

# *Kol Ma'arav* *Voice of the West* קול מערב



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

*Spring 2006*

## **DEAR SOFERS, MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR:**

- MARCH 13:** Sof Purim Party at 7:00 pm at the Unitarian Church. There will be a Potluck dessert table, with Sof providing *hamentashen* following the reading of the Book of Esther.
- MARCH 19:** Sof Book Club to meet at Judy Goldman's at 1:00 pm. The book under discussion is "Night" by Elie Wiesel. A brief look back at "Call It Sleep" will follow.
- APRIL 12:** The first Passover *Seder*.
- MAY 7:** Sof Board Meeting at the Morgans at 7:30 pm
- MAY 21:** Israeli Independence Day Festival (see below).

**REMINDER:** Passover is just around the corner. Time to get your copy of Sof Ma'arav's "When You Live in Hawaii You Get Creative at Passover Cookbook." Available for \$10.00 to members, \$16.95 to non-members (add \$3.50 per copy for shipping and handling). See order form at our website [www.sofmaarav.org](http://www.sofmaarav.org).



## **58TH ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY FESTIVAL SUNDAY MAY 21, 2006 HONOLULU CIVIC CENTER**

This is the third year of a unique-to-Hawaii event AND IT BELONGS TO US!

On May 21, 2006 we will celebrate Israel Independence Day from 11 am to 5 pm at Honolulu Civic Center (Skygate Park at Honolulu Hale).

Ethan Kuniyoshi, [info@israeldayhawaii.com](mailto:info@israeldayhawaii.com), of Sof Ma'arav is the volunteer festival chairman.

The event Committee represents EVERY Jewish organization in Hawaii united in a common cause to celebrate and support Israel. We need YOUR moral support (submit your thoughts to email below!), YOUR participation (Ya gotta come!), YOUR financial support (Can you send a few shekels to the P.O Box below?), and your practical help (man a booth, sing, dance, join hands).

Tax-deductible (it's true!) contributions may be made at any time to: Israel Independence Day Festival, P.O Box 10309, Honolulu, HI 96816. You will be recognized in the festival program and website (contributions of \$360 or more will be printed on the festival banner and announced by our emcee (with your permission). Ethan Kuniyoshi and Pinchas Neuman are co-chairing the event and can be reached respectively at 696-0077 or 358-3493.

**ETHAN WILL DRIVE AND PICK UP YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS IF YOU CAN'T FIND A STAMP.**

This celebration is about community unity, positive Israel information and education and a day to have FUN!

Check out the website! [www.IsraelDayHawaii.com](http://www.IsraelDayHawaii.com)

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## IN MEMORIAM

**Shirley Chaney**, beloved mother and grandmother passed away on February 20, 2006 at Tripler Army Medical Center. Shirley has been active in the Hawaii Jewish community for many years. Her community contributions include, but are not limited to, being president of both the Jewish Women's Guild of the Aloha Jewish Chapel as well as Hadassah. She will be sorely missed.

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### Jewish Community Services

If you are concerned about anyone in the Jewish community who may need the assistance of Jewish Community Services and would like to refer them, please call Sue Alden-Rudin at 258-7121.

### Sof Book Group

If you have an interest in reading and discussing Jewish literature, join the Sof Book Group.

All meetings will take place on Sunday afternoon, 1-3 p.m. at a location to be confirmed closer to the date.

Please RSVP to Carolann to [cabc@lava.net](mailto:cabc@lava.net) or 254-8812 for locations and directions.

- March 19: Night by Elie Weisel (at Judy Goldman's home, 1042 Kola Street, Kahala)  
May 28: Paradise Park by Allegra Goodman  
July 16: Rashi's Daughter by Maggie Anton  
Sept. 10: Patrimony by Phillip Roth  
Nov. 26: open

### BRINGING GOD'S JUSTICE TO EARTH - By Yael

For over 18 years I have been battling for special disability access with the Judiciary of Hawaii. Acting as my own attorney, I won a landmark decision by the Hawaii District Court on September 30, 2005 to be granted alternative site access. As a person disabled with environmental illness, all District and Circuit Court buildings on Oahu are inaccessible to me. With this decision, Hawaii has taken a step forward to join such states as Vermont, where disabled access, including alternative site access, was granted 10 years before the Americans with Disabilities Act became law.

Among those to whom I want to give 10,000 *mahalos* are Sof members Hinda and Ken, whose support these past few years have given me hope and comfort; Dina, who even came to court so I wouldn't be alone; and David, Koby, and Jodi, who had to make do without Dina; and most importantly my copilot who is ever with me and who only asks of us "to act justly, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God." (Micha 6:8.)

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Please visit our website at [www.sofmaarav.org](http://www.sofmaarav.org)

Submissions and suggestions may be e-mailed to [mrabinko@yahoo.com](mailto:mrabinko@yahoo.com)

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

### Board of Directors

President:	Bernice Littman	Vice President:	Sally Morgan	Treasurer:	Dr. Robert Littman
Recording Secretary:	Sally Morgan	Corresponding Secretary:	Ami Olstein	Ritual Committee Chair:	Dr. Gregg Kinkley
Ritual Committee Adviser:	Ken Aronowitz	Oneq Chair:	Dr. Gin Sgan	Drash Coordinator:	Fran Marquies
Newsletter Editor:	Morris Rabinko	Havdalah Organizer:	Dr. Jordan Popper	Webmistresses:	Louise Good & Marlene Booth
Gabbais:	Dr. Michael Weinstein & Dr. Marvin Black	Education Chair:	Dr. Dina Yoshimi		
		Welcoming Committee:	Sandy Armstrong		

## SALLY'S BOOK CORNER

Before you go to another Bar or Bat Mitzvah, take the time to read "Thirteen and A Day" by Mark Oppenheimer. Oppenheimer, although Jewish, was raised by Jewish parents in a strictly non religious home. He first encountered practicing Jews when he went to Yale. Fascinated by the growing popularity of *b'nai mitzvah*, he traveled around the country to see why this was happening. And so, we, too, embark on this journey of investigation with him. He begins with an overview of what he calls "The American Rite", and then we are off on our journey to a Reform Temple in New York, a conservative congregation, Beth El-Kesser Israel (BEKI) in New Haven, Connecticut, the viewpoint of a Torah tutor in Tampa, Florida, a Jewish Encounter Bar Mitzvah in Fayetteville, Arkansas, a Chabad Bar Mitzvah in Juno, Alaska, and finally to Lake Charles, Louisiana for an adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This is a serious look at the growth of a rite that was comparatively minor until the 1940s. Take this journey in the world of American Judaism.

On the other hand, there is the view point of the *b'nai mitzvah*'s in "Bar Mitzvah Disco; The Music May Have Stopped, but the Party's Never Over" by Roger Bennett, Jules Shell, and Nick Kroll. The book began life as a web site and matured into this coffee table volume. It documents *b'nai mitzvah* celebrations from all over the United States in living color and in the vivid words of the celebrants that serve as examples for Oppenheimer's opening chapter.

"The Rabbi's Cat" by Joann Sfar, one of France's most celebrated young comic artists, tells the story of a rabbi, his daughter, and their talking cat who live in Algeria. This whimsical story is full of the colors and flavors of Algeria's Jewish Community, and Sfar's art adds a wonderful visual element. You can read the whole book in about an hour, so that gives you time to go back to the beginning and reread it again to recapture the sheer joy of this book.

The third title in the Jewish Encounter Series has recently been published. Following Nuland's "Maimonides" and Pinsky's "The Life of David" comes Douglas Century's "Barney Ross". In about 200 pages, Century has condensed all the important and essential information about that tough kid, Beryl Rasofsky, who chose the name Barney Ross and was eventually ranked with Hank Greenberg as the most admired Jewish athlete only to die a forgotten figure.

### Winners of Jewish Book Awards

The 2005 National Jewish Book Award winners have been announced with the presentations to be made April 26 at the Center for Jewish History in New York City. The Jewish Book Council has been handing out these awards since 1943, adding much to the promotion of American Jewish letters..

- Israeli writer Amos Oz took home the top prize – the Everett Family Foundation Jewish Book of the Year Award – for his memoir "A Tale of Love and Darkness."

- Berkeley writer Michael Chabon, won the top fiction award for his latest, "The Final Solution," a detective story about a mute Jewish boy in England, circa 1944.
- David Ellenson, the president of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, picked up the Dorot Foundation Award in the category of modern Jewish thought and experience with "After Emancipation." By happy coincidence his daughter, Ruth Andrew Ellenson, won the Barbara Dobkin Award for Women's Studies for "The Modern Jewish Girls' Guide to Guilt," a collection of essays she edited.
- In a new category, Jewish family literature, endowed by the Kripke Foundation in memory of the late author Dorothy Kripke, the winning book is "A Box of Candles" by Laurie A. Jacobs, illustrated by Shelly Ephraim.
- In the category of American Jewish history, Jerome Karabel's "The Chosen: The Hidden History of Exclusion at Harvard, Yale and Princeton."
- In the anthologies category, "Who We Are: On Being (and Not Being) A Jewish American Writer," edited by Derek Rubin.
- For biography/memoir, Masha Gessen's "Ester and Ruzya".
- For children's literature, the winner is "Real Time" by Pnina Moed Kass.
- Scott-Martin Kosofsky's "The Book of Customs" won in the category of contemporary Jewish life and practice.
- Yuri Slezkine won the Ronald S. Lauder Award in Eastern European Studies for his book "The Jewish Century."
- In history, Mark Mazower won the Gerrard and Ella Berman Award for his book "Salonica, City of Ghosts."
- Deborah Lipstadt won in the Holocaust category for her "History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving" (Irving was recently sentenced to three years in prison for his Holocaust denial activities).
- Uri Shulevitz's "The Travels of Benjamin of Tudela: Through Three Continents in the 12th Century" won the Louis Posner Memorial Award for excellence in the field of illustrated children's books.
- In the poetry category, Gerald Stern won for his 2005 collection "Everything is Burning: Poems."
- Howard Schwartz's "The Tree of Souls" won in the reference category
- The Mimi S. Frank Award for excellence in scholarship on Sephardic culture went to "The Schocken Book of Modern Sephardic Literature" and editor Ilan Stavans.
- Elliott R. Wolfson's "Language, Eros, Being: Kabbalistic Hermeneutics and Poetic Imagination" won in the scholarship category.
- In the visual arts category, co-editors Emily D. Bilski and Emily Braun won for their work, "Jewish Women and Their Salons: The Power of Conversation."

The Jewish Book Council publishes Jewish Book World (a Jewish counterpart of Publishers Weekly) and also coordinates Jewish Book Month.

- Sally Morgan

## A Bissl un a Bissl

Just in time for Purim comes this new book, "**The Great Latke Hamantash Debate**" edited by Ruth Fredman Cernea. For more than 60 years, faculty members of the University of Chicago have staged an annual latke-hamantash debate. And here is a record of this great and serious debate. Read it, and you decide which is better, a latke or a hamantash.

**From Forward:** iPod puts the Talmud in the Palm of Your Hand (August 5, 2005). Yehuda Shmidman, a 24-year-old Yeshiva University graduate, had developed the ShasPod, which holds daily Talmud lessons. The gadget takes its name from the acronym Shas shorthand for the Shisha Sedarim (six "orders" or divisions) of the Mishnah that form the basis for the Talmud.

**Singer Memoir on CD** (August 5, 2005). The Forward Association released, this summer, a two disc recording of Nobel Prize -winner Isaac Bashevis Singer's 1966 memoir, "In My Father's Court"— in Yiddish read by Yiddish actor, David Rogow. Originally serialized in the Yiddish Forward over the course of seven months in 1955, Singer's reminiscences were published under the pseudonym "Isaac Warshawsky". It is the story of a childhood spent as a rabbi's son in Poland.

**Michigan Welcomes a New Department.** A \$20 million donation from the Samuel and Jean Frankel Jewish Heritage Foundation has allowed the University of Michigan to establish "the largest dedicated department to Judaic Studies at any university." Major international conferences and residencies each year to 14 leading scholars from around the world are among the plans for this department.

**From Nextbook,** February 27, 2006. A new book by Allegra Goodman, "Intuition", could be subtitled "Seeking Truth in the Bottom of a Beaker". Though set in science labs, Goodman's new book retreads the spiritual terrain she's explored in previous novels. "The book is very much about faith and doubt. It's about religious people, except that their religion is science," she tells the Washington Post. "Lest this sound too earnest," says Geraldine Brooks, "Goodman presides over the universe with a light and sometimes funny touch."

**From Hadassah Magazine,** January 2006 Cut & Post. Brit Mila: The Anti-Aids? A recent study may prove that the practice of circumcision is an effective health measure in preventing the contraction of AIDs. The results of the study by Rance's National Agency of AIDS Research found that circumcision prevented 6 to 7 out of 10 potential HIV infections.

**From "A Little Joy A Little Oy" calendar.** Jews have marched on - and survived for millennia with a little help from their brains, not to mention their humor: Three men were about to be executed and were asked what they wished for their last meal. Carlucci asked for a pepperoni pizza - which he was served. And then he was executed. La Pierre requested filet mignon - which he was served. And then he was executed. Finkel asked for a plate of fresh strawberries. "Strawberries?" asked the warden, "but they're out of season!" "So nu," said Finkel, "I'll wait...."

**Yiddish quotation:** *Az men hot nit keyn seykhel darf men keyn kop nit hobn.* If you don't have brains, you don't need a head.

- Sally Morgan

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**To:**