



NATIONAL JEWISH Outreach

FEBRUARY 2002- SHEVAT 5762

INTERIM UPDATE

A LITTLE FOOD, A LITTLE WINE, A FEW PRIZES AND A REAL GOOD TIME! NJOP's Food & Wine Tasting Extravaganza!

There's a joke circulating which notes that all of Jewish history can be subsumed in a few pithy sentences: "They tried to kill us. We won. Let's eat!" While this, of course, is not exactly true, no one can say that Jews don't like food! Ahh – bagels with lox, pastrami on rye, a *bissile* (a little bit of) brisket. Let's face it, it's not for naught that the traditional Jewish menu has become part of America's eating culture. As everyone delightfully discovered at NJOP's exciting Food and Wine Tasting Extravaganza and Silent Auction on December 5, 2001, kosher cuisine is about more than pickled fish and deli.



With her usual savvy for planning the perfect program, Amy Vogel, NJOP's Director of Special Events, with the help of event chairs Joel Pelofsky, Mindy Wolff, and Sarra and Cyrus Schwartz, put together an outstanding evening, featuring the delightful delicacies of 17 of

New York's top kosher restaurants and caterers. Indeed, the offerings ranged from sushi to quisadillas...not the "traditional" kosher cuisine at all.

"One of the goals of our Food and Wine Tasting event was to show people that even the most sensitive palate can find joy in kosher food," Amy Vogel said as she reflected on the evening. "Some have a stereotype of a very low-brow range of kosher foods, but in New York today, the kosher chefs are doing outstanding work!" Stressing her gratitude, Amy noted that the event's success was due to the generosity and professionalism of most of the top NY area restaurants and caterers who volunteered their skills, labor and energy. In addition to the wonderful selection of culinary delights, attendees were able to complement their tastes with a wide selection of the finest kosher wines provided by the Royal Wine Corporation.

Of course, as the old saying goes, "Man cannot live on bread alone" (even if between the slices are savory cuts of beef). So after satiating their stomachs, the guests feasted their eyes on the exciting and humorous selection of prizes available at NJOP's Silent Auction, consisting of jewelry, artwork, theater tickets and more. The selection for bidding was vast. And bid they did, with the greatest bidding-wars waged on football tickets and sterling silver Judaica.

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THANK YOU:

- Abigail's
- Cathy Fields
- Custom Kosher Patisserie
- Darna
- Eden Wok
- Foremost Caterers
- Josh's Place
- Kay Caterers
- Kosher Marketplace
- Le Marais
- Le Marquise
- Levana
- Prestige Caterers
- Prime Grill
- Simply Divine
- Squeez'r Juices & Juice Cocktails
- Ram Caterers
- Shallots

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A PASSOVER SEDER IN DECEMBER!!!

Join Rabbi Buchwald
for his famous
Model Seder
March 21, 2002 at
Lincoln Square
Synagogue
call (646) 871-0012

What was Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald doing at the well-known non-kosher Aureole restaurant on December 10, 2001?! In conjunction with The Royal Wine Corporation, Rabbi Buchwald was demonstrating just how delightful and delicious a kosher menu can be.

Kosher cuisine has quietly taken the world by storm. In the new millennium, kosher food is one of the fastest expanding niches in the food market. Kosher food is sought after not only by Jews, but by Muslims, vegans, people with allergies, and many others. In an effort to demonstrate to gourmands and gourmets that kosher foods and beverages are just as delicious, versatile and easy to prepare as non-kosher foods and wines, The Royal Wine Corp. sponsored "A Gourmet's Haute Cuisine Passover Seder and Wine Tasting." To illustrate their point, the Royal Wine Corp. invited some of the country's best known food and wine critics to Aureole which, only the day before, had been shut down and kashered to prepare for the event.

Wanting to educate and entertain their guests at the same time, Royal Wine chose to conduct a model Seder because "Passover is an eight-day festive holiday filled with food and wine, with the different foods serving as metaphors, symbols and enactments." Not to mention that since "four glasses of wine are consumed with ritual...many hosts use this occasion to experiment with multiple new wines..."

For over 25 years, Rabbi Buchwald has been leading model Seders at Manhattan's Lincoln Square Synagogue and is an expert at entwining the intricate details of Jewish law with humorous anecdotes, joyful songs, and memorable traditions. The Seder at the Aureole flowed smoothly from the first glass of wine to the eagerly awaited main course, at which point Aureole's renowned Executive Chef, Gerry Hayden, presented his kosher feast. The succulent dishes offered ranged from curried delicata squash soup to roasted duck breast and cepi mushroom ragout, and were accompanied by samples of 21 different award winning wines.

"Why was this model Seder different from all other model Seders?" Rabbi Buchwald ironically asked. "Well, for one," he responded, his humor already a bit tipsy from imbibing, "at this model Seder we used wine, wonderful and delicious wine, rather than grape juice!"

For the food and wine critics, as well as for The Royal Wine Corp., for Aureole and for Chef Hayden, the day was a triumph beyond compare.

(continued from page 1)...

NJOP'S FOOD & WINE TASTING (cont...)



Exciting Silent Auction Prizes

Recalling that Jewish tradition requires Torah at every meal, Rabbi Buchwald, with his usual zest, spoke of the relationship between the weekly Torah portion's story of Joseph and the holiday of Chanukah, both of which express the importance of standing up against assimilation and claiming a proud hold upon Jewish heritage. He then thanked everyone for coming, for helping him and the staff of the National Jewish Outreach Program light the spark of Judaism in thousands of unaffiliated Jews. In addition,

he thanked Mr. Sam Domb, who "makes it possible for us to feed thousands of Jewish souls." Mr. Domb responded by reminding everyone that support for NJOP is exceedingly crucial, because the need is so great and so few in America are doing the vital work of Rabbi Buchwald and the NJOP staff.



Abigail's Chef Jeff Nathan

NJOP's Food and Wine Tasting Extravaganza was, without a doubt, a most extraordinary success. Close to fifty of the over 400 guests left as winners, including Rebecca Frankel, who won the raffle and took home a beautiful silver dreidel just in time for Chanukah. Regardless of whether carrying a prize or not, participants went home with broad smiles, delighted by the fun-filled affair. There is no doubt that all eagerly await a repeat performance at NJOP's second annual Food and Wine Tasting next fall.

Look for more on NJOP's Food and Wine Tasting Extravaganza in the next edition of NJOP's *Outreach Newsletter*.

NJOP'S SECOND SENSATIONAL SINGLES' SHABBAT DINNER

Finding one's soulmate can be more challenging than learning the Aleph-Bet and more exciting than that first Shabbat, but it can also be extremely frustrating. The Jewish future, however, is just as dependant upon Jewish marriages as it is on Hebrew and Shabbat, a fact of which both NJOP and Sam Domb are well aware.

This past May, NJOP offered its inaugural Singles Shabbat Dinner, which was a sensational sold-out hit. The singles' response from this first event reinforced Rabbi Buchwald's and Mr. Domb's realization that they have an obligation to help the many singles in New York City. With this success in their hands, there was no choice but to have a repeat performance!

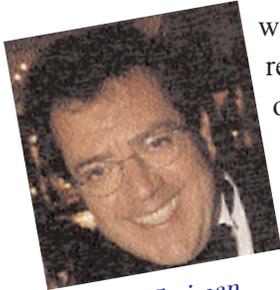
On October 26, 2001, following Friday night Shabbat services at Congregation Ohav Sholom on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, 50 men and 50 women joined Mr. Sam Domb, Aidel and Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald, Ohav Sholom's Rabbi and Rebbitzin Mehlman, and NJOP Board Member Eli Salig, his wife Michelle and their children for a traditional Friday night dinner.

Once again, as at the initial dinner, participants chose their seats by drawing a table number from either the basket for men or the basket for women, ensuring that each table was evenly balanced. While this sometimes separated groups of friends who had come together, it created the perfect opportunity for singles to meet.

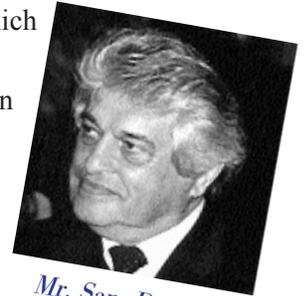
After the participants enjoyed the delightful meal prepared by Le Marquis Caterers, Rabbi Buchwald took the opportunity to acknowledge the dedication, support and generosity of three outstanding members of the NJOP community, Joe Fraiman, Vivian Glueck, and Adena Samowitz, by presenting them each with a beautiful mounted silver mezuzah inscribed with Psalms 37:37: "Mark the perfect person and behold the upright."

Beyond "creating opportunities to meet nice people," stressed Renee Manger as she addressed the dinner guests, the programs instituted by Rabbi Buchwald through NJOP have served "as a beacon, a shining light showing the way home" for hundreds of thousands of Jews. The importance of this work, along with the opportunity to socialize with other singles, was what attracted the evening's participants.

The final speaker of the evening was Mr. Sam Domb. For Mr. Domb, the singles arrayed before him were a testament to the hard work and dedication he has put into gathering support for the National Jewish Outreach Program and for his selfless effort to insure Jewish continuity. Mr. Domb charged the singles with a mission, "the mission of getting married and starting Jewish households of their own." Indeed, this mission is the only one that unquestionably guarantees a Jewish future. It is a mission to which both NJOP and Mr. Sam Domb are wholeheartedly devoted.



Joe Fraiman



Mr. Sam Domb



Vivian Glueck



Adena Samowitz



Sensational Eighth Annual NJOP Dinner

On Tuesday night, February 5, 2002, the National Jewish Outreach Program held its Eighth Annual Dinner at the Waldorf=Astoria Hotel in Midtown Manhattan. This year's honorees were Karen Lehmann-Eisner and David Eisner, who have dedicated themselves for the last 8 years to actively work with NJOP event planners in coordinating the annual Dinners. The Special Service Award was presented to Rabbi Marc and Toby Schneier of The Hampton Synagogue in Westhampton, N.Y. Additionally, Rona and Andrew Steiner were presented with the Young Leadership Award for their enthusiastic dedication. Look for Dinner details and photos in the next edition of NJOP's *Outreach Newsletter!*

PURIM An Individual's Power

NJOP EVENTS

Most people don't see themselves as destined to make great changes in the world. Certainly Esther, a young Jewish maiden in ancient Persia, had no idea of the important role she would be called on to play in Jewish history. True enough, her uncle, Mordechai, was the leader of the Jewish people. But she was simply a pious woman who was seemingly swept up by the currents of history when King Achashverosh chose her to be his queen.

Alone and isolated in the palace, Esther was, in fact, unaware of the evil decree, approved by her husband the King at the behest of the wicked Haman, calling for the murder of all the Jews in a one day massacre. Even when Mordechai informed her of the plot, Esther could not imagine how she could help. She told him that she feared death for approaching the King unbeckoned, and protested that she "has not been called in the past 30 days" (Esther 4:11). Mordechai's surprising response, however, was to subtly remind her that the Jewish people will be saved, whether through her or through another means, but if she does not act, she and her family will be lost forever.

Mordechai's words spurred Esther to action, culminating with the rescinding of the decree and the hanging of Haman.

The impact that an individual can have is as critical today as it was in the time of Esther. While we are not, thank G-d, living under the menace of a wicked Haman threatening our physical existence, the Jews of America are facing a very real threat. Assimilation is an enemy that all Jews must confront. The battle against it must concern everyone, even those who think that they themselves and their families are safe.

The National Jewish Outreach Program wants to thank all of its supporters for standing up for the Jewish people. As the holiday of Purim approaches, each one of us has the opportunity, in our own way, to be an Esther and extend a hand to save the Jewish people.

4th Annual Shabbat Across America/Canada Program

March 8, 2002
Continent Wide
Friday Night
Shabbat Campaign

Donor Appreciation Dinner

March 17, 2002
By Invitation Only

For more information about attending or sponsoring an upcoming NJOP Program, please contact NJOP's Director of Special Events, Amy Vogel, at (646) 871-0111 or amyv@njop.org

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