity license plates, which he signed into law on 8-21-1970 that law provides that the vanity plate fees are paid to the California Environmental License Plate Fund, and today, thanks to Gov. Reagan, California's 1,000,000 vanity plates earn the state \$43,000,000 annually, for environmental projects, statewide!
- 5 If you want to know how many forms we had to fill out to start selling our greeting cards, posters and calendars at the FDR Library gift shop, you will have to read our forthcoming book, **4 A NEW USA THE ROOSEVELT/REAGAN WAY! A CALENDARICAL MEMOIR** BY STEFAN LONCE WITH MH FRYBURG, which we are writing now and plan to publish as an ebook later this year.

MORE INFO:

Here is additional information to help make your GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER a success:

Let My People Go: for a video of Louis Armstrong singing *Let My People Go*, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SP5EfwBWgg0>

For additional materials visit:

www.2forseder.org (sign up to get their free Seder kits).

To download a free and easy-to-use Haggadah prepared by the Jewish Federations of North America, visit:

http://jewishfederation.org/images/uploads/holiday_images/39497.pdf

POSTERS:

We have included 3 captivating and compelling posters, designed by Stefan Lonce:

GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER poster;
CELEBRATE PASSOVER poster; and
THE FRANKLIN AND ELEANOR
ROOSEVELT MID-HUDSON BRIDGE poster.

GAMES:

To entertain and educate you while we're confined at home during the COVID-19 coronavirus plagues, we have included the following games:

PUZLCAKE™ FLYERS: a PUZLCAKE™ is a cake decorated with a puzzle consisting of 2 adjacent photographic or graphic images, with 10 ½ DIFFERENCES between the 2 images; guests at PUZLCAKE™ parties receive a 2 sided flyer depicting the cake, with an answer key; we have included the PUZLCAKE™ flyer for ELEANOR ROOSEVELT'S 135TH BIRTHDAY EXTRAVAGANZA!, which we hosted at the FDR Library on 10-11-2019, and the ESTELLE FRYBURG funeral PUZLCAKE™ flyer.

BOOK REVIEWS:

We have included 4 book reviews, published in *The Montauk Sun*, of the following great books, which you should read:

President Carter: The White House Years,
by Stuart Eizenstat
It's All Relative, by A.J. Jacobs
My Father at 100, by Ron Reagan
Hissing Cousins: The Untold Story of Eleanor Roosevelt and Alice Roosevelt Longworth,
by Marc Peyser and Timothy Dwyer

We also strongly recommend that you read the following books:

The Book of Gutsy Women, by Hillary Rodham Clinton and Chelsea Clinton
American Moonshot: John F. Kennedy and the Great Space Race, by Douglas Brinkley
The Boys of Pointe du Hoc,
by Douglas Brinkley
Leadership in Turbulent Times,
by Doris Kearns Goodwin
No Ordinary Time, by Doris Kearns Goodwin
The Roosevelts: An Intimate History
by Geoffrey Ward
(and watch the companion video
by Ken Burns)



CELEBRATE! חג שמחה
HAPPY PASSOVER



2020 GLOBAL



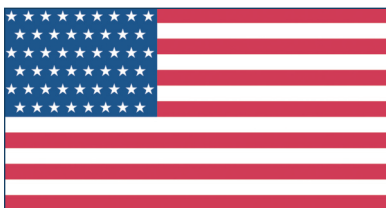
IN HONOR OF THE TREE OF LIFE SYNAGOGUE VICTIMS



SEDER™



GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER™ • APRIL 8 - MAY 10, 2020



HAPPY PASSOVER

חג שמח

2020 GLOBAL PASSOVER SEDER EVENT CHAIRS: MH FRYBURG + STEFAN LONCE

www.4ANEWUSA.com



STAND UP FOR AMERICAN VALUES!™
LET'S RENAME THE MID-HUDSON BRIDGE
THE FRANKLIN AND ELEANOR ROOSEVELT
MID-HUDSON BRIDGE!

FIND THE  PLATE HIDDEN IN THE GRAPHIC ABOVE ↑

PLATEPOSTER #13 • TM + © 2019 4ANEWSA, INC. • www.4ANEWSA.com • DESIGNED BY STEFAN LONCE (3-8-2020)



WWW.TAKEBACKOURFUTURENOW.ORG

SOLVE THE **PUZLCAKE™**!

FIND THE

10½ DIFFERENCES™

BETWEEN

PHOTO #1 + PHOTO #2



PHOTO #1

BAKED BY
HOMESTYLE DESSERTS BAKERY
PEEKSKILL, NY
WWW.HOMESTYLEDESSERTSBAKERY.COM

PUZLCAKE™
DESIGNED BY
STEFAN LONCE
WWW.PUZLCAKE.COM

*Happy 135th Birthday
Eleanor Roosevelt!*

FDR LIBRARY • 10-11-2019



PHOTO #2

INSPIRED BY
PEOPLE® MAGAZINE

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INTRODUCING THE

PUZLCAKE™

PUZLCAKE™ :

A cake decorated with a puzzle consisting of two adjacent graphic or photographic images, with **10½ DIFFERENCES™** between the 2 images.

For information on ordering a **PUZLCAKE™** design for your own celebration, complete with a flyer with answers for your guests, please email: INFO@DRIVINGWITHFDR.COM



SOLVE THE **PUZLCAKE™**!
FIND THE
10½ DIFFERENCES™
BETWEEN
PHOTO #1 + PHOTO #2

*Happy 135th Birthday
Eleanor Roosevelt!*

FDR LIBRARY • 10-11-2019

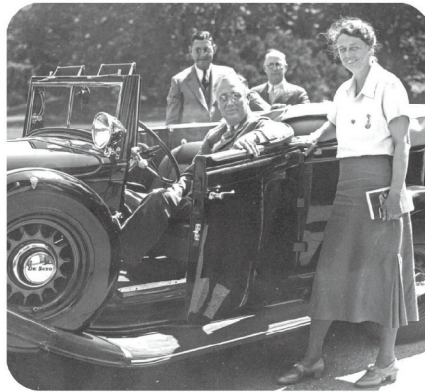


PHOTO #1

BAKED BY
HOMESTYLE DESSERTS BAKERY
PEEKSKILL, NY
WWW.HOMESTYLEDESSERTSBAKERY.COM

PUZLCAKE™
DESIGNED BY
STEFAN LONCE
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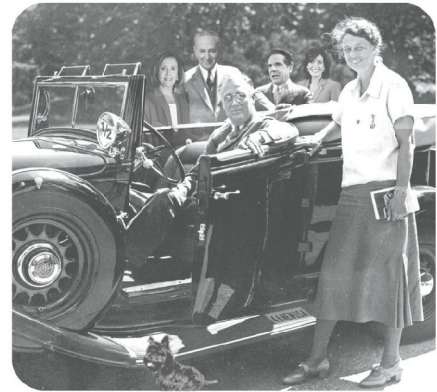


PHOTO #2

INSPIRED BY
PEOPLE® MAGAZINE

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PLEASE SIGN OUR ONLINE PETITION TO RENAME THE MID-HUDSON BRIDGE THE
“FRANKLIN + ELEANOR ROOSEVELT MID-HUDSON BRIDGE”
AT WWW.4ANEWUSA.COM.



Stefan Lonce,
PUZLCAKE™ designer &
future co-author, with MH Fryburg of:

**4 A NEW USA -
THE ROOSEVELT/REAGAN WAY!™
A CALENDRIAL MEMOIR**

[www.4ANEWUSA.com](http://WWW.4ANEWUSA.COM)

ANSWERS TO **PUZLCAKE™** – THE 10½ DIFFERENCES™ ARE:

1) The man standing directly behind FDR is Sen. Chuck Schumer in **PHOTO #2**. 2) The other man standing behind FDR is Gov. Andrew Cuomo in **PHOTO #2**. 3) Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul is standing behind the car in **PHOTO #2**. 4) Rep. Nancy Pelosi is standing behind the passenger side door in **PHOTO #2**. 5) ER's blouse is longer in **PHOTO #2**. 6) The hub cap's De Soto logo has been replaced with a Chrysler logo in **PHOTO #2**. 7) FDR is holding a cigarette in his left hand in **PHOTO #2**. 8) ER is wearing a wristwatch in **PHOTO #2**. 9) Fala, the Roosevelts' dog, is sitting in front of ER in **PHOTO #2**. 10) There is a 4ANEWUSA license plate on the running board near ER's skirt in **PHOTO #2**. 10½) There is a "1/2" on the car's light in **PHOTO #2**.

**Save This Flyer...
It's A Collectible!**

SOLVE THE ESTELLE FRYBURG **PUZLCAKE™**!

FIND THE 10½ DIFFERENCES™ BETWEEN PLATE #1 & PLATE #2



PLATE #1



PLATE #2

ESTELLE FRYBURG

6-6-1929 – 6-1-2016

PUZLCAKE™

DESIGNED BY STEFAN LONCE • WWW.PUZLCAKE.COM • ©2016 LCNS2ROM, INC.
BAKED BY HOMESTYLE DESSERTS BAKERY • PEEKSKILL, NY • INSPIRED BY PEOPLE MAGAZINE

ANSWERS TO **PUZLCAKE™ – THE 10½ DIFFERENCES™ ARE:**

- 1) PLATE #2 has a moon in the upper right-hand corner.
- 2) The "W" on the mountains in the background is missing on PLATE #2.
- 3) The mountains behind the Tappan Zee Bridge are missing from PLATE #2.
- 4) The bird in the "O" of "NEW YORK" is missing from PLATE #2.
- 5) The mountains in the background are taller on PLATE #2.
- 6) There is a deer in front of the Croton Dam on PLATE #2.
- 7) PLATE #1 and PLATE #2 have different messages.
- 8) PLATE #1 says "THE EMPIRE STATE" and PLATE #2 says "THE CREATIVE STATE".
- 9) PLATE #1 has elongated screw holes while PLATE #2 has rounded screw holes.
- 10) The Tappan Zee Bridge is larger on PLATE #2.
- 10½) PLATE #2 says "1/2" in the lower right-hand corner.

As appeared in
The Montauk Sun
December 2019 Edition

**"President Carter: The
White House Years"**
By Stuart Eizenstat
Review by MH Fryburg

Stuart Eizenstat was Jimmy Carter's Frances Perkins.

Let me explain that Stuart Eizenstat, who was President Carter's chief domestic policy advisor, performed the same role in the Carter Administration that Frances Perkins, who was FDR's Secretary of Labor, did in his Administration.

According to Eizenstat, President Carter, who lost his re-election campaign in 1980 to Ronald Reagan, in a landslide, was a much better, and more important President than most people think: "It is conventional wisdom that Jimmy Carter was a weak and hapless president. But I believe that the single term served by the thirty-ninth president of the United States was one of the most consequential in modern history. Far from a failed presidency, he left behind concrete reforms and long-lasting benefits to the people of the United States as well as the international order."

I agree! Among his domestic policy accomplishments, President Carter helped save Chrysler and New York City from bankruptcy by providing federal loan guarantees, while insisting on management changes and concessions by workers, which brought the automaker, and America's largest city, back to financial health.

President Carter doubled the size of the National Park system; laid the foundation for the establishment of solar, wind and other alternative energy industries, and enacted the Superfund law to clean up lands contaminated by pollution.

President Carter deregulated the airline, trucking and railroad industries, deregulated crude oil and natural gas prices (tied to a windfall profits tax), and ended federal caps on interest rates that banks could pay – stimulating the American economy. President Carter also championed the Regulatory Flexibility Act, which required federal agencies to eliminate unnecessary regulatory burdens on small business.

Even though the economy grew about as much during the Carter Administration as it did during the Reagan Administration, Carter had the bad luck to inherit an economy buffeted by "stagflation" -- double digit inflation rates (caused by the borrow

and spend policies of Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford), accompanied by high unemployment. In order to tame inflation, Carter courageously appointed Paul Volcker as Chairman of the Federal Reserve in 1979; with Carter's support, Volcker raised interest rates and took other steps that finally brought inflation – which was 14.8% in 1980 – under control, despite the unpopularity of Volcker's policies.

The perception among many Americans during the 4 years of the Carter Administration that inflation was out of control, reflected a perception among many Americans of a lack of control within the Carter White House, as Eizenstat (who worked for President Johnson), explains: "In an overreaction to the excesses of Watergate and Nixon's centralization of power, Carter initially decided not to have a chief of staff. Except for me, not one senior [Carter] aide had ever before set foot in the White House, lived in Washington, or knew anything about the operations of the U.S. Congress of the massive federal government."

Part of Carter's appeal, as a Presidential candidate, was that he wasn't from Washington – he had served in the Georgia State Senate, and then served a single term as Governor. While ignorance can produce bliss in some circumstances, if you're elected President, it helps to have staff members who have worked in the White House before and know how it should – and how it shouldn't – operate.

On foreign and defense policy, President Carter had huge successes: He championed human rights abroad, he was personally responsible for getting Egypt and Israel to agree to a peace treaty, he normalized diplomatic relations with Communist China, he successfully negotiated a peaceful transfer of the Panama Canal to Panama, and, after the Russians invaded Afghanistan, he began a military buildup that Ronald Reagan continued.

However, those accomplishments were quickly forgotten when Americans were confronted by the seizure, by Iranian radicals, of the American embassy in Teheran after the Shah of Iran was overthrown in 1979. The embassy seizure was precipitated by Carter's decision to admit the Shah, who was suffering from cancer and could not get adequate treatment elsewhere, into the United States. Although Carter had received assurances from the nominal Iranian government that the embassy would not be endangered if the U.S. admitted the Shah, the nominal government did not control the radicals who were aligned with Ayatollah Khomeini, who became the de facto leader of Iran after the Shah left.

The attempted rescue of the embassy hostages, in April 1980, which had to be aborted after a plane and a helicopter on the ground in Iran collided, perpetuated the perception that Carter was a bumbling, indecisive President, and aided Senator Ted Kennedy's primary challenge to Carter in 1980.

Part of President Carter's political problems stemmed from being too ambitious – and too cold, personally. According to Eizenstat, "Carter was so determined to confront intractable problems that he came away at times seeming like a public scold – a nanny telling her charges to eat their spinach."

Ronald Reagan, with his sunny optimism and warm, charismatic personality, defeated Jimmy Carter in 1980 when he asked Americans, during the televised debate he had with Carter in October 1980, "Are you better off today than you were four years ago?" Americans, resoundingly decided that they would be better off with Reagan as President: Carter only carried 6 states in 1980.

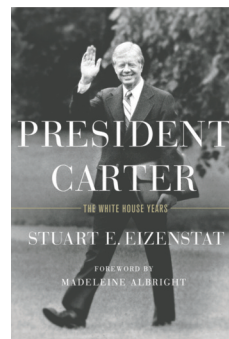
Since leaving office in 1981, Jimmy Carter, and his wife, Rosalynn, have become popular and well respected figures; they established the Carter Center in Atlanta, where they help mediate international disputes, and they work with Habitat for Humanity to build houses for the poor.

President Carter: The White House Years is a combination of biography, history, and memoir; the book is organized topically, not chronologically, which allowed Eizenstat to explain how policies developed over the Carter administration.

Stuart Eizenstat, whom I met at the FDR Library (where he serves on the Board of Trustees) in October, 2018, has written an important book, which is highly accurate factually and which really explains why Jimmy Carter is a dramatically underrated and underappreciated President. A big part of President Carter's success was due to having Stuart Eizenstat as his chief domestic policy adviser.

I sent Stuart Eizenstat some questions to answer; the questions, and his answers, are below:

Continued on Next Page →



1. I think the Carter Administration would have been much more successful if someone with the caliber of Robert Strauss had been appointed as chief of staff in January 1977; what do you think?

One of the principal mistakes President Carter made at the beginning of his presidency was not to appoint any chief of staff, but to be his own. It was not until midway in his presidency that he was finally persuaded to appoint a chief of staff, and then it was Hamilton Jordan, his gifted top political adviser, but someone without any previous Washington experience. As a result, in the crucial early months of the Carter presidency, there was no experienced White House chief of staff to set clear priorities (we had a host of competing priorities--economic stimulus, comprehensive energy reform, welfare reform, water projects, transportation deregulation, SALT II negotiations, the Panama Canal, Middle East peace process, etc.) and to integrate the political and policy perspectives.

Ronald Reagan learned this lesson, appointing James Baker as his chief of staff, even though Baker had been the campaign manager for George H.W. Bush, who became his vice president.

Even without a chief of staff, if President Carter had appointed a Washington wise man like Robert Strauss, former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, as a senior White House adviser, it would have made a big difference. Bob would have helped President Carter navigate the political shoals and helped him keep his fractious Democratic base in line.

Even with this, however, it is important to note that two independent surveys (The Miller Center for the Study of the Presidency and National Journal) give President Carter among the highest marks of any modern president for success with Congress on his major proposals, just under the legendary Lyndon Johnson (on whose White House Staff I served from 1967-1968).

2. You repeatedly state in your book that a big part of President Carter's problems was that he tried to do too much, too soon, and didn't set priorities. How do you think Carter could have done better at setting priorities?

President Carter's nature was to tackle every major problem he saw regardless of the political costs. While he achieved much success, compared to what he proposed, it seemed to pale in comparison. Moreover, he favored comprehensive solutions, when our political system is geared to incremental progress. By having an experienced White House Chief of Staff or top White House adviser, priorities could have been set. At many Democratic congressional leadership

breakfasts, Speaker Tip O'Neill and Senate Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd, urged him to give them his top priorities so they could sort out his proposals, but he replied that if he did that, interest groups would be angry that their top priority was not considered.

3. What, if anything, should President Carter have done differently about Iran after the Shah was overthrown?

There could have been a more aggressive effort to prevent Ayatollah Khomeini from leaving his exile in France to return to Tehran. There were confusing signals because of policy differences between U.S. Ambassador to Iran William Sullivan (who President Carter urged Secretary of State Vance to fire), Secretary of State Vance and National Security Adviser Brzezinski about the use of force. The President sent General Huyser to be his emissary to rally the divided Iranian military to back the Shah's last appointed prime minister Bakhtiar, but Sullivan diluted his message.

When the hostages were captured, I argued for an immediate blockade (or mining) of Kharg Island, where most of Iran's oil was exported. For sure, this had its own risks, including the Soviet Union attempting to challenge the blockade or Iran blocking the Straits of Hormuz. But a clear signal to Iran that the capture of our hostages was an act of war, would have been useful. Instead, the President met with the hostage families and told them that his top priority was getting their loved ones back safely, and he chose negotiations. In fairness, the Iranian revolution was a new phenomenon and it was unclear that the radical clerics were the real power, not the government, with whom agreements were reached that Khomeini vetoed. The fact is that Carter did inform Iran that if there were any show trials or if any hostage was harmed there would be an immediate military response, which is why neither happened (although there "show" executions where our hostages did not know if they would be killed).

4. Did President Carter consider preventing Iranian diplomats and their families who were in the United States from returning to Iran until the American embassy hostages were freed (as the United States did with German and Italian diplomats in 1941)?

No, but he did issue an Executive Order expelling all Iranians and Iranian diplomats from the United States. But he did not want to breach international law as the Iranians had done with our diplomat, by keeping them as hostages. This would have had little impact on the radical clerics, who had disdain for the diplomats who had served under the Shah.

5. What do you like best about Jimmy Carter, and what do you like least about him?

There are many things. He was honest and brought integrity to the White House in the wake of the Watergate scandal, removing its stain from the Oval Office, and passing major ethics legislation in place today. He was trustworthy and brought Americans together, reaching out to minorities and women with historic levels of appointments to senior executive positions and judgeships. I also admired his willingness to take on challenges like our energy dependence on OPEC oil, the Panama Canal Treaty, the Middle East peace process, normalization of relations with China, that were politically unpopular but important for the country.

I also greatly appreciated President Carter making human rights a central feature of his foreign policy during the Cold War battle with the Soviet Union for the hearts and minds of the world, and applying it equally to the Soviet Union and to the military dictators in Latin America. Also, President Carter strengthened our alliances and believed that working with our European, Japanese and North American allies helped the U.S. achieve its objectives abroad. Moreover, President Carter was personally very kind to me, my wife Fran, and my sons Jay and Brian. He allowed us (along with his senior staff) to use Camp David on weekends and even asked my son Jay to jog with him at Camp David.

One of his most courageous decisions, for which he gets no credit to this day, was deciding going into a reelection year to appoint Paul Volcker as chairman of the Federal Reserve, knowing in advance from Volcker that he was going to adopt a tight monetary policy to squeeze out the high inflation that bedeviled Nixon, Ford and Carter, that would raise interest rates and unemployment that would hurt his chances for reelection. But he told us he had tried everything else to curb inflation (which jumped to double digits because of the oil cutoff from Iran during the revolution) and that he did not want his legacy to the country to be persistently high inflation, even if it meant his defeat in 1980. By letting Volcker do his job, without interference, inflation dropped like a rock--by the end of Reagan's first year in office. This is emblematic of much of what Carter did, whose benefits occurred later and to the political benefit of his successors. We have low inflation today because of what Carter and Volcker did in 1979-1980.

There is nothing I dislike about him. But I wished he had done more to personalize his relations with key Members of Congress, to strengthen his relationship with the Democratic Party base, and had done more to set early priorities.



by M.H. Fryburg

IT'S ALL RELATIVE

By A.J. Jacobs

It's not an exaggeration to say that the world would be a better place if every1 would read *It's All Relative*, by A.J. Jacobs.

That's because, as A.J. explains in his new book:

If you go back far enough, everyone is a blood cousin. Humans are a startlingly close knit species. By some estimates, we all share 99.9 percent of our DNA with one another. According to some scientists, you are at most seventieth cousins with all other humans.

It's All Relative tells how A.J. got interested in his ancestors, in particular, and genealogy, in general, after he received an email from a cousin in Israel, which said, "You don't know me, but you are an eighth cousin of my wife.... We have in our database about eighty thousand relatives of yours."

A.J. later spoke with his Israeli cousin, who told him that he had organized a family reunion in Jerusalem of 3,000 of their relatives. Which got A.J. thinking that if his Israeli cousin could organize such a huge family reunion, then

maybe [A.J.] could too. An even bigger one. A worldwide reunion. Like Woodstock, but with more pants and antiperspirant. Sister Sledge could come and sing "We Are Family."

A.J. decided to organize a "Global

Family Reunion," which was eventually held at the Hall of Science, in Queens, on 6-6-2015. *It's All Relative*, which will make you laugh and make you think, tells how A.J. organized the huge event, and how he learned about genealogy, in general, and his own ancestry, in particular.

Let me explain that A.J.'s goal – besides providing material for a new book – was that the Global Family Reunion would be a "foolproof plan to end war and racism," because: maybe the we-are-all family message would resonate with a few people. Maybe it'd increase the total kindness quotient in the world.

In furtherance of his personal quest to promote tolerance, A.J. concludes, "humans have a built-in bias to treat cousins – even distant ones – better than total strangers," and he sets out to learn about his own cousins, and other relatives, alive and dead.

To learn about his family, A.J. spoke with family members, reviewed family records and photos, searched online databases and off-line archives, and took a DNA test, which concluded that A.J. is 97% Jewish and 3% Scandinavian. A.J. knew, of course, that he was Jewish, but the Scandinavian part was a surprise (which helps prove his point that we are all each other's cousins).

It turns out that A.J.'s sixth great grandfather was the Vilna Gaon, a famous 17th century Lithuanian rabbi, and that his ancestors included Haym Solomon, the "great Jewish Revolutionary War hero who saved the United States by securing a \$20,000 loan for George Washington." A.J. also got a copy of the FBI file on his maternal grandfather, Theodore Kheel who was a prominent leftist labor lawyer who represented unions and who was an activist in the Civil Rights movement.

In furtherance of his observation



A.J. Jacobs

that we are all each other's cousins and that, "to paraphrase the Bible, maybe you should treat your forty-third cousin as you would yourself," A.J. spoke with Ron McCoy, whose great grandfather was part of

the original feud between the Hatfields and the McCoys, which began in the 1860's, and resulted in the murders of several Hatfields and several McCoys. McCoy told A.J. that, in 2003, representatives of the Hatfields and the McCoys signed a treaty symbolically ending their feud.

To prove his point that "embracing our genetic jambalya will erode tribalism for all of us," A.J. wrote monthly columns in *People Magazine*, interviewing some of his famous cousins, including former President George H.W. Bush who, with Barbara Bush, posed with A.J. while holding a sign saying "I AM A COUSIN," which he also included in *It's All Relative*.

A.J. also recounted his speech at the NY chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, whose members are female descendants of Revolutionary War soldiers, where he met a DAR officer who is African-American, which surprised -- and pleased! -- A.J., because he knew about the DAR's segregationist history:

The DAR was the subject of an infamous race-related controversy in 1939: the great African-American opera singer Marian Anderson tried to book a concert in Washington, D.C.'s Constitution Hall, which was owned by the DAR. But the DAR, which was segregated at the time, had a "white performers only" policy. They rejected her. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt was appalled [and] withdrew her membership from the DAR and helped organize a concert for Marian Anderson on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial [which] drew seventy-five thousand people.

Continued

It's too bad that Eleanor Roosevelt died in 1962, because she would have enjoyed A.J.'s Global Family Reunion. Although it rained on 6-6-2015, A.J. still got a good crowd at his event, including Harvard professor Louis Henry Gates, the host of a genealogy/family history show on PBS called "Finding Your Roots," who reiterated A.J.'s theme, telling attendees, "Despite all our differences – in geographical origin, skin color, hair texture, nose structure – we are all related. We are all cousins, whether we like it or not."

With the help of volunteers, A.J. organized 44 simultaneous reunions around the world, including in Texas, Mexico, New Zealand, Canada, and Salt Lake City. In Queens, the Global Family Reunion ended with a with the pop group Sister Sledge raucously performing "We Are Family," with A.J. and his other cousins singing along... and dancing!

Which goes to prove that if every1 reads A.J. Jacobs's new book, *It's All Relative*, then every1 would understand that we are all each other's cousins, which would make the world a better place.

I sent A.J. Jacobs some questions about *It's All Relative*, which are reprinted below, together with his answers.

How can our Montauk Sun readers learn their ancestry by getting their DNA tested (and how reliable are the results)?

There are several good services, including 23andMe.com and AncestryDNA.com. You spit into a tube, send it off, and they send you an analysis of where your ancestors came from, along with a list of distant cousins. I found it fascinating, but people should also be aware of the drawbacks: There are privacy concerns, and they aren't 100 percent accurate. One service told me that I'm 14 percent Scandinavian. I was excited – I was ready to take up cross-country skiing and eat more herring. But then it turned out to be a mistake. I

have barely 3 percent Scandinavian ancestry, if that.

How can our Montauk Sun readers research their family histories?

It's never been easier to research family history. There are websites such as Geni.com, MyHeritage.com and Ancestry.com. Also, I loved looking at old newspapers on sites like newspapers.com. You can search your ancestors' names and find the most random tidbits about their lives – like my fourth great uncle who was quoted in an advertisement for a hemorrhoid cream. I was so proud!

What surprised you most about your family history?

I didn't know that my third great grandfather was a soldier for the Union Army in the Civil War. I found his records on a military website. I'm Jewish, so this led me down a fascinating rabbit hole about Jewish soldiers during the Civil War, a topic I knew practically nothing about.

We think that Eleanor Roosevelt, who famously said, "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent," would agree with you that if people understood that we are all each other's cousins, then they would treat each other better. What do you think?

I agree with the brilliant Eleanor Roosevelt. In fact, some scientific research shows that if we all realized how we are all cousins, we might act with more kindness. One Harvard study found that Israelis and Palestinians treated each other with more kindness when they were told how closely they were related.

Have you become friends with any of your newfound cousins?

I've made friends with many of my new cousins. For instance, I figured out how I'm distantly related to both the Hatfields and the McCoys. I

got to meet one McCoy descendant who created a truce to end the century-old feud. A fascinating cousin!



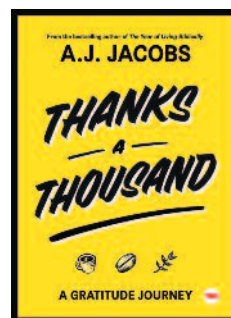
I have the perfect NY vanity license plate for you: [IHATEH8], which reads

as I HATE HATE. Too bad you don't have a car!

I love that. I do have some cousins who have cars, so I'll suggest that to them.

What is your forthcoming book, Thanks A Thousand about, and when will it be published?

The book is about how gratitude - especially in these dark times - is so



crucial. I go on a quest to thank every single person who had a role (however small) in making my morning cup of coffee possible: The barista, the lid designer, the South American farmer, the

trucker who hauled the coffee, the folks who paved the road for the trucker, the people who painted the stripes on the highways so the truck didn't veer into traffic. In the book, adventures are had. Characters are encountered. Lessons are learned. Observations are recorded. Coffee is drunk. Causes are joined. Synonyms for gratitude are employed. I'm really happy with the way the book came out, and I hope my readers like it too. Thank you!

What are your favorite things to do in Montauk?

I love Montauk. My kids and I have played many competitive rounds at the Puff'n' Putt (warning: Hole 11 is a killer). After working up a sweat on the links, we always go for ice cream at John's Drive-in.

To purchase *It's All Relative* and A.J. Jacobs' other books, please visit:
<https://ajjacobs.com/>



BY STEFAN LONCE + M.H. FRYBURG

MY FATHER AT 100

By Ron Reagan

Viking - \$25.95

MY FATHER AT 100, by Ron Reagan, is the perfect book for readers who are Ronald Reagan fans...and even for readers who aren't.

Tellingly, Ron Reagan has called his book a "memoir" rather than a "biography," because it's primarily about the relationship between the author and his father, who died in 2004, from Alzheimer's disease. Ronald Reagan would have been 100 on 2-11-2011, which explains the book's title (it was published in 2011).

The picture that Ron Reagan paints of his father was of a sensitive, creative boy, inspired by his mother, who grew up poor, with a father who had a "serious problem" with alcohol. Ron's grandfather, Jack Reagan, went on alcoholic benders that caused him to be arrested, and to lose jobs – he was a shoe salesman; Jack and his older son, Neil Reagan, later survived the Great Depression only because they got jobs with the New Deal's public works agencies.

In his memoir, Ron Reagan explains how his father, like many children of alcoholics, learned to avoid conflict, in part by ignoring it: "My father often frustrated my mother by conveniently checking out of dinnertime confrontations.... He was always acutely uncomfortable with roiling emotion and harsh words."

Ron Reagan also wrote about his road trips to various towns in Illinois, where Ronald Reagan was born and raised, where he was a lifeguard at the Rock River (he rescued 77 swimmers), and where he graduated from Eureka College. Ron Reagan's prose is not just polished – it's elegant! Ronald Reagan, the father, was a great writer who wrote his own speeches before he was elected President in 1980, and Ron Reagan, the son, has obviously inherited his father's literary talent.

Here's another quote from *MY FATHER AT 100*: "Like all my siblings, I loved my father deeply, at times longingly. He was easy to love but hard to know. He was seldom far from our minds, but you couldn't help wondering sometimes whether he remembered you once you were out of his sight."

Ron Reagan also wrote about his father's love of the outdoors, of riding horses, and of building things at the ranches that his parents owned. Governor Reagan was a great environmentalist -- he signed laws that preserved scenic wilderness areas, added to California's state's parks, and reduced air pollution.

Ronald Reagan was a huge FDR fan. "I voted for FDR four times. I'm trying to undo the Great Society [not the New Deal]," Reagan wrote in his second

autobiography, *An American Life*. FDR's conversational yet confident way of speaking on the radio inspired RR, who got his first radio job – he was a sportscaster – in 1932, in Iowa. In 1937 RR went to Hollywood and FDR, who loved movies, may have seen RR on the silver screen.

President Reagan preserved – and strengthened! – President Roosevelt's greatest domestic legacy: Social Security. On 8-14-1935, President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law. "We can never insure one hundred per cent of the population against one hundred per cent of the hazards and vicissitudes of life but we have tried to frame a law which will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family...against poverty-ridden old age," FDR said.

Social Security was financially secure from 1940, when it started paying benefits, until the late 1970's, when stagflation (inflation + economic stagnation = stagflation) pushed Social Security to the verge of insolvency. On 9-24-1981, President Reagan appointed the bipartisan Greenspan Commission, which recommended that Social Security be expanded to include more workers, that the retirement age be increased and benefits slightly decreased, and that mandatory FICA Social Security insurance premiums (commonly called "payroll taxes") be increased. After President Reagan signed the Social Security Amendments of 1983, incorporating the Greenspan Commission's recommendations, into law on 4-20-1983, he said: "Today we reaffirm Franklin Roosevelt's commitment that Social Security must always provide a secure and stable base so that older Americans may live in dignity."

Today, thanks to President Reagan, since 1983, Social Security has amassed \$2.8 trillion in surpluses, which are invested in special non-marketable Treasury bonds, and is projected to continue earning surpluses until 2022. Social Security reform, together with sensible immigration reform (the Immigration Reform and Control Act, which RR signed into law on 11-6-1986, provided amnesty for 3 million illegal immigrants), and tax reform (the Income Tax Reform Act of 1986, which RR signed into law on 11-22-1986, lowered rates, closed loopholes, and treated all income identically, regardless of its source) were President Reagan's greatest domestic accomplishments. President Roosevelt would have been quite proud of President Reagan, who, in 1983, enthusiastically authorized the construction of the FDR Memorial in Washington, near the White House.

Ronald Reagan was, at heart, a moderate, not the fire-breathing radical right-winger he was often depicted as. "Beyond a fondness for nonintrusive government and lower taxes (you will recall that the top marginal tax rate for most of his years in office was 50 percent), my father had little in common with the rage mongering infecting his party today. Short circuiting the functions of government, potentially driving the country into ruin just to score political points by pinning the blame on the opposition, are tactics he would consider unpatriotic, not to mention undemocratic," Ron Reagan wrote in his most excellent book.

Ronald Reagan's greatest unknown accomplishment took place on 8-21-1970, when Governor Reagan signed the law authorizing California to issue vanity license plates, which provides that the plate fees are paid to the California Environmental License Plate Fund. Today, thanks to Governor Reagan, California's 1 million vanity plates EARN it \$38 million annually for environmental protection programs, statewide. Amazingly, vanity license plates are another thing that FDR and RR had in common: Franklin Delano Roosevelt had the first-known vanity plates, on his cars with hand controls he designed after he was paralyzed by polio, which said: **FDR**.

While searching for a photograph of Governor Reagan signing the law authorizing California to issue vanity license plates – none exists – we discovered

amazing, black-and-white newspaper photos (taken by *Sacramento Bee* photographers), and we self-published our **2011 RONALD REAGAN LOVES KIDS COLLECTIBLE CALENDAR BY STEFAN LONCE**, which has great black-and-white photos of the Reagans from their Sacramento years (1967 - 1975).

In 2010, we sent Ron Reagan a copy of the calendar (we are now disassembling the unsold calendars, and selling the amazing photos as mounted, matted prints), through his agent, Laurie Jacoby (Ron Reagan frequently appears as a political commentator on TV), so we decided to send President Reagan's youngest son this review, with some interview questions. The questions, and Ron Reagan's answers, are below.

Q: What was your father's greatest strength?

A: Simple human decency. He treated everyone with the same respect and compassion.

Q: What was your father's greatest weakness?

A: The naïve faith that other people would generally act in accord with simple human decency.

Q: Your brother-in-law, Dennis Revell, told us that Ronald Reagan was the funniest man he ever met. Do you agree, or disagree? (Please explain your answer.)

A: I've met a lot of very funny people – George Carlin; Steve Martin; Robin Williams. Funniest person is a pretty high bar. Still, my father was funny. He had great timing and understood how to deliver a punch line. My maternal grandmother and he had regular phone calls where they would crack each other up trading dirty jokes.

Q: We don't think that Ronald Reagan would have been elected Governor or President without Nancy Reagan's advice, particularly about people, since, as you wrote, she was a much better judge of people, and what they wanted, than he was. What do you think?

A: She was his radar and backstop. She provided a calm, safe space that enabled him to function.

Q: How are your parents alike, and how are they different?

A: As my father would say of my mother, "she's a worrier." My father, famously, was not.

Q: Did you know about your father's role in enacting and promoting California's vanity license plates before we sent you our 2011 calendar?

A: Not until you reminded me.

Q: Did your father ever discuss California's vanity plates, and his efforts to enact and promote them, with you?

A: Probably. But life is long, memory short.

Q: Your mother had one of the first vanity plates that California issued; the plate says 111 NDR – she wanted a plate with her initials, but there were concerns about her security so the DMV added the meaningless 111 to the plate so that people wouldn't know that it was the Governor's wife's car. Did she ever discuss her vanity plate with you? If so, why did she want the plate and what did she like about it?

A: If it helped my father do what he wanted to do, she'd happily have a vanity plate.

Q: Do you now have, or have you ever had, a vanity license plate? If so, what did the plate(s) say and what did it/they mean?

A: I considered one for my wife. She was unenthusiastic.

Stefan Lonce is the editor of *The Montauk Sun*; M.H. Fryburg is an attorney and author in Croton-on-Hudson, NY. Lonce and Fryburg are working on a forthcoming book: **4 A NEW USA - THE ROOSEVELT/REAGAN WAY: A CALENDARICAL MEMOIR** (www.4ANEWSUSA.com)

Hissing Cousins: The Untold Story of Eleanor Roosevelt and Alice Roosevelt Longworth

By Marc Peyser + Timothy Dwyer - Reviewed by MH Fryburg

As seen in *The Montauk Sun*, October 2019

Marc Peyser and Timothy Dwyer, who wrote, *Hissing Cousins: The Untold Story of Eleanor Roosevelt and Alice Roosevelt Longworth*, make history fun.

Eleanor Roosevelt and Alice Roosevelt Longworth, who were both born in 1884, were 1st cousins. Eleanor's father, Elliott, was the younger brother of Theodore Roosevelt; Alice was Teddy's oldest child. Sadly, both Eleanor and Alice endured tragic and unhappy childhoods: Eleanor's mother, Anna, died when she was 8, and, 2 years later, was followed into the grave by her alcoholic father, Elliott; Alice's mother (who was also named Alice) died in childbirth on the same day as TR's mother, which sent the future President into a prolonged depression which took him years to overcome.

Anna, who was a great beauty, objected to Eleanor's plain looks and peculiar mannerisms, and mockingly called her daughter "Granny." After her cold and condescending mother died, Eleanor was raised by her joyless maternal grandmother in a cold and unhappy mansion in Tivoli, NY, where locks were installed on Eleanor's bedroom door to keep her alcoholic uncles, who still lived at home, away from their young niece. Eleanor kept her sanity in part by reveling in memories of her father, who treated her lovingly, even though he didn't spend much time with her.

After her mother died, Alice was raised by her Aunt Anna (who was TR's younger sister, and whose nickname was "Bye") until TR married Edith Carew, who, over her new husband's objections, insisted that Alice live with them. "I don't think he had any special affection for me," Alice said, about her father.

As children, Eleanor and Alice spent time together -- ER was TR's favorite niece; as adults, they both married politicians -- Eleanor married her (and Alice's) 5th cousin, once removed, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Alice married Nicholas Longworth, who became the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

As children and as young adults, Eleanor and Alice were opposites. Eleanor was shy and insecure; Alice was gregarious and provocative, generating controversy wherever she went, often in the guise of unofficial ambassador for her father, when he was President. TR famously said, "I can run the country or I could control Alice. I can't possibly do both."

The bad blood between Eleanor and Alice included Alice's anger at Eleanor for helping to

torpedo the NY gubernatorial campaign of her brother, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr, in 1924. During that campaign, ER drove around NYS in a car outfitted with a teapot on the roof, which actually spouted steam... which was an allusion to the Teapot Dome scandal in the Harding Administration; Ted Roosevelt, Jr, lost to Alfred Smith, which paved the way for FDR to get elected Governor of NY in 1928.

After FDR won the White House in 1932, the Eleanor/Alice relationship became national news, as Peyser and Dwyer explain:

The press played Alice and Eleanor off each other like rivals in a blue-blooded version of Oz: the good witch and the bad witch. Eleanor was the saint, the woman who revolutionized the role of First Lady.... Alice played the troublemaker. She relished any opportunity to tweak the stogy establishment, and no one was more establishment -- or in Alice's eyes, more sanctimonious -- than Anna Eleanor Roosevelt.

Although she was welcomed as a guest at the Roosevelt White House, Alice never hesitated to criticize her cousin the President, on political and personal matters. Eleanor [whose actual legal 1st name was "Anna"] and Alice both wrote newspaper columns that were distributed nationally, beginning in 1935. ER continued writing her column, "My Day," for years, even after 4-12-1945, when FDR died at the polio clinic he founded in Warm Springs, Georgia, in the presence of his "girlfriend," Lucy Mercer Rutherford, with whom he had an affair, starting in 1917, which Eleanor discovered in 1918. Alice's syndicated column, "What Alice Thinks," lasted only 18 months.

Eleanor Roosevelt was Franklin Roosevelt's eyes, ears and legs: in 1921, when he was 39 years old, FDR was paralyzed, from the waist down, by the polio virus; although he never walked, unassisted, again, according to medical records, FDR's polio-induced paralysis



did not affect his sexuality. Eleanor Roosevelt was also Franklin Roosevelt's conscience: she constantly advocated for the downtrodden and the oppressed; in a time of rampant racism, ER publicly denounced racism and lynching of colored people (as Black Americans were then called); she helped save many lives by helping refugees from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy enter the United States.

In contrast, before America entered WW2 on 12-8-1941, Alice became an isolationist, who fiercely opposed FDR's efforts to rearm America and help the British stave off defeat, by Hitler, in 1941. Because he was fluent in German -- he read Hitler's hateful memoir, *Mein Kampf* [My Struggle], in the original German -- FDR understood the menace that Hitler posed to every1, before almost any1.

After FDR died, President Truman appointed ER as US delegate to the United Nations, where she helped lead the fight to partition Palestine into Jewish and Arab states, and where she became the dominant figure in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was incorporated in the 1975 Helsinki Accords, which recognized Soviet domination of Eastern Europe in exchange for recognition, by the Communists, of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration, and which lead to the peaceful downfall of Communism in Russia and its satellites, beginning in 1989.

Eleanor died in 1962; Alice didn't attend the funeral. Alice died in 1980. Here's how Peyser and Dwyer sum up the Eleanor/Alice relationship:

They were arguably the most famous women in the country, if not the world, for extended periods of their lives, important enough to command audiences with presidents and kings. They were writers and lecturers, terrible mothers but beloved grandmothers. Above all they were politicians. Even though they never ran for office, few women waded as deeply into the issues of the day.

I met Marc Peyser and Tim Dwyer at the FDR Library, in 2015, when *Hissing Cousins* was first published; listening to them speak, I realized that Marc Peyser and Tim Dwyer make history fun. Having read *Hissing Cousins* (twice!), I can tell you that even if you don't like history, you should read *Hissing Cousins*, because Marc Peyser and Tim Dwyer make history fun.

