

SoCalJSS Newsletter

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Hanukah Activities with Beach Hillel

Hanukah was the busiest time of the fall semester for Beach Hillel this year and Rabbi Drew was involved throughout.

The highlights of the Hanukah festivities were a Shabbat dinner attended by over 40 people, the seventh annual Monster Menorah competition, and a dinner the last night of the festival.

The festivities started off with passing out menorahs at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) while tabling, courtesy of Rabbi Moshe Engel of the Hebrew Academy of Huntington Beach on 30 November. Further promoting the upcoming festival, tabling was continued the following day for the Monster Menorah competition

(<http://beachhillel.org/?p=1416>).

There were both students and faculty who came up to us and inquired as to when Hanukah began and we were able to fill them in.

On Thursday 2 December, Beach Hillel



Beach Hillel Hanukah Party on December 2nd
(Picture courtesy of Phyllis Kenigsberg)

celebrated with a Hanukah party and continued the celebrations for a huge, festive (and delicious) Shabbat

dinner the following night.

On Sunday 5 December, we took part in the Super Sunday activities of the Jewish Federation



Rabbi Drew lighting Hanukah candles on Wednesday 8 December at Beach Hillel's Hanukah Dinner Hangout Program to finish up with the holiday (Picture by Phyllis Kenigsberg)



Nitzan Harel, a CSULB student, and Rabbi Drew toasting sparkling grape juice on Tuesday 7 December at Beach Hillel's Snapshot of Israel event (Picture by Rachel Kaplan)

of Greater Long Beach & West Orange County

(<http://beachhillel.org/?p=1412>). The following evening, Rabbi Drew led a Torah on Tap discussion on campus at CSULB on the game and story of Dreidel.

The following day

featured both a Jewish Faculty Brunch at CSULB and, in the evening, a new program called

Snapshot of Israel (<http://beachhillel.org/?p=1429>), to help promote Beach Hillel's upcoming Taglit-Birthright Israel trip this summer.

The next evening was the last night of Hanukah and Beach Hillel marked it by celebrating it with a dinner and candle-lighting.

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Rabbi Drew

Website Revived

Having only put up a few a posts a year ago on the SoCaUSS website (<http://socaljss.org>), the site is being revived. The website is first and foremost the central online location for information about SoCaUSS. Further, though, it serves as a platform to publish online content, in a blog style.

This style allows for Rabbi Drew to do easily publish online about SoCaUSS activities (more in-depth than the Twitter account mentioned in last month's newsletter) and to write about other matters pertinent to Jewish students on area university campuses.



Scan this with your smartphone

Furthermore, it provides a platform for voicing opinions on events on campuses as well as to respond to content in campus newspapers that may need a response.

The purpose is to connect readers not only to what Rabbi Drew is up to, but also to other campus news in the area relevant to Jewish students or people involved with campuses. It can serve to provide a greater visibility to SoCaUSS, whether that means providing a voice for Jewish interests on campuses or simply a general forum. It also provides a forum for me to voice my opinion.

Speaking About Hanukah at UCI

Rabbi Drew spoke at the Interfaith Center at University of California, Irvine on Thursday 2 December on the Hanukah festival. Addressing the attendees of the weekly luncheon at the Interfaith Center, Rabbi Drew spoke on the game of dreidel.



Students playing the game of dreidel at the UCI Interfaith Center after Rabbi Drew spoke on the game

Afterwards, students stuck around to hear him speak about the Hanukah story.

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Hanukah Sessions at Poly HS Jewish Club

Rabbi Drew spoke about Hanukah to the Jewish Club at Long Beach's Polytechnic High School in the first couple of weeks in December. On December 1st, Rabbi Drew spoke about the story of Hanukah. On December 8th, Rabbi Drew spoke on the game of dreidel, bringing chocolates and dreidels with which to play. Additionally, as part of the culinary experience of Hanukah, Rabbi Drew brought sufganiyot in addition to the pizza he regularly brings. The students enjoyed ending the year with a fun time playing the game of dreidel!



Kayla Kaplan, the president of the Jewish Club, and Rabbi Drew holding boxes of donuts



Students at Poly's Jewish Club enjoyed playing the game of dreidel in different groups

The SoCaIJSS Newsletter is a monthly publication of Southern California Jewish Student Services (SoCaIJSS), an enterprise of Beth El Synagogue, a synagogue without walls, generously funded by Allen & Deanna Alevy. SoCaIJSS's mission is to facilitate Jewish living and learning, and engaging with Jewish students in Southern California. SoCaIJSS provides the only rabbi for two universities California State University (CSU) - Long Beach, Long Beach Polytechnic High School's Jewish Club, and the primary rabbi at CSU-Fullerton. Other universities in Southern California are served by SoCaIJSS, as well (Chapman University, CSU-San Bernardino, UC-Irvine, UC-Riverside, and University of Redlands) and students at many area community colleges. Tax-deductible donations to support the work of SoCaIJSS can be made out to 'Beth El Synagogue' and mailed to Rabbi Drew, 3801 E. Willow Street, Long Beach, CA 90815. Rabbi Drew Kaplan can be emailed at RabbiDrew@SoCaIJSS.org.