

Fall 2008

Holiday Schedule

Holiday Service Schedule

Erev Rosh Hashanah:

Monday September 29th 8:00PM

Rosh Hashanah:

Tuesday September 30th 9:00AM-1:00PM

Wednesday October 1st 9:00AM-1:00PM

Yom Kippur - Kol Nidre:

Wednesday October 8th 6:30PM

Yom Kippur Day:

Thursday October 9th 10:00AM-2:00PM
5:00PM - 7:00PM

Community pot luck to break the fast

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Sukkot-Havdalah Pot Luck

Saturday October 18th 5:00pm
At the Kosansky's in Kailua

Simchat Torah:

Tuesday October 21st 6:30 PM
Dessert pot luck

Hats On to Bernice

By Mat Sgan

Sof congregants gathered recently at the home of Gin and Mat Sgan to celebrate a decade of successful and enlightened leadership by Bernice Littman. Bernice recently stepped down from her post as President of Sof Ma'arav. The event was titled, "Hats On to Bernice!" and was a fun-filled evening of roasts, toasts, memories, and songs for the 50 attendees.

The pot luck food was well received. Pre-program socializing was filled with laughter and amazement as people examined each other's chapeaus. Bernice could be counted on from the very beginning of the program. When Mat went from the attendees being Mad Hatters to the Jabberwocky line of "TwaS Brillig...." she swiftly



corrected an error in his recitation (hey, it has been awhile, said Mat), and supplied the next line, "All Mimsy was the Baragroves. . ."

Continued on page 7 Hats On

JCS Annual Dinner

By Sandy Armstrong

Jewish Community Services Annual Dinner
Honoring
Deborah Washofsky
2008 Volunteer of The Year
At
The Japanese Cultural Center
Sunday, November 16, 2008
Cocktails and Silent Auction 5:00PM, Program & Dinner 6:30PM
Guest Speaker
Mark Bennett
Attorney General, State of Hawaii
\$60 Per Person

Update on Sof Ma'arav's Valerie Nechyeva

By Peter Freeman

Valerie has been accepted to attend the prestigious St. Petersburg University. This by itself is of course a wonderful achievement.

There is more. She has also been accepted to the School of International Relations, North American Studies. Here are the numbers: 700 applicants to the School of International Studies – 70 selected; of the 70, 15 were accepted to the School of North American Studies; Valerie candidly mentioned that this is the most sought after course within the school.

Needless to say she is quite thrilled. The year she spent at La Pietra proved to be a very beneficial part of her Curriculum Vitae. The entrance exams were by her account, unbelievably intense. They are "impossible" to do well on as they are designed to virtually eliminate most applicants. At any rate, she obviously did well enough on the exams which made her eligible to have an interview. Undoubtedly, the interview put her over the top.

During her year in Hawaii, she described the corrupt way of life in Russia. As it relates to going to University, she was very worried. Because she is "not connected" and her parents could not afford to "buy" her a seat at a good university, she was

concerned that she may be relegated to attend a second tier school or even not being able to go at all.

There is another factor that Valerie will mention as it relates to her year in Hawaii as focal point in her development. That is the discovery of her "Jewishness". She was a Bat Mitzvah at Sof Ma'arav, but the events that led up to that milestone were as significant as the rite of passage itself. The Shabbats at the various homes that she visited, the services on Saturdays, and celebrations of the holidays all moved her to realize the depth of her heritage.

After returning home, Valerie was asked to apply and then selected to be an assistant program administrator by the American Consul in St Petersburg. She competed for the position and now will work with young Russian High School students who are vying for the opportunity to study in the U.S. This is an elite position and naturally a very good fit for both Valerie and our Consul.

Valerie's strength and desire to achieve, coupled with her intellect have brought her to an incredible starting place for a very bright future. She is proof that a person's perseverance, unwavering focus and ability brought to bear on a goal, can win out in spite of the most difficult obstacles that are placed in front of them.

JEWISH COMMUNITY SERVICES AND GIVE ALOHA



By Judy Goldman

Jewish Community Services (JCS) is an essential organization in our Jewish community. It's not known by everyone but is much appreciated by those who have benefited from its mission: to support and enhance the quality of life for those in need of help in the Hawaii Jewish community by providing appropriate social services. As a not-for-profit, JCS is supported by donations from the local Jewish Community. JCS needs your generous contributions at any time.

To make a tax-deductible donation under \$249 go farther, in September you may participate in Foodland's Matching Gift Program:

For assistance from JCS call 258-7121

- Between September 1-30, 2008 donate up to \$249 maximum per person per organization at any Foodland or Sack N Save checkout using a free Maika'i card.
- Jewish Community Services Code is : #77215
- Foodland does not send JCS the names of donors. JCS would like to acknowledge your gift: Please send a copy of your Foodland receipt, or make a donation with your name and address to:

• JEWISH COMMUNITY SERVICES
2550 Pali Hwy
Honolulu HI 96817

Yiskor Memorial List and Book of Memory

Please submit all additions by **Friday, September 26, 2008.**

1. **Yiskor Memorial List** is read on Yom Kippur. Only submit names if they are not in the Book of Memory or were not on last year's list.

2. **Book of Memory** provides a permanent record of immediate family members (parent, sibling, child, spouse) who have died. Included names are read at services on the Shabbat preceding the yahrzeit and during the Yom Kippur Yiskor service. A name may be added any time.

Please send the following information to Judy Goldman: 1288 Ala Moana Blvd., #9D, Honolulu HI 96814 OR email: jagoldman@hawaii.rr.com

[] Yiskor Memorial List [] Book of Memory: Date of Death _____

Name to be recalled (please print)_____Relationship_____

Your name_____Contact #_____

It is customary to give tzedakah in memory of a loved one. Checks payable to Congregation Sof Ma'arav are appreciated and may be sent c/o Robert Littman to @ P. O. Box 10850, Honolulu, HI 96816. Please indicate whether it is for the Book of Memory or the Yiskor list.

Sof Book Club

By Carolann Biederman

The Sof Book Group will hold two more meetings in 2008 and you are welcome to attend one or both of the gatherings. We meet on Sundays, 1 to 3 p.m. at members' homes. Books and authors are selected, based on group suggestions and are set for the entire year. The 2009 schedule will be finalized at the December 28 meeting. Flyers with details are available each Shabbat at Sof, closer to each meeting. For the location of the meeting and to RSVP, contact Carolann Biederman at 254-8812 or cabc@lava.net. Note: these dates have been recently updated and confirmed.

10/26/08

Joy Comes in the Morning by Jonathan Rosen

389 pages, 3 copies @HPL

Protagonist Deborah Green is a woman of passionate contradictions: a rabbi who craves faith and goodness while wrestling with her own doubts and desires. Her life changes when she visits the hospital room of an ailing Holocaust survivor who is recovering from a debilitating stroke and a suicide attempt and meets his skeptical son. Served with the merest teaspoon of schmaltz, Rosen's touching novel of Jewish manners thoughtfully addresses the question of whether piety can teach us faith.

12/28/08

The Yiddish Policemen's Union: A Novel by Michael Chabon

414 pages, many copies @HPL

In Chabon's version of the world, Jewish refugees and migrants after WWII did not form the state of Israel and were expelled from the Holy Land in 1948. By way of a strictly temporary refuge, the United States granted the Jews the right to settle in Sitka, Alaska – for sixty years. The existing inhabitants, the Tlingit in this case, were far from happy about the sudden, dominant population boost – for Yiddish, not Hebrew, is the primary language. Chabon's writing, like Yiddish itself, is rich and thick with meaning, funny and thoughtful. The book follows a murder investigation in a town filled with greed and corruption, and the path Detective Landsman, the protagonist, must walk is filled with hurdles and hidden minefields.

This novel recently won the Hugo Award, the Pulitzer of science fiction writing, by the World Science Fiction Society and the Nebula Award by the Science Fiction Writers of America. While more of an alternative history than the genre of science fiction, Chabon's writing continues to receive praise from many quarters. Rumor has it that the Coen brothers plan to write and direct the film version.

Sally's Book Corner

By Sally Morgan

The Jewish Book Council 57th National Book Lifetime achievement award went to Rabbi Harold S. Kushner for his body of works. The award reads in part, : "Through his writings, Rabbi Kushner has brought solace, hope, and inspiration to millions of people who have been hurt or disappointed by life—Jews and Gentiles alike... .Because Rabbi Kushner is able to do this through a Jewish idiom that speaks to men and women of all faiths, his books have made a Kiddush HaShem, a sanctification of God's name, that very few contemporary theologians can match."

The Everett Family Foundation Jewish Book of the Year Award went to James L. Kugel for his book, "How to Read the Bible: A Guide to Scripture, Then and Now" (Free Press, 2007). In part, the award read: "James L. Kugel mixes his extensive knowledge of ancient politics, history, geography, archeology, and anthropology in addition to ancient and modern interpretations to guide us to a better understanding of the many ways to look at the classic text."

The fiction award was given to Meir Shalev for "A Pigeon and a Boy" (Schocken Books, 2007). Again quoting in part from the award, "This is a mesmerizing novel of two love stories separated by half a century but connected by one enchanting act of devotion". Meir tells a story as universal as war and as intimate as a winged declaration of love.

The Contemporary Jewish Life award went to Sharon Duke Estroff for "Can I Have a Cell Phone for Hanukkah?" (Broadway Books, 2007), a step by step comprehensive guide: for the modern mom on how to raise young Jewish children as Jewish mentsches. The runner up by Paul Steinberg, "Celebrating the Jewish Year" (JPS,2007)is for the rest of us. There are two volumes to this book available now: "The Fall Holidays" and "The Winter Holidays". The Spring and Summer Holidays will be available in early 2009. The books contain a rich collection of reading from many of the Jewish greats, and guides us in discovering for ourselves the many treasures within each text.

And with that, I wish you all a Gut Yontev . L'Shanah Tovah Tikkatevu..

Bissl Und Bissl

By Sally Morgan

>From The New York Times: Three elder statesmen of comic book writers—Neal Adams, Joe Kubert and Stan Lee—have joined forces to combat what they see as a real-world injustice. The men are lending their talents to help Dina Gottliebova Babbit, who survived two years in Auschwitz by painting watercolor portraits for Dr. Mengele. to retrieve her work. Her ability to paint saved her life and that of her mother. Some of the artwork has survived and is now in the Auschwitz–Birkenau Memorial and Museum in Poland. Mrs. Babbit, now 86 and living in California, wants the artwork back, but the museum has refused to return it, claiming that it was purchased from another survivor. To help Mrs. Babbit's cause, the three men have written a six-page comic book to capture Mrs. Babbit's story. Whether or not this will help Mrs. Babbit is still an open question.

>From Heebmagazine.com; Rejoice you Tam Tam lovers. Manischewitz solved the technical problems that caused the production of Tam Tams to stop. On the market since 1940, these bite-sized matzah crackers account for about \$2 million in annual sales Manischewitz's now proud to say that the Ta Tams are back, and are better than ever.

Bissl Und Bissl (Continued...)

>From Hadassah Magazine: It is time to belt out "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" in Hebrew. Inaugural pitches were thrown in Israel for a new professional baseball league. To follow the progress of the six Israeli Baseball League teams go to www.israelbaseballleague.com. The only changes in the game are that it will only go for seven innings and a home run derby tiebreaker will replace extra innings.

Child Care

By Fran Margulies

Sylvia is a child care professional with thirty year's experience at the Early School Pre-School in Moiiili. She lives with her brother but has a passion for travel which she indulges as often as she can. She has traveled all across the US by bus, taken three cruises, in the Caribbean and along the Mexican Riviera. She has visited Japan, and has travelled three times through Korea and is planning her next adventure in Egypt.

Sylvia has helped us on Shabbat mornings and High Holidays for five years now. We are more than grateful for her dependable, responsive, and loving care. Sylvia has also introduced us to her sister Phyllis Keohohou who fills in on occasion. Phyllis has a family with grown children and is administrative Secretary of Kokua Kai Health Care Center. Our warm thanks to Phyllis too.

Sof Ma'arav provides childcare for all services within the following guidelines: On Shabbat, babysitting services are provided from 10 AM to noon. Parents should deliver their children to the sitter in the baby sitting room, make verbal contact with the sitter to acknowledge the transfer, and check periodically on their children for bathroom and water breaks. Children seven years and older may leave the sitting room unattended provided that they inform the sitter they are leaving and their parents have agreed to this in advance with the sitter. Please note, however, that outside the sitting area all children are the responsibility of their parents. Younger children may only leave the sitting area when they are picked up by their parents or when they go as a group to the playground.

Parents please reinforce the sitter's authority during these hours and inform your children of these ground rules. The sitter cannot follow children around the building and simultaneously monitor the other children in the sitting room. For Eyn Keloheynu "chorus", each parent should come in person to get his child. And one last footnote gained from experience: after the service, do please check the sitting room for your toys and belongings. Sylvia is great about cleaning up, but she should not stay past 12 noon.

Children's Services

The Sof Ma'arav children's service will begin after the High Holidays on the first Shabbat of the month. The first session will be November 1. Children's services are for children ages 6 and older. Children younger than 6 will probably not find the service engaging, and may be supervised elsewhere during this time. Services will begin at 11:00 am. If you have any questions, please call Pam Kosansky at 262-1216.

Hats On from page 1

And the whole evening was indeed Mimsy. Michael Weinstein's commentary on Allegra Goodman's fictionalized account of Sof Ma'arav in "Total Immersion" brought back memories of the birth of our shul more than three decades ago. That was some debate about full participation by women and men in services. Hard to imagine a Sof service without everybody being on call, but there it was.

Kay Lorraine brought over 40 hats from her personal collection, "in case someone needed one." Some of the men liked the women's hats better and quickly abandoned their own for one of Kay's. Then she gave a show-stopping (and we had just begun) review of the Bernice she knew and of the Littman family over the years, with highlights of Robert's courtship of Bernice.

Gin read a beautiful message from Valerie Nechviya at the University of St. Petersburg. Valerie was a 5768 exchange student from Russia who lived with Peter and Genevieve Freeman and their family during her year in Hawaii. She became close to our congregation and chose to become a bat mitzvah while here. She credited Bernice with being an inspiration for that major milestone in her life. Notes of appreciation were also read from Greta Beigel and Joyce and Rudy Fischer, who now reside in Oregon and Maryland, respectively.

Songs, with lyrics made relevant to the occasion and Bernice, from George Hudes ("Our Lady in the Tutti Frutti Hat"), Ken and Hinda, and Marlene Booth (Dai Dai Yenu became "Bernice, we love you") were interspersed with jokes, puns, and serious mahalos by many participants.

Avi Soifer summarized his admiration in Haikus. Sandy Armstrong suggested that she and her

family might still be in New Jersey except for the comfort of knowing that a strong, welcoming Sof congregation as represented by Bernice and Robert was here for them.

Emma and Robert Littman spoke of how significant Bernice was as a woman pioneer balancing career and family obligations. Then Kay presented an exquisite pair of etched crystal shabbat candleholder inserts and new Sof president Don Armstrong, a hat bouquet, to the honoree. Bernice donned the hat, graciously accepted the roasts and toasts, and did not say that now she will have more time to spend with her family. She thanked all for coming and for their warm and creative tributes.

Mat announced the winners of the Hats contests as:

Most Original: George Hudes

Most Jewish: Ken Aronowitz

Most Funny: Dina Yoshimi

Most Hawaiian flavor: Jay Hanlin

Most Bernice-like: Don Armstrong

At the finale, it was All Hats Off to Bernice!



Congregation Sof Ma'arav

2500 Pali Hwy
Honolulu, HI 96817

President: Don Armstrong
President Emerita: Bernice Littman
Vice-President: Seth Markow
Treasurer: Robert Littman
Rec. Secretary: Sally Morgan
Corr. Secretary: Naomi Olstein
Ritual Comm.: Gregg Kinkley
Oneg Chair: Jessie Weinberger
Drashes: Fran Margulies
Newsletter: Alan Kosansky
Ritual Advisor: Ken Aronowitz
Gabbai: Marvin Black, Michael Weinstein
Havdalah: Trudy Wong
Webmistress: Louise Good
Welcome: Sandy Armstrong
Adult Ed. Dina Yoshimi

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.sofmaarav.org

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