

Kol Ma'arav Voice of the West



The Newsletter of Congregation Sof Ma'arav,
the Westernmost Member of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

Winter 2005-06

Send away those cold, winter blues
Enjoy a delightful evening of warmth and celebration!



CHANUKAH PARTY

at the Armstrongs
Sunday, January 1, 2006
5:00 PM to 8:00 PM
Kailua



Please call Sandy or Don at 263-1130 to RSVP

Please Bring – Potluck Dairy/Parve and latkes!

We will enjoy our very own Chanukah band, singing, dreidel spinning,
games and outdoor dining.

Circling the Wagons

For over thirty years, Congregation Sof Ma'arav has been my family's spiritual home. To say that we've participated in Shabbat and holiday services and celebrations can't begin to explain the part the shul has played in our lives. By far the services are the most enriching and satisfying of any we've attended, but it's much more. Lifelong friendships continue and new friendships begin at Sof. We stretched our hearts and our minds to new people and new ideas for 33 years. We celebrated, laughed, mourned, studied and learned, and of course we ate together - at every possible occasion. The people of Sof Ma'arav became our *ohana*.

So it isn't surprising that when Bob died the *shul* became an even closer family. It was a kind of "circling the wagons" that surrounded Erica and me with love and caring, with more than a *minyán* of friends old and new every evening of *shiva*, and a complete roster of folks who brought us delicious food every night. (I'm still enjoying the leftovers from the freezer!)

My sister and brother-in-law came to be with us during the week of *shiva*; our daughter Erica was here with me for weeks and her husband Peter for a few days and they will come back often - but they must return to their homes. Fortunately for me, I have my *ohana* - Congregation Sof Ma'arav.

- Judy Goldman

IN MEMORIAM

Robert Goldman, passed away at home on October 27 with his wife, Judy, and daughter, Erica, by his side. Jordan Popper expressed the sentiments of the congregation in his eulogizing remarks: "Bob was a truly wonderful person – a true gentleman who was rarely angered, an outstanding husband and father. He was a stalwart in the Jewish Community serving on several Jewish boards and as treasurer for Sof Ma'arav and the Jewish Federation of Hawaii. He was part of the core families that kept Sof Ma'arav alive – his was one of the homes used for services early in our history and often used for Havdalah evenings. He and Judy brought with them from Brandeis University in California, the concept of Havdalah evenings and of rotating Drashim at each Shabbat service. He gave the annual Drash on Yom Kippur – a form of soul nutrition to help us sustain our fast. He had a very strong moral sense and would not brook immorality of any kind. He read voraciously and was a delight in discussion groups, classes, Seders and as a dinner companion....He was a truly unique person. We will all miss him terribly."

Zelda Tanenbaum Scott, mother of Sof member Stuart Scott, passed away the morning of November 1st in Queens, New York. She was 88. She is survived by her three children – Stuart, Diana, and David – and three grand children – Sean, Joshua and Zoe Scott. She was born and raised in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn and later moved with her husband to Queens after the end of WWII where they raised a family. She was a great homemaker, cook and baker, made *mandelbread* and *hamentashen* that, according to Stuart, was legendary. In retirement she became an artist in many media, mostly oils and acrylics, but ceramics as well. She and Stuart's father had a combined retrospective exhibit at Queens College in 1998 representing the best of the art they had done while attending the college. Says Stuart, "she will be missed, but survives in our hearts and minds."

Havdalah Evening – Saturday, January 21 at 7:00 pm

ARGUING WITH THE EARTH FOR THE SAKE OF HEAVEN: Talmudic Thinking and Ecology

Rabbi Natan Margalit presents this subject for discussion at a Sof Ma'arav Havdalah evening at the home of Fran Margulies, 118 Hawaii Loa St., Aina Haina
Rabbi Margalit teaches at the Hebrew College Rabbinical School in Newton, Mass.

Jewish Community Services accepting volunteers to assist the elderly in the Jewish community

Thank you to Sof members who participated in the volunteer training session in September.

It is not too late for others to volunteer to assist the elderly in the Jewish community by providing friendly visits; transportation to religious services, medical appointments, grocery shopping, etc.; friendly telephone calls; hospital and nursing home visits; and caregivers' respite relief.

Please call Sue Alden-Rudin at JCS, 258-7121, for further information.

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Please visit our website at www.sofmaarav.org

Submissions and suggestions may be e-mailed to mrabinko@yahoo.com

Regular Shabbat Services are held Saturdays at 10 a.m. Babysitting is available.

Board of Directors

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BOB GOLDMAN by Erica Goldman

Many people commented that they only knew Bob Goldman in a particular context - as a friend, as a community member. During the last few years, I was gratified to have the opportunity to "interview" my dad about his life and get to know him - at least a little bit - as a child, as a sailor, as an entrepreneur, as an intellectual. While I can't represent his life in a page or two, following is an effort to share some of these other sides of my dad.

My dad was born March 28, 1926 in Providence, Rhode Island to Frances Levy Goldman and James Goldman. He was the youngest of five children, with three brothers and one sister. He greatly respected his entrepreneurial father and his family-oriented mother. His father had come to the United States at the age of 16, when he proceeded to start his own business, bring many family members to the US and Canada, and help build the growing Providence Jewish community. I believe that much of my father's kindness and sense of community was inspired by early impressions of his own father.

My dad's proclivities toward science and good books took hold at an early age. For play, he experimented with chemistry sets in the basement of his family's home, occasionally sparking small explosions! He enjoyed reading and collected books throughout childhood. He recalled many family meals spent in silence with his nose in a book - it was a family tradition. Years later, his nieces and nephews would comment how they enjoyed visiting their grandmother's house and raiding their "Uncle Bobby's" book collection.

Dad left home at 17 to attend college at Cornell. A year later, he suspended his studies to join the military and support the war effort. Dad chose the navy due to his long-time love of boats and sailing. While there, Dad received training in cutting-edge electronics, including radar. In addition to forwarding his scientific knowledge, the navy broadened his social awareness: he befriended people from a variety of backgrounds and ethnicities, in contrast to his primarily Jewish friends from home. Despite the diversity of his fellow shipmates, he noted with regret that the navy was still racially segregated. By the time he was trained and his ship was ready, the war ended. Still he sailed with the ship from the West coast, through the Panama Canal, and back to the East coast.

After the navy, Dad returned to Cornell to finish his college education. Soon after graduation, he tried his first entrepreneurial venture with a fraternity brother: hydroponic farming in Florida (growing vegetables in water instead of soil). Although the venture was not profitable, we are told he grew delicious tomatoes! Later, he headed west to Los Angeles to apply his computer expertise as Director of Technical Information for Bendix Computers. In 1960, Dad and a colleague from Bendix, Ron Katz, teamed up to create a new company called Telecredit, Inc., where they pioneered the nascent credit card industry. The two were a good match: Dad invented cutting edge technologies and built computers; Ron forged partnerships and built

organizations to bring the technologies to market. (For example, Telecredit partnered with the California DMV and the Los Angeles Police Department to build their network.) Over the next ten years, Dad and Ron introduced a number of industry "firsts": the first to introduce online check cashing authorization; the first to build and deploy a real time credit approval terminal; the first to deploy a Bank Check Guarantee card; the first to invent a device for reading and writing on the magnetic strip. (This magnetic strip was used by the ATM manufacturers at the beginning of the ATM revolution in the 70's.) Dozens of Dad's designs were patented.

Meanwhile, in 1962, Dad met Judy Solomon (a.k.a. "Mom") at the Hickory Ski and Outdoor Club, a group of young Jewish singles who spent weekends hiking the Sierras, camping in beach parks, and apparently, meeting future spouses. They were engaged in 1963 and married in January 1964, the start of a happy 41-year union.

In the next several years, Dad's priorities began to shift from career to family. He and Ron sold Telecredit to Equifax and started a new company to build fraud-prevention technologies. However, after launching the company, Dad chose to limit his business involvement in order to focus on his family. By then, Mom and Dad had two daughters -- my sister Cindy and myself, Erica. Not wanting to raise their children in Los Angeles, they bought a home in the quiet Lanikai neighborhood of Kailua. They agreed to try it for a year; if they didn't like it, they would move back to L.A. Within a month of living in Lanikai, they knew they had found their home.

Dad's lifelong loves flourished in Hawaii. Our home was always full of books. He swam in the ocean every day. He found an outlet for his interest in Jewish learning and community at Congregation Sof Ma'arav, where he and Mom became leaders and contributors. He also explored his interest in Einstein's religious beliefs, reading and researching fervently. One summer in the 1970's, he took the family to Princeton so he could study Einstein's letters and papers first hand; he met with Einstein's secretary and visited his personal library. After years of thoughtful research, he published his first book in 1997, titled "Einstein's God: Albert Einstein's Quest As a Scientist and As a Jew to Replace a Forsaken God". Meanwhile, he shared his ideas with the congregation at Havdalahs and on High Holidays for many years. His love of study never ended; he completed his second book manuscript in August 2005, titled "Renewal: the Hebrew Lord in an Age of Science." On Yom Kippur this year, Mom read the drash that Dad prepared which represented many of the ideas in the second book.

Dad was an attentive and loving father and husband. He hugged his family often and encouraged us to find our passions. My dad passed away at home on October 27, 2005. Mom, my husband Peter and I were by his side. He is greatly missed and deeply loved.

Sof Book Group

You are invited to participate in the Sof Book Group, now starting its second year. If you have an interest in reading and discussing Jewish literature, start 2006 with this exciting and varied selection of books. All meetings will take place on Sunday afternoon, 1-3 p.m. at a location to be confirmed closer to the date. Please RSVP for the meetings to cabc@lava.net or 254-8812. When you RSVP, I will give you directions to the meeting place. Hope you will join us for one or all of the meetings.

Shalom, Carolann Biederman

January 15: Call It Sleep by Henry Roth
at Trudy and Al Wong's Manoa home

March 19: Night and Dawn by Elie Weisel
(if you have time for only one book, read Night only)

May 28: Paradise Park by Allegra Goodman

July 16: Rashi's Daughter by Maggie Anton

Sept. 10: Patrimony by Phillip Roth

Nov. 26: open

Sisterhood Announcement

The Sisterhood of Temple Emanuel invites all Jewish women in our community to join Sisterhood. Sisterhood supports The Gan Yerushalayim pre-school, School of Jewish Studies (SJS), and Jewish Community Services among other programs. This year we have a variety of activities planned including speakers, community service projects, and book discussions. We also host a women's Torah study group facilitated by Dr. Saundi Schwartz. This year the women's Torah study group is focusing on the Five Books of Miriam. Please join us.

Membership is as follows:

Membership.....\$ 30

Fellowship Member...\$ 45

Matriarch Member.....\$100

Please make your check out to:

The Sisterhood of Temple Emanuel, and send to:
Temple Emanuel 2550 Pali Highway Honolulu, HI 96817

Eulogy for Bob Goldman by Jordan Popper, October 31, 2005

Bob Goldman was a true Jewish philosopher-scientist in the mold of one of his heroes – Albert Einstein. Bob studied Einstein's correspondence during several months at Princeton and concluded that Einstein's grounding in Judaism, Torah and classical Hebrew were major contributions to his world view and to his theories – especially the Theory of Relativity.

Most biographies of Einstein dismissed his Jewish background as irrelevant to his work. Bob saw that the absence of tenses in Biblical Hebrew was a prerequisite for developing a theory in which past, present and future co-exist. There is no clear cut distinction between past, present and future. There are only completed acts and uncompleted acts or partially completed acts. The future in classical Hebrew is behind us, while the past is before us as the acts have been completed. All acts and actions are intertwined as time is relative.

This attitude towards time was a major factor in the Hebrew attitude toward death. There is no heaven or hell. The dead person has lost their physical body, but they live on in the memories and thoughts of family members, friends, students and colleagues and in the impact they have upon all whom they have touched and influenced. Mankind is in a state of constant evolution in an effort at *Tikkun Olam* - repairing or completing the incomplete world God had created. The world was left incomplete so that a partnership between God and Man would be required.

As a computer engineer, Bob suggests that an Internet inspired massive and steadily progressive increase in knowledge at a worldwide level will occur, in a sense reaching for the sky and stars – for "heaven." It will require contributions from all cultures and would

succeed where the tower of Babel failed due to lack of a universal language. The internet could be that universal language.

Bob has written two books on these subjects – one of which has not been published yet. He provides amazing insight into the meaning of *Olam* (eternity – the world etc.) and into the impossibility of translating Torah. It can really only be studied in the original Hebrew.

Bob was a truly wonderful person – a true gentleman who was rarely angered, an outstanding husband and father. He was a stalwart in the Jewish Community serving on several Jewish boards and as treasurer for Sof Ma'arav and the Jewish Federation of Hawaii. He was part of the core three families that kept Sof Ma'arav alive – his was one of the homes used for services early in our history and often used for *Havdalah* evenings. He and his wife, Judy, brought with them from Brandeis University in California, the concept of *Havdalah* evenings and of rotating *Drashim* at each Shabbat service. He gave the annual *Drash* on Yom Kippur – a form of soul nutrition to help us sustain our fast. He had a very strong moral sense and would not brook immorality of any kind. He read voraciously and was a delight in discussion groups, classes, Seders and as a dinner companion.

Our three families (Goldmans, Littmans, and Poppers) have become almost a single family over the years. Bob is the first to leave and the shock to us is unimaginable. He was a truly unique person. I was thinking about who I could talk to as I prepared this talk and of course it would have been Bob. We will all miss him terribly.

A Note from Mathew R. Sgan

Recently, the UU Church newsletter included an article about **Don Dvojacki**. Most of us know him as just Don, but not only does he have a last name, he also has the title of Church Administrator.

In that role, the article indicates he is really a Don of all seasons. He keeps records; mows lawns; produces the Church newsletter, directory, and annual report; schedules events; changes light bulbs; provides security; organizes volunteer days; and serves as custodian. Sof Ma'arav benefits from his work as well. In the recent past, he has helped with chair arrangement, manual labor, sound system repair, and traffic management.

While Don is never too shy to be sure that we do no harm, he is always willing to lend a hand to make things right. We appreciate his availability and hard work to ensure that our events at UU run smoothly and properly.

I am sure that I speak for all the members of Sof Ma'arav in extending our heartfelt thanks to Don for all the extra things he does to help us in our worship services and festival programs. He is very important to the fine relationship that we have had with the UU Church over many years.

Sofers, perhaps you would like to express your appreciation to Don when you next see him. He will no doubt appreciate hearing from you. Oh, and if you don't bump into him, he's probably off playing paintball with friends on the Windward side.

SALLY'S BOOK CORNER

You have read the entire Kemelman series, and the Jewish cowboy, Kinkey Friedman doesn't appeal, you're waiting for the next Faye Kellerman, and you can't find another Joseph Teluskin mystery, where can you turn to find mysteries with Jewish characters?

How about David Liss's *A Conspiracy of Paper*, or his second book, *The Coffee Trader*? As Liss writes, "After years in the archives, I failed to find the source that told me precisely what I wanted to know about the new finance of the early eighteenth century, so I wrote one." He wrote two, as a matter of fact. His first, *A Conspiracy of Paper*, is a mystery novel set in London on the cusp of the South Sea Bubble in 1720. His hero is Benjamin Weaver, a Jew and ex-boxer who tracks down debtors and felons for aristocratic clients. The son of a wealthy stock trader, he lives estranged from his family until he is asked to investigate his father's sudden death. In *The Coffee Trader*, Liss takes us to the Amsterdam of 1659 and the world's first commodities exchange where fortunes are won and lost in an instant. Miquel Lienzo, a sharp-witted trader in the city's close-knit community of Portuguese Jews has suddenly lost everything and is living, poor and humiliated, in his younger brother's canal-flooded basement. In hopes of recovering his fortune, Miquel enters into a partnership to corner the market of a new commodity called "coffee". To succeed, Miquel must risk everything and face a powerful enemy who will stop at nothing to see him ruined.

Or, if you prefer a cozy humorous mystery, try Sharon Kahn's *Which Big Giver Stole the Chopped Liver*: a Ruby, the Rabbi's Wife Mystery. Kahn's mysteries are set in Eternal, Texas and her congregation is Temple Rita. Essie Sue Margolis, the terror of Temple Rita, decides it's time for a reunion fund-raiser to renovate the temple. At the opening celebratory event, an unknown man is found dead, keeled over in a platter of ice where once rested Essie Sue's chopped live mold in the shape of Texas. The antics of Temple Rita's Rabbi Levin strain credibility. Ruby's sense of humor and apt observations on life will

find the reader laughing their way through this mystery. The bonus at the end of the book is: Essie Sue Margolis' recipe for chopped liver with tofu. Other books in the series are: *Fax Me A Bagel*; *Never Nosh A Matzo Ball*; *Don't Cry For Me, Hot Pastrami*; and *Hold the Cream Cheese, Kill the Lox*.

For those who like an academic background, there is Lev Raphael's *The Edith Wharton Murders*, a Nick Hoffman Mystery. In this campus mystery, set at fictional State University of Michigan, a conference on Edith Wharton becomes a killing ground when various literary factions carry their war of words a little too far, and someone ends up dead. Once the murder takes place, Nick must switch his focus from panel discussions to investigation, a course of action that provides plenty of opportunities for Raphael to skewer the academic world. Other books in the Nick Hoffman series are: *Tropic of Murder*, *Burning Down the House*, *Little Miss Evil*, *The Death of a Constant Lover* and *Let's Get Criminal*.

And then there is Rochelle Krich's Molly Blume series, in beginning with *Blues in the Night*, *Dream House*, *Grave Endings*, and just published in October, *Now You See Me*. Molly Blue is an L.A. true-crime writer. In her mysteries, Krich expertly mixes Orthodox Jewish faith with crisp whodunit plotting. Her latest book has been selected for the Jewish Book Network-2005-2006 Authors on Tour.

On a more serious note, the Jewish Encounters Book Series, a partnership of Nextbook and Schocken Books has published the first two books in their Jewish Encounters Book Series. Jewish Encounters will include biographies of major Jewish figures from Moses to Emma Lazarus to Marc Chagall. The first two, *The Life of David* by Robert Pinsky and *Maimonides* by Sherwin B. Nuland have been published. For a full list of the series, go to www.nextbook.org/publishingprogram.

Good reading to all...and have a great Hanukkah!

- Sally Morgan

A Bissl un a Bissl

From YIVO News, Fall 2005. To commemorate its 80th anniversary, YIVO sponsored an historic conference, "Jews and Medicine—in the Footsteps of Maimonides: The Jewish Doctor as Healer, Scientist and Intellectual." Topics included medical ethics, the role of women, the attraction of the medical field for Jews and issues related to the boycott of Israeli academicians and physicians at international meetings. Concurrent with the conference was an exhibition that focused on the subject with artifacts and documents from the extensive YIVO Archives.

From *belieftnet*. "The 'Protocols' Past and Present" by Saul Austerlitz. Two recent works have sought to explore the ugly history of the "Protocols", one with an eye to the past, and one looking to the present. Will Eisner, the graphic artist, completed, just before his death, "The Plot", an illustrated history of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion." A new documentary by film maker Marc Levin, "Protocols of Zion", documents the text's strange re-emergence, journeying deep into the heart of contemporary world conspiracy theorizing to find the "Protocols" seemingly lurking everywhere....Jewish history is rife with the lies told about their nefarious practices, from Christ-killing to blood libel to secret global domination. The Protocols are not the problem: they are merely its expression, and Eisner and Levin both adopt a mournful tone when it comes to discussion of its eradication, because this malevolent weed simply will not die.

From *The New York Times*, November 9, 2005. In the 20th century B.C., in the hill country south of Jerusalem, a scribe carved his ABC's or rather his *aleph-bet-gimel's* on a limestone boulder in what appears to be an early rendering of the emergent Hebrew. Archaeologists digging in July at the site, Tel Zayit, found the inscribed stone and concluded that this was the earliest known specimen of the Hebrew alphabet and an important benchmark in the history of writing.

From "A Little Joy A Little Oy" calendar: The proper making of an egg cream: According to Stan Zimmerman, owner of Sammy's Roumanian Steak House, this is what you do. The ingredients are: Seltzer (bottle only), whole milk, and Fox's U-Bet. Add the milk first (an inch). Spritz

seltzer almost to top and let sit three seconds, then add a little more seltzer. Pour syrup down the center of glass to taste (about 3/4 ounce). Stir right, then left. After it homogenizes and then separates into a clear, white head, drink and enjoy!

From *Forward*, September 9, 2005. For you who want to know plant names in Yiddish, YIVO has come to your aid. It has recently published "*Di geviksn-velt in yidish*" or "Plant Names in Yiddish" assembled and in part newly coined by Yiddish linguist and scholar Mordkhe Schaechter. The terms are listed alphabetically only in English-to-Yiddish and not Yiddish-to-English, which limits the use of the book. The Yiddish vocabulary was highly regional and differed greatly from place to place. As a result, if you wish to know what a sunflower is named in Yiddish, you will find *zunoyz*, *royz*, *zunblum*, *levone-kveyt*, etc. In other areas, the Yiddish name was influenced by Jewish tradition such as *shyne-boym* for willow tree, from *hoshayes* (Hebrew *hosha'not*), the prayers said with willow branches.

From *Hadassah Magazine*, October 2005. Web Sightings. A number of web sights give ample reasons for you to study Talmud with your computer. The article selection at www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/talmud.htm is a good start for beginners. Its Guided Learning sequence includes investigations of the Talmud's history and explanations of its various commentators. For a list of the vast number of subjects that came under the sages' scrutiny and where they are found, try www.aishdas.org/webshas. To tackle the commitment of *daf yomi*, there is www.edaf.com, which offers the daily lesson in audio.

Better still, come to the Saturday morning Sof Study Sessions. One week it's a study of the *parshah*, and the next it's Talmud with Gregg. As Rashi writes, "Study in joy and good cheer, in accordance with your intelligence and heart's dictates."

Yiddish quotation: *Ver es vagt nit krigt nit zayn kheytlek*. If you don't dare, you won't get anywhere.

-Sally Morgan

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Honolulu, HI 96817**

To: