

SoCalJSS Newsletter

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Jewlicious Festival 7.0 Successful Again

Jewlicious Festival 7.0 was once again held in Long Beach with hundreds of young Jews in attendance. The Festival featured leading Jewish personalities, musicians, artists, and writers from around the world for a world-class concert series, inspiring Shabbat experiences, discussions and workshops. As a partner since the festival's inception, Southern California Jewish Student Services (SoCalJSS) was once again a producer of the festival, along with Beach Hillel, Jewlicious, and JConnectLA.

Held 25-27 February 2011 at the Alpert Jewish Community Center in Long Beach, the festival kicked off for the first time in LA on the evening of 24 February with the second annual JConnectLA & Jewlicious Night of Unity, held at the El Rey Theater. The festival featured music on the acoustic stage on Friday and Sunday afternoons as well as a concert Saturday night. *Challah*-braiding, *chamsa* art table, and pickle-making were amongst some of the exciting activities in which participants took part on Friday afternoon. Many different organizations represented at the vendors' fair on Sunday, many providing opportunities for young Jews to get involved. Amongst the highlights were huge shabbat meals, Sunday poolside BBQ, and more food.



The promenade at the Alpert JCC filled with vendors, participants, food on Sunday of the festival.

Continued on next page



Main stage of music at the Saturday night concert

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



Eric Van Raalte, the Fullerton Hillel student president, with Rabbi Drew

Continued from previous page

Rabbi Drew led three sessions over the course of Shabbat at the festival. The first of which was on Friday evening on “Stand, Sit, Bend & Bow:

Why are they Moving that Way? Jewish Prayer and the Choreography of Talking to God”, a text-study in which Rabbi Drew demonstrated the various movements of “The Prayer”, the central Jewish prayer. In addition to reading and discussing the traditional texts on the matter,

attendees at the session also took part in practicing the various

bodily movements. The following morning, Rabbi Drew discussed the architectural elements of the Tabernacle in “An Artistic Look at the Parshah”. The last of the three sessions occurred on Saturday afternoon, which Rabbi Drew led alongside Amanda Gelb, LA Director of Community Education for Uri



Dinner during Saturday evening following Shabbat brought hundreds of young Jews together before the evening’s entertainment (Photo courtesy of David Abitbol)

L’Tzedek, on “Conversation on Kosher Consumption: A Discussion of Jewish Eating Practices”. Rabbi Drew and Ms. Gelb both brought some classical Jewish texts on the possible reasons for the various Jewish



CSUF student Eric Don with Rabbi Drew at the second annual Night of Unity, the festival’s gala kickoff event

dietary laws and entertained a discussion for participants to voice what matters to them in their eating practices and to speculate regarding the reasons as to the Biblical laws.

In addition to leading these discussions, Rabbi Drew also was able to engage with numerous students and other young adults, from the Southern California area and beyond. After such an amazing weekend, Rabbi Drew is already looking forward to Jewlicious Festival 8.0!

Major supporters of Jewlicious Festival 7.0 were Deanna & Allen Alevy, Barbara & Ray Alpert, The Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles, Liz & Jim Breslauer, and Gila & Adam Milstein.



Beach Hillel staff at the festival



Long Beach students enjoying the Sunday afternoon barbeque (Photo courtesy of David Abitbol)

Tabling with Soref Schools

As a new semester began, area schools once again held club fairs to show what offerings there are on campus. Two schools that are affiliated as Soref schools held such club fairs. Established through



Tabling with OCC Hillel for Orange Coast College's Club Fair on 15 February.

the generosity of the Samuel and Helene Soref Foundation, Hillel's Soref Initiative for Emerging Campuses enables students and local college and university communities to celebrate Jewish life on campus with smaller Jewish populations.



At California State University, Fullerton's DiscoverFest on 3 February.

Midrashim Discussions at Poly HS Jewish Club

In February, Rabbi Drew spoke on *midrashim* (rabbinic expansions of the Biblical narrative) in three different discussions at the Jewish Club at Long Beach Polytechnic High School.

Using examples to provide the students with a concrete sense of *midrash*, Rabbi



Rabbi Drew led three discussions on *midrashim* at Poly HS' Jewish Club in February

discussions on a few *midrashim* on Abraham in the first gathering, a few on Adam and Eve in the second, and a couple of other assorted *midrashim* to close out the cycle in the last meeting.

Exposing these students to the notion and specific instances of *midrashim* helped give the students a better sense of the Biblical stories and a deeper sense of the texts.

For more on Rabbi Drew's activities with this club, visit <http://socialjss.org/polyhsjewishclub>

Rabbi Drew & Beach Hillel



Rabbi Drew discussing *mezuzot* at CSULB on February 9th at a Beach Hillel *Mezuzah* (cover)-making event (Picture courtesy of Phyllis Kenigsberg)

On 9 February, Beach Hillel had "Pimp My Doorpost", a Mezuzah-making opportunity on campus at CSULB for students to make mezuzah covers. Rabbi Drew spoke on the foundational Jewish sources on *mezuzot* while the students created their own *mezuzot* covers. Rabbi Drew, in addition to answering students' questions about *mezuzot*, also guided them on writing certain words in Hebrew.

On 6 February, Beach Hillel and the Long Beach AEPi had their second annual Super Bowl Party, replete with hamburgers, hot dogs, and more.



Beach Hillel's Second Annual Super Bowl Party (Picture courtesy of Rebecca Scheier)

Rabbi Drew Attends AJWS Rabbis' Conference

SoCalJSS' Rabbi Drew attended the second Rabbinical Student Delegation Alumni Institute of American Jewish World Service (AJWS), held at the Pearlman Conference and Retreat Center in Reisterstown, MD.



Rabbi Yosef Kanefsky, rabbi of B'nai David-Judea in Los Angeles and one of the scholars-in-residence at the conference, speaking here on "Expanding Horizons: Rousing the Congregation to New Ways of Engaging".

Along with over 40 other rabbis and rabbinical students, Rabbi Drew was able to engage with ideas on Judaism and social justice. The Institute is designed to provide a forum for developing strategies, deepening knowledge and building

a cohesive leadership body. AJWS believes that through efforts like the RSD Alumni Institute, rabbinical students and early-career rabbis will be increasingly well-

equipped to lead a robust Jewish effort at advancing human rights and social justice around the world.

Rabbi Drew found sessions with Scholars-in-Residence such as Rabbi Yosef Kanefsky's "A Jewish Ethic of Universal Concern" and Dr. Erica Brown's "Tikkun Olam - Creating a Language of Change" to be helpful in thinking about social justice work in a Jewish framework. Rabbi Drew was more practically enriched through Dr. Brown's session on "Creating Board Effectiveness" and two sessions with AJWS development officer Leah Weinstein.

In addition to the excellent people of AJWS who created and ran the Institute, the conference was sponsored by the Einhorn Family Charitable Trust, enabling not only the program, itself, to take place, but for the participants to get there, as well (such as Rabbi Drew). For more on AJWS' RSD programs, you can visit <http://www.ajws.org/rsd>.

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<http://twitter.com/SoCalJSS>

Rabbi Drew at UCR



At University of California, Riverside on 3 February, Rabbi Drew spent the morning at the Hillel office at for Desert & Inland Empire Hillel's weekly bagels gathering, where students could wander in and out, picking up some eats in between classes. Rabbi Drew was on-hand to speak with students and was available for questions.

The SoCalJSS Newsletter is a monthly publication of Southern California Jewish Student Services (SoCalJSS). Past issues are available at <http://socaljss.org/newsletters>. To sign up to receive the SoCalJSS Newsletter via email, either fill out the brief form at <http://eepurl.com/hy5> or email Newsletter@SoCalJSS.org and ask to sign up.

SoCalJSS is an enterprise of Beth El Synagogue, a synagogue without walls, generously funded by Allen & Deanna Alevy. SoCalJSS's mission is to facilitate Jewish living and learning, and engaging with Jewish students in Southern California. SoCalJSS provides the only rabbi for Jewish students at California State University (CSU), Long Beach and for Long Beach Polytechnic High School's Jewish Club, as well as the primary rabbi with the Hillel at CSU-Fullerton. Other universities in Southern California served by SoCalJSS, as well, include (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 SoCalJSS 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@SoCalJSS.org.